

DEPARTMENT: Office of Student Affairs
NAME: Grievances and Appeals
POLICY NUMBER:
OWNER: Office of Student Affairs
EFFECTIVE DATE: 06.30.2025

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students enrolled at the Meritus School of Osteopathic Medicine (MSOM).

PURPOSE

MSOM is committed to providing a fair and respectful environment in which students can raise and resolve concerns. The institution recognizes the right of students to express grievances regarding course grades, academic decisions, behavioral or professional issues, financial concerns, or other matters, and encourages these concerns to be communicated in a professional and ethical manner.

POLICY

I. Grievances

A. General Guidelines

1. All grievances, except Title IX and other harassment and discrimination-related grievances, must be submitted in writing to the Office of the Dean. Records of submitted grievances will be securely maintained in the Office of the Dean. For information regarding grievances related to Title IX and other harassment and discrimination, see the Non-Discrimination Policy and the Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedures.
2. Unless otherwise noted, each stage of the grievance process is expected to be completed within two weeks, and all reasonable efforts will be made to meet the timelines. Requests for extensions to these timeframes must be submitted in writing at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the deadline. The Office of the Dean will respond to extension requests within two (2) business days. If MSOM initiates an extension, students will be notified at least five (5) calendar days in advance of the deadline.

B. Informal Resolution

1. Students are encouraged to first seek an informal resolution by discussing the concern directly with the involved faculty member, staff member, or relevant party. Many grievances can be resolved at this level through open and respectful

communication. If the issue is satisfactorily resolved, no further action is required. The student may consult with the Office of Student Affairs for non-academic grievances or the Offices of Academic Affairs or Clinical Education for academic-related grievances.

C. Submission of Formal Grievance

1. If informal resolution is unsuccessful, students may submit a formal grievance form to the Office of the Dean within 15 business days of the incident or decision in question. The Dean will issue a written response or resolution within 10 business days of receiving the grievance.

D. Request for Grievance Hearing

1. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal grievance review, they may request a Grievance Hearing within 30 calendar days of receiving written notification of the decision. The request must be submitted in writing to the Office of the Dean and include the following:
 - a. A clear, concise description of the grievance
 - b. An explanation of how the action or decision was unjust, discriminatory, or unreasonable
 - c. Identification of the respondent(s) involved
 - d. A statement of how each respondent is responsible
 - e. The specific remedy requested
 - f. Whether the student will bring a non-participating observer to the hearing

E. Grievance Hearing Procedure

1. Upon receipt of the hearing request, the Grievance Hearing Board will be convened by the Dean. The hearing will be scheduled within 10 business days of notification to board members. Members of the Grievance Hearing Board must not have any conflict of interest or direct involvement in the subject of the grievance.
2. The board will consist of:
 - a. The appropriate Associate Dean(s)
 - b. Two faculty members
 - c. One staff member
 - d. One student
 - e. The Dean (ad-hoc, non-voting member)

- f. Other members, as determined by the Dean
- 3. At the hearing, both the student and the respondent(s) may present evidence, documentation, and witnesses. Legal counsel or any other representation on behalf of the student is strictly prohibited at the hearing. The Grievance Hearing Board will also review relevant materials, including the Dean's final report. The board will render a final determination regarding the outcome of the grievance. The decision of the Grievance Hearing Board is final. No additional appeal process is available within the institution.

F. Complaints to Outside Agencies

- 1. Any interested stakeholder or member of the public may file a complaint regarding compliance with Accreditation Standards. Initial complaints should be referred to the Associate Dean of Student Services. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted, but the identity of the complainant will be protected to the greatest extent possible. Complaints will be reviewed and investigated by the Dean's Council and a report provided to the Dean within 10 business days. Should the complaint not be addressed to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complaint may be escalated to the appropriate accreditation or regulatory agency. Additionally, anyone may file a complaint directly with the accreditation or regulatory agency by following the processes outlined on their websites.
- 2. COCA complaint policies and complaint form can be found at <https://osteopathic.org/accreditation/accreditation-guidelines-policies>.
- 3. The Maryland Higher Learning Commission complaint form can be found at https://mhec.maryland.gov/institutions_training/Documents/acadaff/MHECStudentComplaintProcedures.pdf.
- 4. Maryland Office of Attorney General Consumer Affairs 200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202 (888) 743-0023 or (410) 528-8662.

MSOM maintains a strict policy of non-retaliation against anyone who submits a complaint to the school or to any accreditation or regulatory agency.

POLICY MANAGEMENT

The Office of Student Affairs is responsible for the development, implementation, and maintenance of this policy. It is reviewed periodically and housed in the electronic policy management system. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Office of Student Affairs.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- A. Non-discrimination Policy
- B. Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedures