

**PALO ALTO COLLEGE  
COLLEGE PROCEDURES**

Procedure Number: S 27.0  
Procedure Title: Student Initiated Academic Grievance  
Relevant Board Policy: [F.4.6 Academic Grievances](#)  
Relevant SACSCOC Policy:  
Originating Unit: Dean of Academic Success  
Maintenance Unit: Vice President of Academic Success

- I. Purpose: To delineate a process for students to initiate an academic grievance when they feel they have not been treated fairly by a faculty member.

Note: All issues pertaining to Academic Integrity (Board Procedure [F.4.2.2](#)) are handled apart from this procedure and may not be comingled or used in conjunction with this procedure.

II. Procedure Statement:

- A. If a situation occurs in which a student believes that he or she has been treated unfairly by an instructor, the student should schedule a conference with the instructor in an attempt to resolve the problem.
- B. A student grievance should be initiated as soon as possible after the incident upon which the grievance is based.
- C. If, after a conference with the instructor, the student believes that the matter is unresolved, he or she may consult with the department chairperson. Such consultation shall take place within five (5) business days of the student's conference with the instructor.
- D. If an initial conversation with the Chairperson does not resolve the grievance, a Student Academic Grievance Form (see attachment) must be completed and filed with the department chairperson. The student and the instructor will retain copies of the form.
- E. The chairperson will individually and separately hear details regarding the grievance from the student and from the instructor. After hearing both sides, the Chairperson may request that the student and the instructor meet with the chairperson in order to reach an acceptable conclusion.
- F. If an agreement is not reached, the chairperson will affirm or deny the grievance within five (5) business days. If the decision is to affirm the

instructor's position, the student may appeal to the appropriate Dean of Academic Success. If the decision is to affirm the student grievance and to recommend the instructor reverse his or her decision, the chairperson must meet with the instructor and provide a written explanation. To affirm a student grievance, the chairperson must have adequate cause.

- G. If either the student or instructor is not satisfied with the chairperson's decision, he or she may appeal to the appropriate Dean of Academic Success within five (5) business days of the date of the chairperson's decision. A complete record of the grievance will be forwarded to the Dean of Academic Success by the chairperson. The dean and the chairperson will meet with the student and the instructor. After hearing from all parties involved and reviewing the record, the dean will render a decision, in writing, affirming or denying the grievance within five (5) business days. The decision of the dean is final.

Attachment:

Student Academic Grievance Form

Date Created: January 29, 2011

Date Updated/Approved: January 5, 2021

Approved:

(signed: Beth Tanner)

Vice President of Academic Success

(signed: Dr. Robert Garza)

President