STUDENT APPELLANT AND GRIEVANCE POLICIES

A. General Procedures

When a student has a concern about the action of a particular individual or department, the grievance initially should be directed to the person(s) responsible for the individual or department as noted in the University organizational structure. Certain expeditious procedures to redress specific grievances are outlined below.

B. Academic Grievances

A student against a faculty member, administrator, or staff member at the University may file academic grievances. Written complaints should be filed as soon as possible after the alleged action took place and should be submitted to the department chairperson in the division where the action took place. Copies of the University Academic Grievance procedures are available in the Dean’s Office of each college and school.

C. Access to Personal Records

Policy and procedures concerning student records are based on respect for the privacy of the individual. Guidelines governing student access to individual records and procedures for challenging information on these records can be found on the Office of the University Registrar website. [http://registrar.ua.edu/academics/privacy-guidelines/](http://registrar.ua.edu/academics/privacy-guidelines/)

D. Traffic and Parking Grievances

All students driving a car and parking on campus must register that vehicle and display the proper decal. Students may appeal violation citations to the Student Court. Appeals must be filed on the appropriate form within the prescribed time at the Office of Parking Services. Additional information regarding the appeals process can be found at [http://fawp.ua.edu/bamaparking/regulations/](http://fawp.ua.edu/bamaparking/regulations/) and [http://fawp.ua.edu/bamaparking/forms/](http://fawp.ua.edu/bamaparking/forms/)

E. Financial Aid

Specific rules, regulations, and eligibility requirements for procuring and maintaining financial aid can be found in the office of Student Financial Aid. A concise summary can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog and on the Office of Financial Aid website. [http://financialaid.ua.edu/other/appeal.html](http://financialaid.ua.edu/other/appeal.html)
F. Race, National Origin, Sex, Disability, or Other Discrimination or Harassment

Complaints regarding discrimination in the areas above, if not otherwise resolved, may be directed to the University Compliance Officer in the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. Procedures for resolving sexual harassment complaints can be found in Part III of this handbook.

G. Resident/Non-Resident Classification

The residency status of a student is set by policy established by the Board of Trustees. A copy of the regulations used to interpret and establish residency status is available in the Office of Academic Records and University Registrar. A summary of the policy can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog. Complaints regarding residency status should be filed with the Office of Academic Records and University Registrar, which will make a determination. The Resident Student Status Committee of the University hears contested decisions. http://registrar.ua.edu/residency
UNIVERSITY-WIDE ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

I. Academic Grievances

A. A student academic grievance is broadly defined as a student complaint regarding an academic action taken by instructional or administrative personnel at The University of Alabama. An academic grievance may be filed by a student against university personnel including instructional personnel, administrators, or staff members at the University. Examples of academic grievances include, but are not limited to, allegations of unfairness in grading, alleged violation of a written or oral agreement with a student (e.g. course requirements for graduation), and alleged inconsistent applications of existing policies.

For a protest of a final course grade or other final comprehensive evaluations to be considered, the protest must be based upon one or more of the following grounds and upon allegation that the ground or grounds cited influenced the grade assignment to the student’s detriment:

1. Arithmetic or clerical error
2. Arbitrariness, possibly including discrimination based upon race, sex, religion, or national origin of the student
3. Personal malice

Grievances related to course grades normally should be filed during the semester in which the alleged action takes place, but such protest must be made not later than the last day of classes of the next succeeding regular semester. This grievance procedure is not available in cases where a decision has been appealed, and been afforded a committee hearing, and the appeal has been denied.

B. A student must file a grievance in the academic department (academic department is a phrase that also refers to academic program or area if these terms apply) of The University of Alabama in which the alleged action took place. Academic grievances shall be resolved by the department head in the division where the grievance took place. Grievances concerning matters that are not within the jurisdiction of a particular academic division and grievances against the divisional academic dean must be resolved by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. Grievances against the department chairperson must be resolved by the divisional academic dean. Appeals from the academic dean’s decisions may also be made to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

II. Resolution by Department Chairperson

A. A student who believes that an academic action has unjustly affected him/her may file a grievance with the department chairperson. The facts and circumstances which are bases for the academic grievance should be presented to the department chairperson in written form.
B. The department chairperson will schedule a conference with the student who has brought the grievance, reissue the student a copy of the University-wide Academic Grievance Procedures, ascertain the circumstances involved, and review any materials or circumstances pertinent to the grievance to determine if there seems to be a reasonable or sound basis for the academic grievance. If the chairperson decides there may be a reasonable or sound basis for the academic grievance, or if the student insists on filing the grievance anyway, then the department chairperson will arrange conferences with the student and other person(s) involved.

Prior to these conferences, the other person(s) involved will be given a copy of the written grievance and will be reissued a copy of the University-wide Academic Grievance Procedures. Both the student and other person(s) will be informed that the purpose of conferences scheduled by the department chairperson is to attempt to resolve the issue informally. Both parties will be informed that they have the right to present any evidence, supporting witnesses, or any other relevant information during these conferences.

C. At the beginning of these conferences, the department chairperson will inform the student and other person(s) involved that the purpose of these meetings is to attempt to resolve the grievances informally. The department chairperson will act as intermediary between the student and other individual(s) with whom the student has a dispute. If a mutually satisfactory resolution can be reached, the academic grievance is resolved.

D. If a resolution cannot be reached informally between the student and other person(s) involved, then the matter will be forwarded to the academic dean to be resolved.

III. Resolution by Academic Dean

Any matter not resolved by the department chairperson will be resolved by the academic dean. The dean may act alone or in the conjunction with a standing divisional committee or an ad hoc committee appointed by the dean, but the dean will make the decision. The academic dean will arrange conferences with the faculty or staff member, student, and others, as may be appropriate, to discuss the matter in question. The student and other person(s) involved will be given an opportunity to make a statement, present evidence, witnesses, or materials pertinent to the academic grievance; during these conferences both parties can be accompanied or advised by anyone either party chooses. The academic dean, after careful deliberation, will render a decision.

Notice of the dean’s decision will be sent by certified mail to the student with copies to the faculty or staff member and other involved parties; either party may appeal the dean’s decision to the Office for Academic Affairs if the appeal is filed within 15 working days of the date of mailing of the dean’s decision.

IV. Appeal

The dean’s decision may be appealed to the Office for Academic Affairs within 15 working days of the mailing of the dean’s decision. Appeals must be based on substantive grounds such as procedural errors, new information, or inconsistencies in the application of policies.

When an appeal is received by the Office for Academic Affairs, an official from that office will schedule a conference(s) with the student and other concerned parties to discuss the reasons for the appeal. If meetings with the student and other concerned parties result in an agreeable solution to the matter, the appeal process will end. If no such solution is reached, the official from the Office for Academic Affairs will recommend to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, giving reasons for the recommendation, whether the appeal should be heard or denied. If the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs denies the appeal, the appeal process will end. If the appeal is to be heard, the official from the Office for Academic Affairs will convene a panel to resolve the issues that remain. The panel will consist of