Right of Appeal and Grievances

Student grievances are handled by approved university procedures. Grievances may be of at least four types: 1) academic, 2) student conduct, 3) discrimination or harassment, or 4) other non-academic grievances.

1. Academic Grievances: Academic grievances are grievances involving coursework, grades, etc. All such grievances are to be handled in accordance with approved university guidelines and procedures. Copies of the approved procedures are available from offices of department heads, college deans, the Provost’s Office, and the Office of the Dean of Students.

2. Student Conduct Grievances: Student conduct grievances are those which do not involve academics or alleged discrimination or sexual harassment. Copies of university conduct guidelines and appeals procedures for conduct grievances are available at the Office of the Dean of Students.

3. Discrimination or Harassment: Montana State University guarantees the right to file a grievance related to all students, employees, visitors, and applicants for admission or employment. The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) is responsible for MSU’s Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation Policy (http://www.montana.edu/policy/discrimination/procedures/) which covers these rights and the related processes (http://www.montana.edu/policy/discrimination/procedures/). If you believe you may have experienced unlawful discrimination on basis of race, color, religion, national origin, creed, service in the uniformed services (as defined in state and federal law), veteran's status, sex, age, political ideas, marital or family status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation, you can report to OIE to discuss your rights and resources under University Policy. Anyone with questions about their rights and resources related to discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or retaliation can contact OIE. The Director of OIE is the University’s Title IX and 504 Coordinator.

4. Other Non-Academic Grievances:
   a. Traffic Violation Appeals: The Traffic Appeals and Regulations Committee handles appeals of traffic violation citations. This committee is composed of four students, three faculty, three classified staff, and three professional non-faculty members. The University Police Director is an ex-officio non-voting member. The decision of the committee is final on all appeals. Contact the University Police Department for appeal forms and additional information.
   b. Student Financial Aid Appeals: Appeals of actions of the Financial Aid Services Office, which relate to financial aid awards, may be addressed to the Financial Aid Appellate Board. The student should first contact the Director of Financial Aid and, if the grievance cannot be resolved at that level, the director will refer the student to the chair of the Financial Aid Appellate Board. Appeals must be in writing.
   c. Appeals of Residency Status Classification for Fee Purposes: Residency status for fee purposes is initially determined for undergraduates by the Office of Admissions and for graduates by The Graduate School. Requests for reclassification are handled by the Registrar. Appeals of registry decisions made by these offices may be made to the Residency Appeals Board. Information about reclassification and appeals can be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.
   d. Student Athletic Grievances: Student athletes who have grievances should contact the Director of Athletics. Regulations and requirements are published by the Athletics Department as well as by the directors for each sport.
   e. Residence Life Grievances: Grievances related to living in the residence halls should contact the Director of Residence Life. Family housing residents should contact the Family Housing Office if they have grievances.

Appeal

The student should be aware that, in cases of disagreement with the decision of a staff member, an appeal for review of the decision may be made to the next higher official or body unless otherwise stated in the grievance policy. If the student is in doubt concerning the person to whom the appeal should be made, he or she should consult the Office of the Dean of Students.