

STUDENT GRIEVANCES

UTSA students may need to pursue questions or concerns involving academic or nonacademic aspects of student life. The Student Ombuds assists students who are encountering challenges within the campus community by listening to concerns, providing and clarifying information, identifying and evaluating options, acting as a facilitator or mediator, serving as a referral agent, and making recommendations for change to enhance the mission of the University.

The Student Ombuds helps students navigate the University structure in a welcoming and safe environment and communicates with various representatives and offices to respond to and help resolve concerns in a timely and impartial manner. To contact the Student Ombuds, visit their webpage (<https://www.utsa.edu/students/services/>) for more information.

For student employee related concerns within the University, students may seek assistance from the University Ombuds.

The University Ombuds provides informal, confidential, and neutral support to student employees in a safe and welcoming space. The University Ombuds listens to concerns or challenges student employees may have and helps the visitor evaluate and develop options that can lead to a resolution in a timely manner. The University Ombuds serves as a referral agent and makes recommendations for change to enhance the mission of the University. Confidentiality may be limited, depending on the type of concern brought forward.

To contact the University Ombuds, visit their webpage (<https://www.utsa.edu/ombuds/faculty-and-staff.html>) for more information.

Student Complaint Process

Please follow the following steps below to initiate a complaint or grievance against the university. UTSA aspires to resolve student grievances, complaints, and concerns fairly and amicably.

1. To submit an official grievance to UTSA, please refer to the "General Grievance Procedures" or "Academic and Grade Grievance Procedures" below and file the grievance as outlined. It is our hope that issues can be resolved internally.
2. If the issue is unable to be resolved internally, students may file a complaint with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) as outlined on the THECB Student Complaints webpage (<https://www.highered.texas.gov/student-complaints/>).
 - THECB Student Complaint Form is available for download here (<https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/agency-publication/blank-forms-templates/student-complaints-form/>). The required documentation can be submitted in one of three ways: online, by email, or by regular mail.
 - To submit a student complaint online, click here (<https://www1.thecb.state.tx.us/Apps/CRAFT/Home/Create/>). Under Contact Reason, select Student Complaint Against a Higher Education Institution. Once you click Submit, wait for an online student complaint form to appear.
 - Alternatively, students can send the required forms and supporting documentation in a PDF by email to studentcomplaints@thecb.state.tx.us, or by regular mail to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Office of General Counsel, P.O. Box 12788, Austin, TX 78711-2788.

Original documents should not be submitted, as the THECB cannot return documents received.

General Grievance Procedures

A student grievance may involve a UTSA employee (faculty, staff or student employee) or other students. A student with a grievance involving a University employee should first seek to resolve the issue with the employee. If the matter cannot be resolved with the employee, the grievance can be forwarded to the employee's supervisor.

A student who believes another student has violated the Student Code of Conduct (<https://catalog.utsa.edu/policies/administrativepoliciesandprocedures/studentcodeofconduct/>) may file a complaint with Student Conduct and Community Standards (https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofTexasSanAntonio&layout_id=2).

In conflict situations that do not require a criminal or Student Code of Conduct response, or have not been resolved through regular grievance channels, it is recommended that students pursue resolution of their conflict with the Student Ombuds (<https://www.utsa.edu/students/services/>) or University Ombuds (<https://www.utsa.edu/ombuds/faculty-and-staff.html>) for student employee related matters.

Students who believe they have been discriminated, harassed, or retaliated against based upon a protected class and students who are victims of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct, including sexual violence, dating violence, or stalking can file a complaint with the Equal Opportunity Services/Title IX Office (<https://www.utsa.edu/eos/>).

Academic and Grade Grievance Procedures

In resolving any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations or other academically-related concern or incident regarding a faculty member, the student must first make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the faculty member with whom the grievance originated. It is University policy that individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. The faculty member's judgment regarding grades and evaluations is final unless compelling evidence shows discrimination, differential treatment, factual mistake, or violation of a relevant University policy. In resolving a student grievance regarding other academically-related issues involving a faculty member, the student must follow the same process as used when grieving a grade or evaluation. If the matter is not resolved, the student may file a formal grievance, in writing, with the Department Chair (Academic and Grade Grievance Form (<https://onestop.utsa.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/StudentAcademicGradeGrievance.pdf>)). The student must file the grievance with the Department Chair within 90 calendar days from the end of the semester in which the grade was assigned or the other concern or incident occurred.

The Department Chair will communicate his or her decision to the student and forward a copy to the Dean of the College. The student may appeal the decision to the Dean of the College and then, if an undergraduate student, to the Senior Vice Provost of Academic Affairs and Dean of University College, and if a graduate student, to the Dean of the Graduate School. These appeals to the next higher level must be submitted on the Student Academic and Grade Grievance Form and submitted within thirty (30) calendar days of the decision of the previous administrative level. The decisions of the Senior Vice Provost of Academic Affairs and Dean of University College and the Dean of the Graduate School are final. The administrator handling the appeal at each level will notify individuals

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involved, including those who have already ruled on the appeal, once a decision has been rendered.

For an allegation of discrimination or if a grade appeal contains an allegation of discrimination, the faculty member or Department Chair must notify the student to contact the Equal Opportunity Services (EOS) office and the administrator must also contact EOS to report the student's claim. The student may simultaneously file a discrimination complaint with the EOS office. If there is a foundation for the discrimination complaint, EOS will notify the appropriate administrator to place the academic and grade grievance on hold until an investigation has been completed. Once the investigation has been completed, EOS will notify the student and the administrator of the outcome. Based upon the outcome, the academic and grade grievance review process will continue or be closed.

Under no circumstances will grades be changed after one calendar year.