

## **SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH - STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

The School of Public Health is committed to creating an educational and work environment that is inclusive and supportive of all students, faculty, and staff. We aspire to develop and mentor the next generation of public health leaders and in doing so we strive for a learning environment that is fair, respectful, equitable, and free from all forms of harassment. Each member of the School of Public Health community is expected to contribute to this positive learning and work environment. The school is supported in this goal by several [campus policies](#). When behavior or conduct occurs that is inconsistent with a respectful and safe learning environment, members of our community may report the incident and seek assistance through the following policies and procedures.

### **CAMPUS POLICIES**

It is the policy of the University and the School of Public Health to maintain the campus as a place of work for faculty, staff, and students, free from all forms of harassment. Harassment in the workplace or the educational environment is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. The University has established policies and reporting processes that address Title IX, sexual misconduct and discrimination. These policies can be found here:

[Non-Discrimination Policy](#)

[Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

[Policy on Threatening and Intimidating Conduct](#)

'Unacceptable incident' reporting forms are available for students to submit directly to the campus if they wish.

[Undergraduate Student Incident Reporting Form](#)

[Graduate Student Incident Reporting Form](#)

The University has established policies and grievance processes for students who believe that their academic performance has been unfairly evaluated. The policies and procedures can be found here:

[Undergraduate Student Arbitrary and Capricious Grading Policy](#)

[Graduate Student Arbitrary and Capricious Grading Policy](#)

In addition, the Graduate Council has established grievance policies and procedures for both graduate students generally and specifically for Graduate Assistants (RA, TA, GA) who believe that they have been unfairly treated with respect to their employment and/or duties as a

Research, Teaching, or Administrative Graduate Assistant. A related policy on graduate students changing advisors is also available. The policies/procedures can be found here:

[Graduate Student Grievance Procedure](#)

[Graduate Assistant Workload Grievance Procedure](#)

[Graduate Student Advisor Policy](#)

The Graduate School has also outlined a website that helps guide graduate students in understanding their options for reporting different types of incidents.

[Graduate Student Incident Reporting and Support Pathways](#)

For concerns that exist outside of academic programs, the campus [Dean of Students](#) can be an excellent resource.

If you are a campus staff member, follow the [staff grievance policy](#). If you are a campus faculty member, follow the [faculty grievance policy](#).

## **INFORMAL PROCESS**

We believe that it is best to facilitate, with dignity, the resolution of disputes and concerns at the administrative level most closely aligned with the dispute. That is, it is best to attempt a resolution with the parties involved. Students are therefore encouraged to start by seeking advice and mentorship from their advisors. If the student does not feel comfortable discussing the issue(s) with their advisor or if that discussion does not lead to a resolution, they are encouraged to discuss the situation with their unit head and/or the Undergraduate Director or Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) (or equivalent roles) as appropriate. Students are also encouraged to document the occurrence of these discussions and any plan(s) to resolve the issue(s) that emerged, for example via a follow-up email sent to the advisor and/or administrator. Involved mentors (advisors, unit heads, or other administrators) are encouraged to follow-up as appropriate. In some cases, it may be worthwhile to meet regularly to assess progress toward a resolution.

Note that the informal process is not a prerequisite for the formal process and students may start with the formal process if they are uncomfortable with the informal process.

The full language of the informal process can be found here:

[Undergraduate Grievance Policy](#)

[Graduate Student Grievance Policy](#) – see Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities

To assist with mediation, you may also wish to contact a campus Ombuds Officer. The Ombuds Officer is available to all students with questions or concerns related to their student experience. The university is a large and complex institution; misunderstandings and conflicts can occur easily. The Ombuds Officer provides confidential and informal assistance in resolving these conflicts and promotes fair and equitable treatment within the university.

[Undergraduate Ombuds Office](#)

[Graduate Student Ombuds Office](#)

## **FORMAL PROCESS**

If a student believes that they have experienced treatment that is unethical, grossly unjust, uncivil, or otherwise creates a hostile learning or working environment from a faculty member, a staff member, or another student, the student should attempt to resolve the matters locally, collegially, and informally, as outlined above. If the issue has not been resolved to the student's satisfaction or the treatment cannot be stopped through informal means, the student may elect to file a formal grievance.

It is the policy of the School of Public Health to review grievance submissions in a fair, respectful, and equitable manner. We are also committed to serving as an advocate for, and resource to, student victims of crimes, harassment, and other traumatic experiences.

If you are unable to achieve a mutually satisfactory resolution informally, then the next step is to initiate the formal grievance process. This process within the School of Public Health, conducted in strict confidentiality, is as follows:

Phase 1. The process begins with the filing of a formal grievance with either the Undergraduate Director/Program Administrator or Director of Graduate Studies (or equivalent position):

1. The student shall provide in writing a request to initiate a formal grievance process. This request must contain a clear description of the facts giving rise to the grievance including the following elements: names of the parties involved; date(s), time(s) and location(s) of the actions/incidents; names of witnesses (if any); and the desired resolution of the grievance. The request must be signed.
2. The written grievance must be filed within 20 business days of the next regular semester from when the incident occurred (following campus policy). The Department or School may waive the time limit upon a showing of good cause.
3. The Undergraduate Director or Director of Graduate Studies will conduct an investigation and provide a determination within 30 business days of the filing of the

grievance. This investigation can include interviewing the parties involved and consulting with appropriate campus administrators (such as University Counsel). The decision shall be provided in writing to the parties involved.

4. If the decision is accepted by the parties, the matter is deemed settled. If not, then the decision can be appealed in Phase 2 of the process.

Phase 2. If the resolution proffered in Phase 1 is deemed unacceptable, either party can file an appeal with the Department Chair/Unit Head (referred to as Chair, below) as follows:

1. The appeal process shall be initiated by sending a written appeal to the Chair of the department within 30 calendar days of the Phase 1 decision.

2. The written appeal must be signed and include the original description of the facts, a clear explanation of why the party filing the appeal found the outcome(s) of the Phase 1 proceedings and decision(s) unsatisfactory, and a statement of the desired resolution/remedy.

3. The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within ten business days of receipt of the written appeal.

4. The Chair will proceed by selecting one of two options:

a. The Chair will convene a panel of three faculty members to confidentially review the matter and make a recommendation to the Chair. The panel should conduct its review in an impartial and unbiased manner. The Chair will provide a copy of the letter of appeal and other documentation as appropriate. The panel will offer to meet with the parties involved, individually and/or together, before reaching a decision. The panel can confidentially consult with the appropriate persons who may be knowledgeable about the policies, practices, and issues involved. The panel shall endeavor to convey a written decision and, where appropriate, the remedy, to the parties involved within 30 calendar days of receipt of the letter of appeal. The written report of the panel will contain a statement of the issues, the panel's findings of fact, the controlling policy provisions, the panel's assessment regarding the merits of the grievance, and a recommended disposition of the grievance, including a suggested remedy and/or disciplinary actions. The Chair shall endeavor to convey a written decision and, where appropriate, the remedy, to the parties involved within 15 calendar days of receipt of the panel's report.

5. If the decision is accepted by the parties, the matter is deemed settled. If not, then the decision of the Chair can be appealed in Phase 3 of the process.

Phase 3. If the resolution proffered by the Chair/Head of the unit is deemed unacceptable, either party can file an appeal with the Dean of the School (or their designee) as follows:

1. The appeal process shall be initiated by sending a written appeal to the Dean of the School within 30 calendar days of the announcement of the decision by the Chair of the unit.
2. The written appeal must be signed and include the original description of the facts, a clear explanation of why the party filing the appeal found the outcome(s) of both the Phase 1 and Phase 2 proceedings and decision(s) unsatisfactory, and a statement of the desired resolution/remedy.
3. The Dean of the School will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within ten business days of receipt of the written appeal.
4. The Dean of the School (or designee) will proceed with one of two options:
  - a. The Dean or their designee will convene a panel of three faculty members to confidentially review the matter and make a recommendation to the Dean or their designee. The panel will conduct its review in an impartial and unbiased manner. The Dean or their designee will provide a copy of the letter of appeal and other documentation as appropriate. The panel will offer to meet with the parties involved, individually and/or together, before reaching a decision. The panel can confidentially consult with the appropriate persons who may be knowledgeable about the policies, practices, and issues involved. The panel shall endeavor to convey a written decision and, where appropriate, the remedy, to the parties involved within 30 calendar days of receipt of the letter of appeal. The written report of the panel will contain a statement of the issues, the panel's findings of fact, the controlling policy provisions, the panel's assessment regarding the merits of the grievance, and a recommended disposition of the grievance, including a suggested remedy and/or disciplinary actions. The Dean or their designee shall endeavor to convey a written decision and, where appropriate, the remedy, to the parties involved within 15 calendar days of receipt of the panel's report.
5. If the decision is accepted by the parties, the matter is deemed settled. If not, then the decision of the Dean can be appealed to either the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of the Graduate School as set forth in campus policies (discussed above).

In the instance that one of the parties involved in the grievance is the Undergraduate Director, Director of Graduate Studies, or the Chair/Head of the Department, the student may file the grievance with the Dean of the School. If the Dean is a party to the grievance, the student may

file the grievance directly with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of the Graduate School.

Remedies suggested by the filing party must be reasonable and within the actions that can be taken in accordance with university policy and appropriate statutes. The School will endeavor to reach a just and equitable resolution in each case.

Within limitations that govern an ordered intellectual community, the School of Public Health accords its members freedom of inquiry, expression, and action. Along with this freedom, is the obligation to do so responsibly. When that bond is broken, we are committed to addressing the issues and concerns as outlined above.

The full description of the formal grievance policy and procedure can be found here: [Undergraduate Formal Grievance Policy and Procedure](#) [Graduate Student Formal Grievance Policy and Procedure](#) – see Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities

## **CAMPUS RESOURCES**

All members of the University community have access to campus resources to address the effects of threatening or intimidating conduct, including:

**University of Maryland Police Department.** UMPD receives and assesses all reports of prohibited conduct motivated in whole or in part by actual or perceived protected status. UMPD investigates reports of such prohibited conduct by gathering details, collecting evidence, sharing information with law enforcement partners, and consulting with legal experts. UMPD will communicate with relevant administrative offices to facilitate the University's response and to make appropriate referrals to begin University disciplinary processes.

Emergency: 911 or (301) 405-3333 (mobile phone: #3333)

Non-emergency: (301) 405-3555

Website: [www.umpd.umd.edu](http://www.umpd.umd.edu)

**Office of Diversity and Inclusion.** ODI tracks hate-bias incident reports and coordinates the deployment of campus support services to individuals affected by hate-bias incidents. ODI also provides campus programming in collaboration with other campus units to foster prevention efforts and facilitate responses to hate-bias incidents.

Phone: (301) 405-6810

Website: [www.diversity.umd.edu](http://www.diversity.umd.edu)

**University Counseling Center.** The Counseling Center provides comprehensive psychological and counseling services to students and others in the University community. The Center is staffed by counseling and clinical psychologists.

Phone: (301) 314-7651

Website: [www.counseling.umd.edu](http://www.counseling.umd.edu)

**University Health Center, Mental Health Service.** The Mental Health Service in the Health Center offers short-term psychotherapy, medication evaluations, crisis intervention, group psychotherapy, and more. The service is staffed by psychiatrists and licensed clinical social workers.

Phone: (301) 314-8106

Website: [www.health.umd.edu/mentalhealth/services](http://www.health.umd.edu/mentalhealth/services)

**Campus Chaplains.** Campus chaplains represent 14 faith communities, working to serve the spiritual needs of the community. Campus Chaplains will meet with any member of the campus community, regardless of faith background.

Website: [http://thestamp.umd.edu/memorial\\_chapel/chaplains](http://thestamp.umd.edu/memorial_chapel/chaplains)

**Faculty Staff Assistance Program (FSAP).** FSAP provides free and confidential support to all faculty and staff (and their family members) on a range of issues. Services include short-term counseling services provided through FSAP (generally used for 3 sessions, but can support up to 10 sessions of counseling). FSAP also provides referrals for long-term counseling needs.

Phone: (301) 314-8170 or (301) 314-8099

Website: <http://www.health.umd.edu/fsap>