

# Uniform Student Grievance Policy and Grade Appeal Process

**Please note:** Students in the Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences (MDCHS) should refer to the MDCHS section in this catalog, consult the MDCHS student handbook, or contact the Office of the Vice President of MDCHS for grievances involving any of the following concerns.

1. The Ombuds Officers (i.e., first point of contact) for students who wish to explore the possibility of filing a complaint or lodging a grievance at Mary Baldwin University are:
  1. The associate dean or program director of the respective school for matters dealing with academic programs and coursework.
  2. The assistant vice president for student engagement for matters dealing with student life, residence life, extra-curricular programs, and other issues not involving academic programs and coursework.
2. Grievances involving academic programs, faculty, and coursework:
  1. Grade Appeals: The respective school associate dean will explain the university's grade appeal policy (see the grade change policy ([Academic Credit and Grading](#)),) and guide the student in following the established procedure and, if the appeal is not resolved, refer the matter to the provost and vice president for academic affairs of the university.
  2. Complaints about Faculty Members: The department chair will hear the student's concern and determine an appropriate course of action. In most cases, this course of action will consist of one or more of the following: mediation, counseling, referral to the college dean, submission of a written statement to the college dean, or resolution with no further action.
  3. Other Academic Complaints and Grievances: The Provost or the Provost's designee will hear the student's concern and determine an appropriate course of action. In most cases, this course of action will consist of one or more of the following: mediation, counseling, referral to a college dean, submission of a written statement to a college dean, or resolution with no action.
3. Grievances involving admissions, student life, and extracurricular programs:
  1. Student Senate: Every student has the option of referring issues and concerns to the Student Senate through her/his Senator. Students should consult their Hall President to determine if the issue or concern is appropriately referred to that body.
  2. Complaints about a Staff Member: An associate vice president for student life will hear the student's concern and determine an appropriate course of action. In most cases, this course of action will consist of one or more of the following: mediation, counseling, referral to the vice president for student engagement, submission of a written statement to the vice president for student engagement, or resolution with no action.
  3. Other Complaints and Grievances: An associate vice president for student life will hear the student's concern and determine an appropriate course of action. In most cases, this course of action will consist of one or more of the following: mediation, counseling, referral to the vice president for student engagement, submission of a written statement to the vice president for student engagement, or resolution with no action.

4. For grievances about aspects of university policy or procedure not falling into either of the above categories, the student complaint is forwarded from the staff recipient of the complaint to the Executive Staff member responsible for the area of concern. That person attempts to resolve the complaint to the student's satisfaction. For example, a complaint about food that initially was submitted to the food service director would go to the vice president for business and finance. The responsible executive staff member will report steps taken to the complainant within 90 days of receiving the complaint.
5. If grievances cannot be resolved in the above manner:
  1. The complainant may present a written appeal to the president of the institution. Such an appeal will not be received unless the complainant documents that he or she has gone through the steps above.
  2. Upon receiving the appeal, the president will, at their sole discretion, determine whether or not further intervention is necessary and take whatever steps they feel are appropriate. The president will report steps taken to the complainant within 90 days of receiving the complaint.
  3. If the complainant has proceeded through all the steps leading through 5(b) above, he/she has exhausted all possibilities of internal intervention to resolve the issue.
6. If the complainant feels that his/her complaint involves a violation of accreditation standards:
  1. The complainant may file a written complaint to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. That complaint must follow the protocol established by the Commission on Colleges in its policy, "Complaint Procedures for the Commission or its Accredited Institutions."
  2. The protocol for filing complaints and the required forms may be obtained from the Commission's web site, [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org), or from the institution's accreditation liaison, currently Ms. Carol Creager, university librarian.
7. Filing a Complaint with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and complaints in all Other States:
  1. Mary Baldwin University accepts State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), the Commonwealth's coordinating body for higher education, oversight in resolving complaints from students taking distance education under the aegis of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA). If a student has exhausted the avenues provided by MBU and the complaint has not been resolved internally, the student can submit a Student Complaint Form to SCHEV (details on the formal SCHEV student complaints procedure and a link to the form can be found on the following website: [schev.edu/index/students-and-parents/resources/student-complaints](http://schev.edu/index/students-and-parents/resources/student-complaints))
  2. If a distance learning student residing out-of-state while enrolled in a Mary Baldwin University course has exhausted the student complaint avenues provided by MBU and the complaint has not been resolved internally, the student can submit a complaint about MBU to the state in which the student resides. The list of contact information for all state agencies with links to complaint process information can be found at [nc-sara.org/state-portal-entity-contacts](http://nc-sara.org/state-portal-entity-contacts) in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education State Authorization regulations.
  3. Filing a Complaint with Accreditation Agency Mary Baldwin University successfully achieved reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and School-Commission on

Colleges (SACSCOC) in December 2017. This acknowledgement reflects MBU's ongoing commitment to operational excellence, as well as academic excellence. It also speaks to our efforts to continually improve as an institution while meeting our institutional mission and strategic initiatives.

If a student has exhausted the avenues provided by Mary Baldwin University and the complaint has not been resolved internally, and if a student has exhausted the avenues provided by their state and the complaint has not been resolved, the student can contact the SACSCOC office via the following: [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)