2018-2019 Student Handbook Policies on Student Complaints

General Academic Grievances

General academic grievances are for those concerns not addressed by the Academic Dismissal or Academic Dishonesty sections of this Handbook. The steps listed below are to be carried out with an attitude of Christian love and concern for academic, moral, and spiritual growth. Face-to-face meetings are encouraged throughout the process.

Step I: The student meets with the instructor to resolve the matter informally.

Step II: (For Mequon campus students only; Ann Arbor students should proceed to step III).

Traditional undergraduate students submit a written grievance to the Department Chair of the program in which the course was taught within 10 working days after meeting with the instructor. Upon receipt of the student’s grievance, the Department Chair will notify the instructor, who will then have 10 working days to submit a written explanation of the incident to the Department Chair. Within 5 working days of receiving the instructor’s report, the Department Chair will send written response to the student and the instructor. Adult Learners follow this step with their Center Director. Graduate students follow this step with their Program Director. Full-time online students follow this step with the Executive Director of the OCDE.

Step III: If the student is still not satisfied, s/he may file a written complaint with the Dean (at Mequon) or campus Dean (at Ann Arbor) of the School in which the course was taught within 10 working days of receiving the step II report (if applicable). The Dean or campus Dean will render a decision and send a written response to the student, the instructor, and the step II University official (if applicable) within 10 working days of receiving the grievance.

General Non-Academic Grievances for Students

General non-academic grievances are designed to provide a student with the opportunity to obtain a fair and accessible resolution to alleged injustices or issues stemming from a non-academic action, policy, or practice of the University that does not fall within the scope of other grievances policies in the Handbook. This policy applies to all students of the University.

Grievances applicable under this policy:

1. Arbitrary and/or capricious actions by a college employee or administrative office;

2. Policy or procedure applied unfairly and/or in a different manner than it was applied to others in like circumstances; and

3. Administrative error in the application of a policy or procedure.

Grievances not applicable under this policy:
1. Academic performance (e.g., contesting a grade);
2. Academic dishonesty;
3. Academic probation or dismissal;
4. Program probation or dismissal;
5. Disability services (e.g., student accommodations through the LRC and ARC);
6. The Code of Student Conduct and the conduct system;
7. Title IX (e.g., sexual harassment);
8. Residence Life;
9. Parking tickets;
10. Financial debt to the University;
11. Financial Aid appeals; and
12. University-wide requirements (e.g., student fees).

The steps listed below are to be carried out with an attitude of Christian love and concern for academic, moral, and spiritual growth. Face-to-face meetings are encouraged throughout the process.

**Step 1 – Informal Resolution:** The student meets with the appropriate person¹ to resolve the matter informally. This meeting should be initiated within ten (10) working days of the alleged injustice, unless there are extenuating circumstances. CUW is committed to the Peacemakers model of conflict resolution (i.e., Biblical reconciliation). Therefore, when a student does not feel comfortable directly confronting the alleged, the student is encouraged to schedule a “coaching session” with our Director of Counseling or his/her designee to help prepare the student for the conversation. If the parties are in agreement that the matter is resolved following the face-to-face meeting, the case will be considered closed. If resolution is not met, the student may elect to file a formal grievance. Please note that a student will need to show documentation that an Informal Resolution was attempted in order to advance to the Formal Resolution phase. At a minimum, the documentation should indicate the date of the face-to-face meeting and a summary of the points discussed.

**Step 2 – Formal Resolution:** The student must submit in writing the basis of the grievance to the appropriate University official.² The student shall include the following elements in his/her written grievance: a clear description of the incident(s); a chronological timeline of all relevant communications and events; the efforts taken to resolve the matter (e.g., Informal Resolution); a list of potential witnesses (e.g., someone who overheard a conversation or observed something);
the outcome being sought; and a request for a meeting with the involved person and the direct supervisor of the alleged and/or the Dean of Students. The student is allowed to use the help of an advisor or support person to write out the elements listed above, though the student should be the author of the document. A meeting will be scheduled within ten (10) working days of notification of the complaint, unless there are extenuating circumstances. The supervisor and/or the Dean of Students will conduct an inquiry, gathering additional information if needed. After meeting with the student, the supervisor and/or the Dean of Students will issue a formal written response within ten (10) days. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome after the Formal Resolution, the student can appeal.

1. Typically, the appropriate person in Step 1 is the person who has allegedly violated the student’s rights. In some instances, the appropriate person could be the direct supervisor of the alleged.
2. Typically, the appropriate person in Step 2 is the direct supervisor of the alleged or the Dean of Students.

**Step 3 – Appeal:** The student should send a written request for an appeal to the person who handled the grievance at the Formal Resolution stage within ten (10) days of the issuance of the written response. The appropriate appellate person will be determined by the administrator(s). The student will be notified of the appellate person after receiving the written request. The appellate person will review the documentation, possibly request a meeting with one or both parties, and issue a decision within twenty (20) days of receiving the written request. Decisions at this level are final.

**Who may file a grievance under this policy?** Any student who is admitted, enrolled, or registered for study at the University for any academic period and/or those who may attend other educational institutions and reside in a University residence hall or attend University classes. The full definition of a student is listed on page 12 of the Code of Student Conduct. Please note that third parties (e.g., parents; faculty) are not allowed to file a grievance on behalf of a student under this policy. Faculty members seeking resolution to a non-academic matter should follow the grievance policy as distributed by their department chair, dean, or HR.

**Utilizing an Advisor.**
The University encourages the student to create a support network through the use of an advisor. The advisor may be a member of the campus community or a family member of the student. The advisor may not make a presentation, speak on behalf of the student, or write the documentation. During any meetings, the student and advisor may speak quietly, request a short break to talk, or communicate in writing. The full role of an advisor is listed on page 42 of the Code of Student Conduct.

**Sanctions/Consequences.**
Please note that any administrative actions or decisions imposed on a student stand until “overturned” in any of the steps listed above. For example, a student who has been dismissed from an athletic team remains dismissed until otherwise determined by the University.

**Retaliation Prohibited.**
Retaliation against a complainant (i.e., student) or witness involved in the investigation is prohibited. Retaliation is any implicit or explicit act (e.g., intimidation, hostility). The University will investigate any reports of retaliation and take appropriate action.

Privacy.
All communications and investigative actions related to a grievance will be treated with as much privacy as possible without compromising the thoroughness and fairness of the process. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.