



NIU-24-ACAD-006

29 July 2024

**Subject: Student Academic Grievance and Complaint Policy**

1. **Purpose.** The memorandum establishes policy for student academic grievance resolution at the National Intelligence University (NIU).
2. **Authority.** ODNI Instruction 10.37, National Intelligence University, 26 July 2023
3. **References.**
  - a. ODNI 120.01, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy, 6 February 2017
  - b. National Intelligence University Catalog
  - c. NIU-24-ACAD-011, Academic Freedom and Non-Attribution Policy 29 July 2024
  - d. National Intelligence University Student Handbook
4. **Appendices.**
  - a. Appendix A – Process for Student Grievance
  - b. Appendix B – Student Grievance Form (completed via a fillable PDF form)
  - c. Appendix C – Grade Appeal Form (completed via a fillable PDF form)
5. **Applicability.** This policy applies to current and former NIU students who meet the requirements outlined in this policy for submitting an academic grievance related to a matter that falls within NIU's jurisdiction.
6. **Definitions.**
  - a. **Grievance:** A formal written request, subject to the limitations in section (c) of this paragraph, by a student for remedial action concerning disputes related to matters that directly affect a student and that are subject to NIU oversight. The filing of a grievance raises no presumption of improper action or wrongdoing by any party to the grievance. Examples of matters that may be the subject of a grievance include but are not limited to:
    - (1) Freedom of Expression;
    - (2) Freedom of Association;
    - (3) Academic Evaluation;
    - (4) Disclosure of information regarding student views, beliefs, or political associations;
    - (5) Reprisal by a faculty member against a student for comments made concerning course subject matter; and
    - (6) Inappropriate behavior exhibited by faculty or staff toward students.
  - b. **Parties to the Grievance:** The individuals directly involved in a grievance proceeding include the grievant and relevant NIU faculty and staff members.



- c. Nonacademic Grievance: Nonacademic and other grievances are not subject to this instruction, including, but not limited to, any disputes or claims concerning:
  - (1) Any claim that falls outside of NIU's jurisdiction or any claim covered by higher-level authorities (e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity).
  - (2) Published ODNI Instructions, NIU policy, and internal process documents.
  - (3) Recommendations and selection decisions for honorary awards or discretionary awards under the NIU awards and recognition program.
  - (4) Grievances a grievant may refer to their respective home agency.

## 7. Policy.

- a. Guidelines: NIU students may seek resolution of university-related grievances, as defined in paragraph 5.a. above, through the NIU Grievance Process. The Associate Provost of Student Affairs (APSA) serves as the NIU Student Grievance Officer and manages the grievance process. Grievances will be filed and resolved in accordance with the procedures and time limits outlined in Appendix A.
- b. Requirements: All individuals must cooperate with the grievance process. Individuals involved in the grievance process will be held free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, and reprisal. Individuals who subject others to such action may be subject to discipline.
  - (1) Students shall make every effort to resolve disputes informally before initiating a formal complaint. To the extent possible, grievances shall be resolved at the lowest appropriate level.
  - (2) Grievances shall be submitted by the student in writing and shall specify:
    - (a) The policy or procedure allegedly violated;
    - (b) How the policy or procedure was misapplied;
    - (c) How the decision/action in question unfairly or adversely affected the student;
    - (d) Efforts the student made to resolve the concern informally; and
    - (e) The requested resolution.
  - (3) A student who elects to enter the grievance resolution process may designate a representative.
    - (a) The grievant's representative will not be held responsible for the outcome of the grievance.
    - (b) Representatives must obtain supervisor or senior service advisor concurrence prior to serving as a grievant's representative.
    - (c) The APSA may disqualify a representative because of an actual or apparent conflict of interest with the interests of NIU arising from the designated



representative's service in that role. The grievant may appeal such disqualification to the Provost, whose decision shall be final.

- c. Penalty for Reprisal: An individual who inflicts any form of reprisal on another individual for discussing, planning to file, filing, or pursuing a grievance under this policy, may be subject to administrative action.
- d. Penalty for Failure to Implement Agreed Decisions: An individual who fails to implement an agreed-upon resolution of a grievance under this policy within the length of time as determined by the APSA may be subject to any administrative action. All administrative actions must be coordinated with appropriate stakeholders.
- e. Appeals: All appeals will be considered in accordance with Appendix A.
- f. Expiration of Time Limits: At any point in the process, the parties to the grievance and the APSA may extend the time limit by mutual written agreement. Grievants who fail to seek informal resolution to a university related dispute, fail to file a formal grievance, or fail to appeal to the Provost within the time limits specified in Appendix A forfeit the right to pursue that dispute or grievance under this policy. Any party to a grievance who has lost the right to appeal a grievance may appeal the expiration of the appeal to the APSA.
- g. Grievance Files: The APSA will maintain the central repository of student grievance files in accordance with regulations governing the maintenance and disposition of such records
- h. Contractors: Contractors supporting NIU named in a grievance will be managed as similarly as possible to this policy, but may vary slightly based on contractual, legal or other requirements.
- i. Grievants pursuing a non-academic grievance or complaint who are Contractors should consult with the employer for advice and guidance at the outset of the grievance process.

#### 8. **Responsibilities.**

- a. The Provost will:
  - (1) In accordance with paragraph 6.b. above, make a final determination in cases of dispute on whether a matter constitutes a grievance under this policy.
  - (2) Oversee appeals process and adjudication. In accordance with Appendix A, adjudicate appeals of decision made by the APSA. The Provost's decision will constitute the final determination concerning the resolution of appeals and may not be appealed further within NIU. The Provost will inform the NIU President of all appeal decisions.
  - (3) The provost may adjudicate appeals of the decision made by the APSA.





- b. The APSA as the NIU Student Grievance Officer, will:
  - (1) Manage the NIU grievance system in accordance with Appendix A.
  - (2) Determine if the grievance process is the appropriate venue for addressing student-related issues and advise students if their grievance may be addressed through other means.
  - (3) Provide recommendation to the Provost after the MSSI, MSTI, and BSI Program Directors, the Academic Policy and Standards Committee (APSC), and the Deans have reviewed the student's grievance in accordance with Appendix A.
  - (4) Maintain the central repository of NIU student grievance files.
- c. The Deans will:
  - (1) Review APSC's recommendation, and provide a recommendation to the APSA in accordance with Appendix A.
- d. The MSSI, MSTI, and BSI Program Directors will:
  - (1) Mediate grievances to ensure a timely, fair, and effective resolution of grievances in accordance with Appendix A.
  - (2) If necessary, form the APSC to seek a resolution in the event the student grievance cannot be resolved by mediation.
- e. The APSC will:
  - (1) Review the grievance, gather and record all relevant information, and prepare a written report of findings, conclusions, and recommendations within 10 working days for the Dean.
- f. Grievants will:
  - (1) Make every reasonable effort to resolve disputes informally and consult with the APSA, as needed, for advice and guidance at the outset of the grievance process. Students who use the grievance system must do so in compliance with the procedures and time limits set in Appendix A.
  - (2) Take initial responsibility to present the facts and circumstances that they believe support their grievance and clearly articulate the resolution they seek.
- g. Resolution:
  - (1) If at any stage of the formal academic grievance process the grievant is satisfied with a resolution, he or she will execute a written statement to the effect, thereby closing the matter.
  - (2) The grievant may reopen the matter only by presenting new evidence that materially affects the basis for the resolution of the matter that was previously not discovered by the student, by presenting the evidence of non-compliance with a previous determination, or by presenting evidence of reprisal for pursuing the resolution

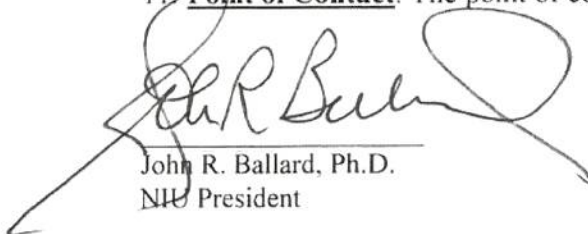


process.

9. **Cancellation of a Grievance.** A grievance may be cancelled, at any time, at the written request of the grievant. The APSA may also cancel a student grievance if the grievant has failed to furnish requested information within 30 calendar days of the grievance's occurrence, fails to exercise the option to file a written formal grievance with the appropriate Program Director no later than 10 working days following the informal grievance resolution period of 30 days, or fails to file a written appeal to the Provost within 10 working days from the date the grievant is advised in writing of the APSC decision. Any decision by the APSA to cancel a student grievance must be provided to the grievant in writing.

10. **Effective Date.** This policy is effective upon signature.

11. **Point of Contact.** The point of contact for this policy is the Provost.



John R. Ballard, Ph.D.  
NIU President

July 29, 2024  
Date

## **APPENDIX A - Process for Student Grievance**

Students with a grievance should consult with the appropriate Dean and/or Associate Provost for Student Affairs for advice and guidance at the outset of the grievance process.

Overview of the Academic Grievance Process and Timelines. The following chart summarizes the academic grievance process and timeline.

<b>Stage of Grievance Process</b>	<b>Action and Timelines</b>
<b>Informal Academic Grievance Process</b>	
Initiation of Informal Grievance by Student to Faculty Member.	The grievant raises an informal grievance, in writing, to the appropriate faculty member for classroom related issues within 30 calendar days of the grievance's occurrence.
Resolution of Informal Grievance.	The faculty member must attempt to resolve the grievance within 30 calendar days after the grievance has been raised by the student.
<b>Formal Academic Grievance Process</b>	
Initiation of the Student's Written Formal Grievance to their respective Program Director.	If no agreement was reached within the informal grievance resolution period of 30 days, the student may file a written formal grievance with the appropriate Program Director no later than 10 working days following the expiration of informal grievance resolution period. The time limits may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties involved.
Establishment of the Academic Policy and Standards Committee (APSC).	If the Program Director is unable to resolve the grievance after mediation, the Program Director will form the APSC within 5 working days to seek a resolution. The APSC will review the grievance, gather and record all relevant information, and prepare a written

	report of findings, conclusions, and recommendations within 10 working days for the Dean.
Review by the Dean.	The Dean will review the APSC report and provide his/her recommendation to the Provost within 5 working days.
Provost Decision.	Decision memo prepared by the Provost and provided to the grievant and appropriate Dean within 5 working days.
Appeal to the Provost.	The grievant may file a written appeal to the Provost within 10 working days from the date the grievant is advised in writing of the decision by the Provost.
Decision by the Provost.	The Provost has up to 10 working days to render a decision of the appeal.

**National Intelligence University**  
**Appendix B - Student Grievance Form**  
*(Use fillable PDF form)*

**Notes for students completing the student grievance form:**

As outlined in the University Student and Faculty Handbooks your initial step should be to attempt to resolve all conflicts informally. If you are unable to obtain a satisfactory resolution, you may appeal to the appropriate Program Director using this form. Attach appropriate continuation sheets or additional materials, as needed.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
Program: \_\_\_\_\_ (MSSI, MSTI or BSI, & Full- time/Evening/Weekend/Cohort)  
Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter: \_\_\_\_\_  
Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Assessment:** (i.e., denial of freedom of expression (academic freedom); denial of freedom of association not protected, e.g., by the UCMJ or Hatch Act)

**Details of Request:** Specific reasons must be provided for making this request. You must provide a clear and complete justification for your request. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

**Student's Desired Resolution:**

**Please attach a copy of relevant documentation.**

I confirm that before making this request, I have discussed the situation with the relevant instructor and attempted to resolve my concerns informally and at the lowest possible level.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor:** I have considered the students request and I do not believe that request is merited. I have reviewed this form and the attachments and forwarded them immediately to the appropriate Program Director.



Instructor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Director's Mediation**

\_\_\_\_\_ Program Director mediation was successful and the issue has been resolved in a manner agreeable to the student and the faculty member. Written explanation of the explanation is attached.

Program Director's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ Program Director's mediation was not successful at finding an agreeable solution. The matter was referred to a subcommittee of the Academic Policy and Standards Committee. Enter committee members' names below:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Academic Policy and Standards Committee's Recommendation**

Initial appropriate areas below and attach a brief written explanation for the decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to have merit:

\_\_\_\_\_ We recommend \_\_\_\_\_ to the instructor.

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor agrees with the arbitration. \_\_\_\_\_ (Instructor initials) **OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor disagrees; an appeal will be forwarded to the Dean.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to be without merit.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will not appeal to the Dean. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student Initials)

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will appeal to the Dean. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student initials)

Program Director's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dean's Recommendation**

Initial appropriate areas below and attach a brief written explanation for the decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to have merit:

\_\_\_\_\_ I recommend \_\_\_\_\_ to the instructor.

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor agrees with the Dean's arbitration. \_\_\_\_\_ (Instructor initials) **OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor disagrees; an appeal will be forwarded to the Provost through the APSA.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to be without merit.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will not appeal to the Provost through the APSA. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student Initials)

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will appeal to the Provost through the APSA. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student initials)

Dean's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Associate Provost of Student Affairs Recommendation**

Initial appropriate areas below and attach a brief written explanation for the decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to have merit:

\_\_\_\_\_ I recommend \_\_\_\_\_ to the instructor.

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor agrees with the arbitration. \_\_\_\_\_ (Instructor initials) **OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor disagrees; the appeal will be forwarded to the Provost.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to be without merit.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will not appeal to the Provost. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student Initials)

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will appeal to the Provost. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student initials)

ASPA's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ASPA's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Provost Decision**

Provost's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Provost's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Forward the completed form and all attachments to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Registrar when completed.

**National Intelligence University**

**Appendix C - Grade Appeal Form**  
*(Use fillable PDF form)*

**Notes for students completing the grade appeal form:**

As outlined in the University Student and Faculty Handbooks regarding grade appeals, your initial step must be to discuss your grade with your instructor. If you are unable to obtain a satisfactory resolution, you may appeal to the appropriate Program Director using this form. Attach appropriate continuation sheets or additional materials, as needed.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ (MSSI, MSTI or BSI, & Full- time/Evening/Weekend/Cohort)

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Assessment:** (e.g., final course grade; an oral presentation on a current issue in my course)

**Details of Request:** Specific reasons must be given for challenging a grade. You must provide a clear and complete justification for your request. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

**Student's Desired Resolution:**

**Please attach a copy of the relevant piece (s) of graded work. If appealing the final course grade this will reasonably involve more than one piece of graded work.**

I confirm that before making this request, I have discussed the grade with the relevant instructor and attempted to resolve my concerns informally and at the lowest possible level.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor:** I have considered the students request and I do not believe that a grade change is merited. I have reviewed this form and the attachments and forwarded them immediately to the appropriate Program Director.



Instructor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Program Director's Mediation**

\_\_\_\_\_ Program Director mediation was successful and the issue has been resolved in a manner agreeable to the student and the faculty member. Written explanation of the explanation is attached.

Program Director's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ Program Director's mediation was not successful at finding an agreeable solution. The matter was referred to a subcommittee of the Academic Policy and Standards Committee. Enter committee members' names below:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### **Academic Policy and Standards Committee's Recommendation**

Initial appropriate areas below and attach a brief written explanation for the decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to have merit:

\_\_\_\_\_ We recommend a new grade of \_\_\_\_\_ to the instructor.

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor agrees with the arbitration. \_\_\_\_\_ (Instructor initials) **OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor disagrees; an appeal will be forwarded to the Dean.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to be without merit.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will not appeal to the Dean. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student Initials)

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will appeal to the Dean. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student initials)

Program Director's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Dean's Recommendation**

Initial appropriate areas below and attach a brief written explanation for the decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to have merit:

\_\_\_\_\_ I recommend a new grade of \_\_\_\_\_ to the instructor.

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor agrees with the Dean's arbitration. \_\_\_\_\_ (Instructor initials) **OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor disagrees; an appeal will be forwarded to the Provost through the APSA.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to be without merit.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will not appeal to the Provost through the APSA. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student Initials)

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will appeal to the Provost through the APSA. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student initials)

Dean's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Associate Provost of Student Affairs Recommendation**

Initial appropriate areas below and attach a brief written explanation for the decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to have merit:

\_\_\_\_\_ I recommend a new grade of \_\_\_\_\_ to the instructor.

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor agrees with the arbitration. \_\_\_\_\_ (Instructor initials) **OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The instructor disagrees; the appeal will be forwarded to the Provost.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to be without merit.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will not appeal to the Provost. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student Initials)

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will appeal to the Provost. \_\_\_\_\_ (Student initials)

ASPA's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ASPA's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Provost Decision**

Initial appropriate areas below and attach a brief written explanation for the decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to have merit and change grade to \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ The student's appeal has been found to be without merit and no further action is required.

Provost's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Provost's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Forward the completed form and all attachments to the Associate Provost of Student Affairs and registration when completed.