

## **SECTION 15: STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY**

### **15.1 Grievances**

The NUNM Student Grievance policy provides a means by which a student may seek an equitable and orderly resolution regarding a complaint against an employee, while the employee was acting in an official capacity (e.g., faculty member, administrator, staff member).

A grievance may be filed for an alleged violation of campus policy or procedure that adversely impacts the student. It is an educational matter, personal issue or condition that a student believes to be unfair, inequitable, and/or a hindrance to their education. An unresolved complaint is raised to the level of a grievance when the student completes and submits a Student Grievance form.

In order for a grievance to be legitimately based, actions against the student must have occurred in relation to an NUNM policy, procedure, or established practice that were arbitrary, capricious, unequitable, malicious or professionally inappropriate in nature.

The Student Grievance process must be initiated within 30 days after the alleged incident or issue occurred and begins with the dean of students or an appointed representative.

Students should allow 10 business days to receive a written response to their complaint or grievance.

All proceedings conducted under this policy are closed. The student may bring a support person (not an attorney, as this is not a legal proceeding) to any proceeding if so desired, but such person is not permitted to participate in any part of the discussions.

### **Exemptions from this policy**

The following matters are not handled as student grievances within the scope of this policy, but may be directed for attention as follows:

- **Students may not file a grievance for a grade appeal**, except when a faculty displays unethical, illegal or improper conduct within the context of a grade given. For more on grade appeals processes see the student handbook, Section 5.10.
- Incidences of bias, discrimination or (sexual) harassment. Sexual misconduct, harassment, or sex discrimination complaint, or any complaint concerning discrimination are governed under separate policies. See Section 13 of the student handbook.

### **15.2 Informal Process**

Students must adhere to the following procedure and may request consultation assistance from the Office of Student Life. A grievance must be presented within 30 days after the action or decision being questioned. The following steps should be taken.

Step 1: The student is required to meet with the person involved in the grievance to attempt to resolve the matter informally within ten (10) business days of the alleged incident. In most instances, the matter will be resolved at this level and no further action will be necessary. If a student needs assistance to facilitate such a meeting they may contact the Office of Student Life.

### **15.3 Formal Grievance Process**

Step 2: If the student is unable to resolve the matter in question or is dissatisfied with the outcome of step one, the student may file a formal written grievance with the Office of Student Life. Grievances regarding the dean of students may be filed with the provost. Forms are available by request in the Office of Student Life.

The dean of students (or designee) will determine whether the alleged incident is able to be grieved based on information and documentation provided by the student as well as if it meets the basis of

a grievance (the action(s) taken against the student constitutes arbitrary, capricious, unequal application, malicious or professionally inappropriate evaluations or behavior of a written NUNM policy, procedure, or an established practice). If it is determined that the allegation meets the standards, the dean of students will investigate the allegation or assign the grievance to the appropriate university official for resolution. The dean of students (or designee) will advise the student of the decision in writing within five (5) business days as to whether the issue will be investigated further.

If investigated further, the designated NUNM official will investigate the alleged incident. This process will include interviewing the student and respondent, and other investigative actions as deemed appropriate. The designated official will report the outcome to the student no later than ten (10) business days following the notice of investigation, not including weekends or established holidays, based on assessment of the information provided after receiving the grievance. In the unforeseen event the dean (or designee) needs additional time to review the evidence, the dean (or designee) will notify the student in writing of the deadline extension. After the investigation has concluded and a decision rendered in writing, all materials will be immediately returned to the dean of students to be placed in the appropriate files.

#### **15.4 Appeal Process**

In most instances the decision of the designated official is final; however, under certain circumstances a grievance may be appealed to the provost in writing. Within three (3) business days from the decision date rendered by the dean of students (or designee) the student must notify the provost (or designee) of intention to appeal. The student will then have seven (7) calendar days to complete and submit to the provost (or designee) a written request for review. The provost (or designee) will respond with a final decision within ten (10) business days, not including weekends and published holidays that the university is closed, based on assessment of the information provided by the dean of students and the investigation of procedure, or refer the appeal to the Student Appeals Committee. An appeal to the provost must be based on the following grounds, either individually or in combination:

- Additional information relevant to the grievance is now available for consideration that was not initially available to be considered by the designated official;
- The investigation was not conducted in accordance with this procedure;
- Implementation of the remedy proposed by the designated official would be illegal or constitute a violation of written NUNM policy, procedure or established practice.

The provost (or designee) may elect to uphold the decision of the dean (or designee), reverse the decision, request a different resolution, or refer the case to the Student Appeals Committee in light of new information that was previously not available to, or considered by, the dean of students or designee.

#### **15.5 Accreditation Agency Information**

If a student is not satisfied that NUNM has adhered to its policy or been fair in its handling of the complaint, the student may contact the appropriate accreditation agency listed below.

National University of Natural Medicine is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). Accreditation of an institution of higher education by the NWCCU indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality evaluated through a peer review process. An accredited university or university is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation.

Accreditation by the NWCCU is not partial, but applies to the institution as a whole. As such, it is

not a guarantee of every course or program offered, or the competence of individual graduates. Rather, it provides reasonable assurance about the quality of opportunities available to students who attend the institution.

Inquiries regarding an institution's accredited status by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities should be directed to the administrative staff of the institution. Individuals may also contact:

**Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities**  
**8060 165th Ave. N.E., Ste 100**  
**Redmond, WA 98052**  
**425.558.4224 | nwccu.org**

The degree program in naturopathic medicine is accredited by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education, a professional accrediting agency for naturopathic medicine programs.

**Council on Naturopathic Medical Education**  
**PO Box 178**  
**Great Barrington, MA 01230**  
**413.528.8877 | cnme.org**

The DSOM, MSOM and MAc degree programs are accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM). ACAOM is a professional accrediting agency for the approval of programs preparing acupuncture and Oriental medicine practitioners.

**Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine**  
**8941 Aztec Dr.**  
**Eden Prairie, MN 55347**  
**952.212.2434 | acaom.org**

Consumer or civil complaints can be filed with the Oregon Department of Justice Consumer Complaints.

**Oregon Department of Justice**  
**Consumer Protection Section**  
**1162 Court St. NE**  
**Salem, OR 97301-4096**  
**877.877.9392 | help@oregonconsumer.gov**

If a student feels that their rights under the non-discrimination statement may have been potentially violated, they may contact the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) with or without working with NUNM to correct the issue. A student can find information regarding OCR complaints at: [www2.ed.gov/ocr/complaintintro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/ocr/complaintintro.html)

**U.S. Department of Education – Office for Civil Rights**  
**400 Maryland Ave., SW**  
**Washington, DC 20202**  
**800.421.3481 | ed.gov/ocr**