

## **ATTACHMENT B**

### **Definition of Terms**

Academic grievance. An academic grievance means a dispute concerning some aspect of academic involvement arising from an administrative or faculty decision which the graduate student claims is in violation of his or her rights and is the result of a University error. The Graduate School considers any behavior on the part of a faculty member or an administrator, which the student believes to interfere with his/her academic progress, to be subject to a grievance. While an enumeration of the students' rights with regard to their academic involvement is not possible or desirable, we have provided a short list as illustration. However, as in all cases involving individual rights, whether a specific behavior constitutes a violation of these rights can only be decided in context, following a review by a panel of those given the authority to make such a decision.

In general, we consider that the graduate student:

1. has the right to competent instruction;
2. is entitled to have access to the instructor at hours other than class times (office hours);
3. is entitled to know the grading system by which he/she will be judged;
4. has the right to evaluate each course and instructor;
5. has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

In addition, an academic grievance may include alleged violations of the affirmative action plans of the University as related to academic policies and regulations, as well as disputes over grades, course requirements, graduation/degree program requirements, thesis/dissertation/advisory committee composition, and/or adviser decisions.

Formal academic grievance. An academic grievance is considered formal when the student notifies the Graduate Dean, in writing, that he/she is proceeding with such a grievance. The implications of this declaration are: 1) all correspondence pertaining to any aspect of the grievance will be in writing and will be made available to the Graduate Dean; 2) all documents relevant to the case, including minutes from all relevant meetings, will be part of the complete written record and will be forwarded to the Graduate Dean upon receipt by any party to the grievance; 3) the policy contained herein will be strictly followed; and 4) any member of the academic community who does not follow the grievance policy will be subject to disciplinary actions. Filing a formal academic grievance is a serious matter, and the student is strongly encouraged to seek informal resolution of his/her concerns before taking such a step.