
Grievance Committee Procedures

March 2016

College of Geosciences Grievance Committee Procedures

The purpose of this policy is to provide a mechanism to address and resolve faculty grievances within the College of Geosciences.

Responsibility of the Geosciences Grievance Committee

The College of Geosciences Grievance Committee will consider grievances relating to (but not necessarily limited to) working conditions, salary inequities, and teaching assignments. In accordance with Texas A&M University Rule #12.01.99.M4, the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee will not consider grievances relating to constitutional rights and academic freedom, tenure decisions, sexual harassment, and dismissal from the University. These grievances are pursued through established avenues detailed by the University as outlined in Rule #12.01.99.M4

Grievance Procedure

A faculty member believing that he or she has just cause for grievance not concerning questions of tenure, dismissal or constitutional rights as outlined in Texas A&M University Rule #12.01.99.M should express his/her grievance in writing and make an appointment to speak confidentially with his/her Department Head, or to the Associate Dean responsible for Grievance Committee oversight (“Associate Dean”) if the grievance is directed toward the Department Head. If the matter is resolved at the departmental level, a letter of understanding explaining the resolution should be written by the Department Head and co-signed by the faculty member.

If the matter cannot be resolved by mutual consent with the Department Head the faculty member may bring the grievance to the Associate Dean, who will be responsible for submitting the grievance to the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee. The formal petition should be in the form of a brief written statement that describes the nature of the grievance and identifies against whom the grievance is being filed.

For grievances brought to the Associate Dean, he or she, in consultation with the Dean, will either (1) decide on the grievance or (2) refer the grievance to the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee. Referral to voluntary mediation services coordinated by the Office of the Dean of Faculties may also be recommended as an intermediate step prior to formal referral to the Grievance Committee.

While the Department Head or Administrative Officer will direct the faculty member to the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee, the faculty member has the right to bypass the Committee and speak directly with the Dean.

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Within two weeks after the matter is referred to the Committee, the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee will hold a short, informal hearing with the faculty member, and will advise the faculty member of the information needed and the steps to be taken to pursue the perceived grievance further through a formal hearing. The faculty member may bring supporting materials pertinent to the issue(s) to this informal hearing.

The College of Geosciences Grievance Committee holds sole responsibility for determining whether a detailed investigation is merited, and submission of a petition need not necessarily lead to a detailed investigation. Within 30 days of the grievance being filed with the committee, the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee will inform the faculty member of its decision to conduct a detailed investigation through a formal hearing.

Minutes will be taken of all meetings with the faculty member who filed the grievance and all information collected during a detailed investigation will be maintained by the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee and provided to the faculty member and to the Associate Dean responsible for Faculty Affairs.

Formal Grievance Hearing

If the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee determines that a detailed investigation is appropriate, the petitioner will be provided an opportunity to present his/her case to the Committee. The formal procedure will include the following steps:

- The College of Geosciences Grievance Committee will request a formal petition containing all the factual data that the petitioner considers pertinent to the case.
- The College of Geosciences Grievance Committee will ensure that the party(ies) against whom the grievance is lodged have an opportunity to respond to the concerns or issues raised in the grievance.
- The College of Geosciences Grievance Committee may wish to arrange a hearing in which all parties to the grievance would have an opportunity to present their views and possibly to resolve their differences with or without the involvement of a mediator.
- The College of Geosciences Grievance Committee may seek to bring about a settlement of the issue satisfactory to the parties involved.
- If, in the opinion of the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee, a settlement is not possible or appropriate, the committee will report its findings and recommendations to the Dean of the College of Geosciences. A copy of the report will be sent to the parties involved, the Associate Dean and to the respective Department Head.
- Minutes will be taken of the formal hearings.

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Upon receipt of the report, the Dean of the College of Geosciences will consider the issues and make the decision he or she deems appropriate to resolve the situation. The Dean shall issue a decision within 10 working days of receipt of the committee's recommendation. The Dean has the final college level authority to decide on the grievance.

In accordance with Texas A&M University Rule #12.01.99.M4, if the aggrieved party is not satisfied with the resolution of the issues at the College level or if no resolution is reached, the faculty member may appeal the decision to the University Grievance Committee through the Dean of Faculties. In accordance with Texas A&M University Rule #12.01.99.M4, *“The UGC will not hear grievances that have not been heard by a college grievance committee.”*

Membership

The Geosciences Faculty Advisory Committee (GFAC) shall serve as the College Grievance Committee.

Three members of the committee, not including representatives from the departments that are parties to the grievance, will serve as the grievance committee for each specific case.

No Administrative Officer shall serve on the College of Geosciences Grievance Committee.