Grievance Procedure, Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Program

Purpose: To articulate the procedure for hearing grievances arising within the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Program

Applies to: Faculty, staff, and students within the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Program

Policy Statement:
Pursuant to Article XII of the University Senate Code and VII of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, the REES program establishes the following procedure to hear grievances arising within the Program, unless exceptional circumstances, as determined by the College, make it more appropriate for those grievances to be heard at the College level. Appeal of a grievance heard at a subordinate unit level is to the Judicial Board, not to the College. This procedure shall not be used to hear disputes assigned to other hearing bodies under USRR Article VI, Section 4.

For disputes involving alleged academic misconduct, see the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ policy on academic misconduct. For alleged violations of student rights, the initial hearing normally will be at the unit level. There is an option to hold an initial hearing at the Judicial Board level if both parties agree, or either party petitions the Judicial Board chair to have the hearing at the Judicial Board level and the petition is granted. The petition must state why a fair hearing cannot be obtained at the unit level; the opposing party (called here “the respondent”) has an opportunity to respond to the petition (USRR 6.4.3.1).

Except as provided in USRR 6.5.4, no person shall be disciplined for using the grievance procedure or assisting another in using the grievance procedure.

The REES program shall provide a copy of this procedure to anyone who requests it.

1. To start the grievance process, the complainant must submit a written grievance to the Director of the REES program. The complaint shall contain a statement of the facts underlying the complaint and specify the provision(s) of the Faculty Code of Conduct, University Senate Code, the University Senate Rules and Regulations, the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, or other applicable rule, policy, regulation, or law allegedly violated. The complaint shall also indicate the witnesses or other evidence relied on by the complaining party, and copies of any documents relevant to the complaint shall be attached to the complaint.

2. At the time the complaint is submitted to the REES program, the complaining party shall provide a copy of the complaint, with accompanying documents, to the respondent(s).

3. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Program shall contact the respondent to verify that the respondent has received a copy of the complaint and to provide the respondent with a copy of these procedures.

4. Pursuant to University Senate Code Article XII.2, a respondent has the privilege of remaining silent and refusing to give evidence in response to a complaint. The respondent also has the right to respond and give evidence in response to the complaint.

5. The respondent shall submit a written response to the Program within 14 calendar days of receiving the complaint. The response shall contain the respondent's statement of the facts underlying the dispute as well as any other defenses to the allegations in the complaint. The response shall also identify the witnesses or other evidence relied on by the respondent and shall include copies of any documents
relevant to the response. The respondent shall provide a complete copy of the response to the 
complaining party.

6. Upon receipt of the response, the Program shall contact the complaining party to verify that a copy of 
the response has been provided.

7. Upon receiving the complaint and response, or if the respondent fails to respond within the 14-day time 
period, the REES program Director shall direct the Executive Committee (EC) to consider the 
complaint and will appoint one of the members the chair of the grievance committee. The committee 
members shall be disinterested parties who have not had previous involvement in the specific situation 
forming the basis of the complaint. The chair will inform the REES program Director of all 
developments in the grievance case.

8. Pursuant to USRR 6.8.4.2, the REES program Director, may contact other hearing bodies within the 
University to determine whether a grievance or complaint involving the underlying occurrence or 
events is currently pending before or has been decided by any other hearing body.

9. Time limits. To use this procedure, the complainant must file the written complaint with the Program 
within six months from the action or event that forms the basis of the complaint. The six-month time 
period shall be calculated using calendar days (including weekends and days during which classes are 
not in session).

10. Upon receiving the complaint, if the REES program Director determines that any of the following 
grounds exist, he or she may recommend that the complaint be dismissed without further proceedings. 
The grounds for such dismissal are: (a) the grievance or another grievance involving substantially the 
same underlying occurrence or events has already been, or is being, adjudicated by proper University 
procedures; (b) the grievance has not been filed in a timely fashion; (c) the REES program Director 
lacks jurisdiction over the subject matter or any of the parties; (d) the grievance fails to allege a 
violation of a University rule; (e) the party filing the grievance lacks standing because he or she has 
not suffered a distinct injury as a result of the challenged conduct and has not been empowered to 
bring the complaint on behalf of the University; or (f) the party filing the grievance has been denied 
the right to file grievances pursuant to USRR 6.5.4.

11. If the REES program Director determines that a grievance on its face properly should be heard by 
another body, he or she will recommend that the grievance be sent to the appropriate hearing body 
without further proceedings in the REES program. The REES program Director will send a copy of 
the referral to the complainant(s) and any responding parties.

12. Prior to scheduling a hearing, the parties shall participate in mediation of the dispute unless either party 
waives mediation. Mediation shall be governed by USRR 6.2.3.

13. If mediation is successful, the mediator will forward to the REES program Director and all parties a 
letter describing the outcome of the mediation and the terms upon which the parties have agreed to 
resolve the dispute. This letter shall be a recommendation to the REES program Director. The REES 
program Director will notify the mediator and the parties that the recommendation has been accepted, 
modified, or rejected.

14. If mediation is not successful, the mediator will notify the REES program Director and the parties that 
mediation has terminated. If mediation is not successful, or if it is waived by either party, the 
grievance committee will schedule a hearing no later than 30 calendar days from the written 
submission of the complaint. The 30-day period may be extended for good cause as determined by the
chair of the committee. The 30-day period shall be suspended during the mediation process. The hearing will be closed unless all parties agree that it shall be public.

15. Each party may represent himself or herself or be represented by an advisor or counsel of his or her choice.

16. Each party has the right to introduce all relevant testimony and documents if the documents have been provided with the complaint or response.

17. Each party shall be entitled to question the other party's witnesses. The committee may question all witnesses.

18. Witnesses other than parties shall leave the hearing room when they are not testifying.

19. The chair of the grievance committee shall have the right to place reasonable time limits on each party's presentation.

20. The chair of the grievance committee shall have the authority and responsibility to keep order, rule on questions of evidence and relevance, and shall possess other reasonable powers necessary for a fair and orderly hearing.

21. The hearing shall not be governed by the rules of evidence, but the chair of the grievance committee may exclude information he or she deems irrelevant, unnecessary, or duplicative. Statements or admissions made as part of the mediation process are not admissible.

22. The committee will make an audiotape of the hearing but not of the deliberations of the committee. The audiotape will be available to the parties, their authorized representatives, the committee and the REES program Director. If a party desires a copy of the audiotape or a transcript of the tape, that party will pay for the cost of such copy or transcript. In the event of an appeal, the audiotape will be provided to the appellate body as part of the record of the case.

23. After the presentation of evidence and arguments, the committee will excuse the parties and deliberate. The committee's recommendation will be recorded in writing. The committee shall base its recommendations solely upon the information presented at the hearing.

24. The committee will send its written recommendation to the REES program Director and the parties as soon as possible and no later than 14 calendar days after the end of the hearing.

25. Within 14 calendar days of receiving the committee recommendation, the REES Program Director will notify the parties of the acceptance, modification, or rejection of the recommendation. The REES program Director will advise the parties of the procedure available to appeal the decision.

26. If the REES program Director is the object of a grievance, the grievance procedures will be carried out by an appropriate adjudicating body in the CLAS office.

Approved by:
The Office of the University General Counsel

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Review Cycle:
Annual (As Needed)

Related Policies:
University Senate Rules and Regulations
University Senate Code
Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations

Related Procedures:
Grievance Procedure for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Grievance Procedure, Office of the Provost

Review, Approval & Change History:
10/01/2015: Corrected “Article” links and added links that were missing.
10/21/2014: Policy formatting cleanup (e.g., bolding, spacing).