

## Grievances in the Department of English

In the normal conduct of education at the University of Houston, justifiable grievances may arise concerning the violation of university, college, or department academic policies or procedures. The Department of English is committed to resolving these grievances in a fair, orderly, and expeditious manner. To that end, the Department has established informal and formal procedures, beginning at the department level, for settling academic grievances. An academic grievance refers to an action taken against a student by a member of the faculty (including part-time instructors and teaching assistants), staff, or administration that either violates a university, college, or department academic policy or procedure or prejudicially treats the student on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, handicap, veteran status, or any other non-academic status or characteristic. Because assigning a grade or evaluating a student's work performance involves the faculty's professional judgment and is an integral part of the faculty's teaching responsibilities, disagreement with an instructor concerning a grade or evaluation per se is not a justifiable grievance to be considered under this policy. A student with a justifiable grievance that can be substantiated should initiate academic grievance proceedings as soon as possible after the action in dispute occurs. Any student who believes he or she has an academic grievance in the Department of English must attempt to resolve the grievance informally with the faculty member or other involved parties. If the informal discussions do not resolve the academic grievance, the student may, within 10 days, initiate a formal grievance process by filing a formal written complaint with the department chair according to departmental policies and procedures. In the event that a resolution of a student grievance at the department or program level is not possible or is not satisfactory to the parties, the decision on the grievance may be appealed to the College,

Grievances in the Department of English are referred to the English Department Elections, Rules, and Grievances Committee. Faculty or students should address their grievance to the ERG committee (or to the Dept. Chair who will forward the request) who will convene a meeting of the members to determine if the Department has authority to hear the grievance. If it does, it will contact the grievant and schedule a hearing. If it does not have authority to hear the grievance, it will so notify the faculty member or student. Normally, during the two long academic semesters, the ERG committee will respond to formal grievances within two weeks. It may take longer for the committee to respond to grievances not received during the normal two long academic semesters. In submitting a grievance, the grievant should state the grievance briefly, provide relevant supporting material, and a suggested remedy, if the grievance is upheld.

Elections, Rules, and Grievances Committee. The Elections, Rules and Grievances Committee shall be composed of four elected members, none of whom may be a member of the Personnel Committee or a Department or University administrator. The ERG committee shall be composed of one member from each rank (one full, one associate, one assistant) and one other tenured faculty person. The Committee will:

- a. Choose its own chair at a meeting called within the first two weeks of the fall semester.

- b. Provide to the chair of each elected and standing committee a copy of these By-laws to be distributed and reviewed by each committee at its first Fall meeting.
- c. Rule on procedural disputes brought by any individual or committee.
- d. Organize and carry out elections required by these By-Laws and by those of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.
- e. Review as needed departmental procedures for conformity with these By-laws and other College and University regulations.
- f. In accordance with College and University policies and procedures, receive grievances from full and part time faculty and students, constitute grievance panels, and oversee the timely disposition of the grievances under its departmentally approved procedures.
- g. Advise the Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee on the procedures for the election of the Department chair.