

University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria
“Grade Appeals Process”
Informal Complaint Resolution Guidelines for
Student Assessments / Grades / Narrative Comments

INTRODUCTION

The University of Illinois College of Medicine (COM) has adopted specific processes for consideration of complaints and grievances relevant to decisions made by the COM or its agents. The following guidelines describe the informal process by which medical students on the Peoria campus are expected to seek resolution for complaints or “appeals” regarding course grades and evaluations. If all reasonable efforts to resolve a complaint fail, the student may then formalize the complaint as a grievance, as defined under the Student Academic Grievance Procedures.

- Inquiries about grades, grade calculation processes, and test results are not considered complaints and do not need to follow this process.
- The informal process may *not* be used for appeals from decisions made by the site or college Committees on Student Promotions. The process for addressing promotions committee decisions is described in the COM Student Academic Promotions Policies document.
- In making an informal complaint, the student is expected to include a reason or rationale for the change or remedy that is sought .
- If a complaint or grade appeal involves a charge of unlawful discrimination, the Administrative Office (AO) of the Grievance process should be notified in the First Step and the AO must inform the Office of Access and Equity following Grievance Policy timelines.

FIRST STEP – Course or Clerkship Director

- Within 14 days of notification of the course grade/assessment , student initiates informal complaint by contacting the appropriate faculty member:
 - M2 grades: Assistant Dean for Preclinical Instruction
 - M3 grades: Clerkship Director
 - M4 grades: Course Director
- Student schedules meeting with the faculty member to discuss the complaint.
- At or before the meeting, the student provides a *brief*, clear, written summary of the complaint and the resolution sought. This summary may be submitted via email.
- Within 14 days of receiving notice of the complaint, the faculty member responds to the student with a resolution/decision. The response may be sent via email.
- The decision/resolution, along with the student’s written complaint, will be placed in the student’s file for documentation.

IF the faculty member's resolution/decision is not acceptable to the student, the student may proceed to the

SECOND STEP – Regional Dean

- Within 14 days of written notice of the resolution/decision by the faculty member, student contacts the office of the Regional Dean at 309-671-8402:
- Student provides a brief, clear, written summary of the complaint, the resolution sought, and the reason for disputing the faculty member's decision.
- Within 14 days of receiving notice of the complaint, the Regional Dean or the Dean's designee responds to the student with a resolution/decision.
- The decision/resolution, along with the student's written complaint, is copied to the faculty member and to the student's file for documentation.

If the attempts at an informal resolution as described above are not acceptable to the student, the student may INITIATE a

FORMAL GRIEVANCE – Administrative Officer of Grievance Process

- A formal Grievance should be filed within 60 days of the posting of the assessment.
- It must be filed in writing and signed and dated by the student.
- It must be filed with the College of Medicine's Administrative Officer (AO) of the Grievance Process, 312-996-3540 (in Chicago).
- The Grievance should include
 - Clear description of the decision being grieved.
 - Reason for challenging that decision.
 - Specific remedy requested.
 - Description of all informal steps taken to resolve the complaint.
- The AO will follow the University Guidelines for Student Academic Grievance procedures in addressing the grievance. Students are advised to review and follow these guidelines and accompanying grievance forms carefully when initiating a formal grievance:
http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/docs/FINAL_VERSION_STUDENT_PROCEDURES.pdf

Notes:

- Reasonable extensions to the timelines or other exceptions to the terms of the informal process may be necessary for good cause. Acknowledgement of such exceptions should be obtained from all parties whenever possible.
- Students are urged to consult the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs in Peoria for advice and assistance in understanding and utilizing this process.