

FACULTY HANDBOOK REVISIONS

March 18, 2024

Explanatory Memo

Chapter Six: Faculty Grievances

In Fall 2022, the Faculty Handbook Committee presented a new chapter to the Senate which outlines processes for how to pursue and adjudicate types of grievances not covered elsewhere in the Faculty Handbook.

This material discusses mechanisms for handling grievances that are **not** related to Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination, Research Misconduct, or tenure decisions. It also encourages mediation, when possible, through the Conflict Resolution Program in the Office of Institutional Equity.

It also outlines the same mechanism if a faculty member wishes to file a grievance against a dean.

This chapter clarifies that grievances must begin in a school grievance committee and specifies the requirements of school grievance committees.

It also establishes a process for FTFR's executive role and its ability to entertain appeals, when deemed necessary.

If deans intend to take disciplinary action against a faculty member, they must file a grievance (this is spelled out in the new chapter on disciplinary measures, which was approved by the Senate in April 2022).

2024 Update

When this Chapter 6 was first presented in 2022 (numbered as Chapter 7 at the time), faculty Senators asked many questions regarding the burden of proof, potential conflicts of interest, and the way information could be gained from witness testimony.

The Faculty Handbook Committee invited Law and Business senators, who had the greatest concerns, to a meeting in January 2024 to discuss these concerns directly. The draft submitted here includes multiple revisions based on that meeting.

In particular, new language states that the burden of proof is a “preponderance of evidence.” Procedures have also been added if the Chair has a conflict of interest with the case. Faculty members are also offered a faculty advisor, who normally does not speak directly to the Committee, but may with the permission of the Chair. The new language allows indirect questioning of all parties through the Chair.