

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
EAST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A Student's Guide to Academic Grievance

A fair, consistent, and timely process for resolving academic concerns

STUDENT GUIDE AND COMPLAINT/RESOLUTION FORM

Introduction

The University of Arkansas East Arkansas Community College (UAEACC) is committed to providing students with a positive educational experience and a learning environment that promotes academic success. While students and faculty generally work together effectively, disagreements related to academic matters may occasionally arise. The Academic Grievance Procedure provides a fair, equitable, and timely process for resolving such disputes while protecting the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved.

Purpose

Recognizing that both students and faculty have rights and responsibilities regarding academic matters, UAEACC has established an Academic Grievance Procedure to:

1. Provide students with due process and an opportunity for resolution.
2. Protect faculty rights related to academic freedom and instructional judgment.
3. Promote communication and problem-solving.
4. Ensure academic grievances are reviewed and resolved in a fair, equitable, and timely manner.

Definition

An Academic Grievance is a complaint seeking action to address an issue that has materially affected or is likely to materially affect a student's grade, academic standing, progression, or status within a course or academic program.

The Academic Grievance Procedure may only be used for complaints meeting this definition. Matters involving student conduct, discrimination, harassment, Title IX, or other issues covered by separate University policies must be addressed through the procedures governing those matters.

Summary of Steps

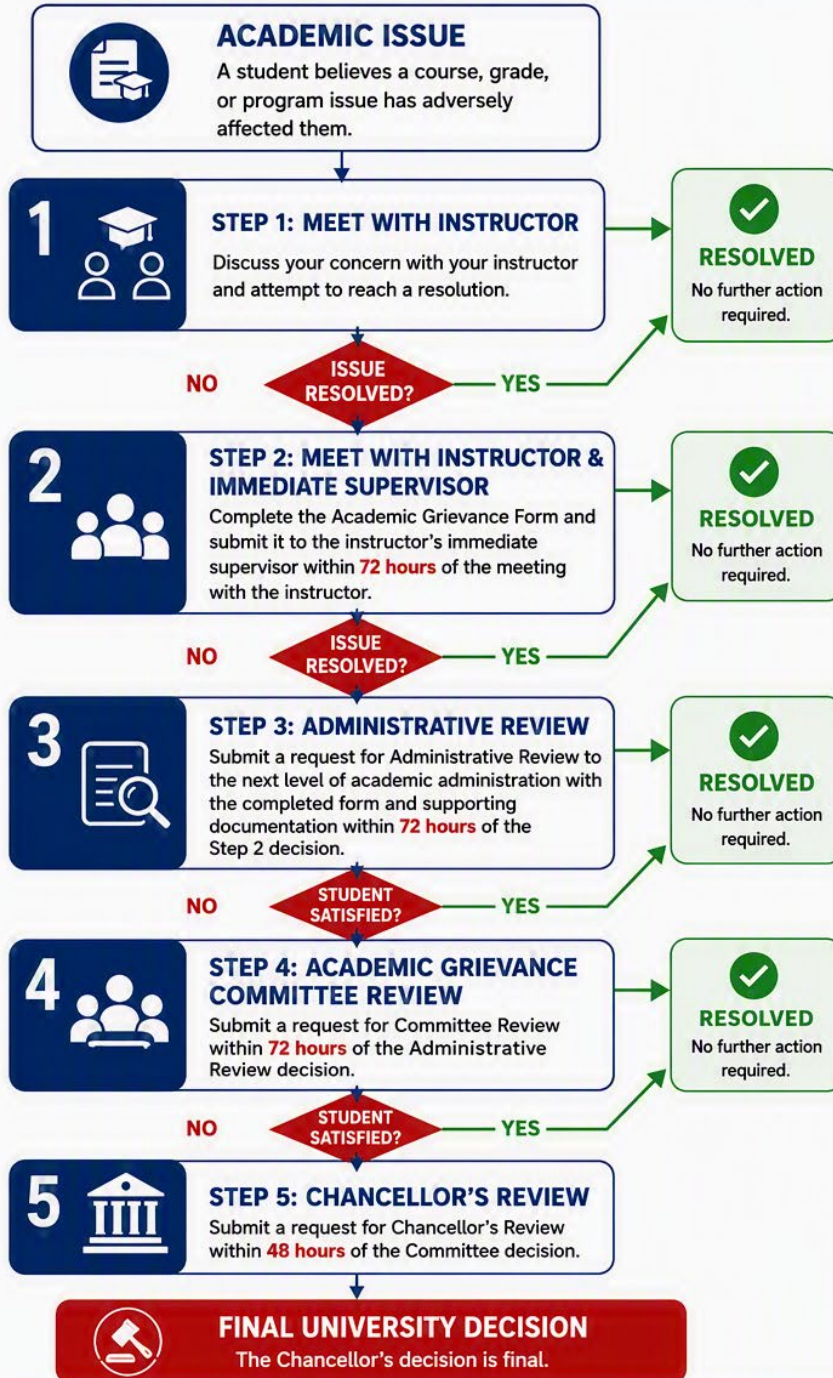
There are five steps in the Academic Grievance Process. The procedure may end at any time if the grievance is resolved or the student decides not to pursue the matter further. Most grievances are resolved at Step 1 or Step

1. Student meets with the Instructor.
2. Student meets with the Instructor and the Instructor's Supervisor.
3. Student may request an Administrative Review from the Area Administrator.
4. Student may request an Academic Grievance Committee Review.
5. Student or Instructor may request a Chancellor's Review.

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCESS FLOW CHART

University of Arkansas East Arkansas Community College (UAEACC)

★ Most grievances are resolved at Step 1 or Step 2.



ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE NOTE

Administrative levels may vary by academic area. References to immediate supervisor and next level of academic administration follow the reporting structure in effect at the time the grievance is filed.



IMPORTANT DEADLINES



STEP 2 REQUEST

Submit Academic Grievance Form to the instructor's immediate supervisor within **72 hours** of meeting with instructor.



STEP 3 REQUEST

Submit request for Administrative Review to the next level of academic administration within **72 hours** of the Step 2 decision.



STEP 4 REQUEST

Submit request for Committee Review within **72 hours** of the Administrative Review decision.



STEP 5 REQUEST

Submit request for Chancellor's Review within **48 hours** of the Committee decision.



PLEASE NOTE

- Deadlines exclude weekends and University holidays.
- The process may end at any step if the matter is resolved.
- Failure to follow deadlines or procedure may result in dismissal of the grievance.



CONFIDENTIALITY

Information shared during the grievance process will be handled in accordance with FERPA and other applicable laws and University policies.



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Administrative Roles

Instructor Supervisor: The immediate supervisor responsible for overseeing the instructor involved in the grievance.

Area Administrator: The Vice Chancellor, Dean, Director, Department Chair, or other designated administrator with supervisory responsibility for the academic or administrative area in which the grievance occurred.

Senior Administrator: The Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Dean, Director, or other administrator designated by the Chancellor.

Chancellor: The chief executive officer of the University of Arkansas East Arkansas Community College.

Grievance Form

A student seeking redress for an Academic Grievance must use the Academic Grievance Complaint and Resolution Form beginning with Step 2 and follow these requirements:

1. Complete the form in full. The completed form serves, without amendment, as the source document for the grievance resolution process.
2. Attach all supporting documentation.
3. Complete a separate form for each occurrence when more than one occurrence is involved.
4. Use this form only for an Academic Grievance. Concerns governed by another University policy must follow the applicable procedure.
5. The form includes five required questions:
6. What was the date of occurrence, and what specific behavior, condition, or violation of policy or procedure occurred?
7. How has the student's course grade or standing in the program been materially adversely affected?
8. What specific action has the student taken to reconcile and improve the situation, including discussing it with the instructor, and what was the outcome?
9. What evidence supports the complaint?
10. What specific remedy does the student request?

Guidelines to Follow

- An Academic Grievance may be filed and pursued only by the grievant. No person may pursue an Academic Grievance on behalf of another person.
- The grievance steps must be followed in order. Failure to follow established procedures may result in suspension or dismissal of the grievance.

- The grievance process must be initiated and completed before the end of the term following the term in which the grievance occurred, excluding summer terms.
- Each step has a time limit. Failure to proceed within the required time frame ends the grievance process. Unless otherwise stated, deadlines exclude weekends and University holidays.
- The form and documentation completed for Step 2 are used throughout the process. Students should complete the form thoroughly and attach all relevant evidence.
- University officials may allow a grievant to have one named support person present at a meeting, provided an appropriate Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) authorization has been completed when applicable. The support person provides emotional support only. All communication will be with the student. The support person may not answer questions, speak for the student, or interrupt proceedings. UAEACC may exclude a support person who does not comply. Completion of a FERPA authorization does not require UAEACC to allow another person to attend. The support person must be identified before any meeting at which attendance is requested.
- Because this is an academic grievance process and not a court proceeding, an advisor or support person may not participate as an attorney acting in a professional capacity.
- If any party intends to record a proceeding in any manner, all parties must be informed.
- Students are expected to review the Academic Grievance Procedure in the UAEACC Catalog, take ownership of the process, and self-advocate. Failure to follow the procedure is the student's responsibility and may end the process.
- Students may not re-grieve the same complaint.

Detailed Steps

Step 1: Meeting with Instructor

The student meets with the instructor to address an issue that has or will materially affect the student's grade or standing in a course or program. The student and instructor should discuss the matter thoroughly and attempt to reach an agreement. The student may accept the instructor's decision or continue to Step 2.

Step 2: Meeting with Instructor and Supervisor

If an agreement cannot be reached, the student contacts the instructor's supervisor. The student must fully complete and submit the Academic Grievance Complaint and Resolution Form to the supervisor within seventy-two (72) hours of meeting with the instructor. The student, instructor, and supervisor will meet to discuss the matter and attempt to reach a resolution. The meeting must be scheduled within seventy-two (72) hours of the supervisor's receipt of the form.

Step 3: Administrative Review

If resolution is not achieved during Step 2, the student may request an Administrative Review by the Area Administrator responsible for the division in which the grievance occurred. To initiate

Step 3, the student must submit the grievance form and all supporting documentation to the Area Administrator within seventy-two (72) hours of the Step 2 meeting.

The Area Administrator will request from the supervisor a written summary explaining why the requested remedy could not be granted, any alternative remedies offered, and any relevant evidence. The Area Administrator may request additional information from the student, instructor, or supervisor, or may decide the matter based on the documentation received.

The Area Administrator will render a decision within seventy-two (72) hours of receiving the grievance documents. The Area Administrator may:

- Grant the student's requested remedy.
- Recommend a different remedy.
- Dismiss the grievance for lack of merit or actionable claim.
- Dismiss the grievance for failure to follow the appropriate procedure.

The decision will be documented on the grievance form and communicated in writing to the student and instructor through official UAEACC email, U.S. Mail, or both, at the Area Administrator's discretion.

Step 4: Academic Grievance Committee Review

If the student does not accept the Administrative Review decision, the student may request review by an Academic Grievance Committee. The request must be submitted within seventy-two (72) hours of receipt of the Administrative Review decision by signing and submitting the grievance form and documentation to the Area Administrator.

Upon receipt of a complete and timely request:

- The Area Administrator shall notify the Chancellor within twenty-four (24) hours.
- Committee members shall be appointed by the Chancellor or designee within forty-eight (48) hours.
- The Committee shall include at least one Senior Administrator, two faculty members, and two staff members.
- Within forty-eight (48) hours of appointment, the Committee will schedule an initial review of all relevant information.

The Committee may call witnesses or request additional documentation. It must first determine whether sufficient grounds exist for a hearing. If sufficient grounds do not exist, the Committee will communicate its decision and rationale in writing to the student and instructor within forty-eight (48) hours. If sufficient grounds exist, the hearing will be scheduled within forty-eight (48) hours of the decision to hear the grievance.

If a hearing is scheduled, the Committee Chair will attempt to contact the student immediately using the telephone number on the grievance form and will make two additional attempts through the date and time of the hearing. If the student fails to attend, the grievance is dismissed.

Academic Grievance Committee Hearing Process and Procedures

- The grievance procedure must be initiated and completed before the end of the term following the term in which the incident occurred, excluding summer terms.
- If the Committee determines that sufficient grounds exist, the hearing shall be scheduled within forty-eight (48) hours of that determination.
- The Committee will issue a written decision, including findings and recommendations, within forty-eight (48) hours of the hearing, excluding weekends and University holidays.
- The Committee will include at least one Senior Administrator, two faculty members, and two staff members. Employees who are parties to the grievance may not serve on the Committee.
- Committee members shall not discuss the grievance outside the formal proceeding.
- Only the student and instructor are ordinarily present during the hearing. If witnesses will be called, the Committee Chair must be notified at least twenty-four (24) hours before the hearing. The student and instructor may present relevant evidence.
- The Committee may limit the number of witnesses or the time allocated for testimony.
- Both the student and instructor must be present for the entire hearing. An advisor may attend if the other party and Committee Chair are notified at least twenty-four (24) hours beforehand. The advisor provides support only and may not speak on behalf of a party, answer questions, or interrupt. An advisor may not participate as an attorney acting in a professional capacity.
- A Committee member who is related to a person involved or who cannot be impartial because of a conflict of interest shall be excused.
- The procedures to be followed during the hearing will be shared with both parties beforehand.
- If the proceeding will be recorded, all parties must be informed, and the Committee Chair shall maintain the official recording.
- Witnesses may be called, and each witness will be dismissed after providing testimony.
- The Committee Chair shall remain objective and vote only to break a tie.
- The Chair and Committee members shall conduct a fair and impartial hearing and ensure that testimony is relevant to the issues.
- No party, witness, or other person may contact a Committee member about the grievance outside the hearing, except through the Committee Chair.
- The names of Committee members are confidential and may not be shared with a party or witness before the hearing.
- After the hearing, the parties and witnesses will be dismissed. Committee members will deliberate in closed session. A decision requires a majority vote, defined as more than fifty percent of members present. Members must be present for the entire hearing to vote. The Chair breaks a tie.
- The Committee Chair will communicate the decision in writing to the student and instructor within forty-eight (48) hours of the hearing through official UAEACC email, U.S. Mail, or both.

Step 5: Chancellor's Review

The student or instructor may request a procedural review by the Chancellor within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the Academic Grievance Committee's decision, excluding weekends and University holidays.

The original grievance documents and the *Committee's* final report will be submitted to the Chancellor. The Chancellor will review the written materials to determine whether the Committee followed applicable University and Committee policies and procedures.

Within forty-eight (48) hours of receiving the materials, excluding weekends and University holidays, the Chancellor will issue a decision. The Chancellor may remand the matter to the Committee for further consideration. The Chancellor's decision is final.

Out-of-State Distance Education Students

Students participating in out-of-state distance education may file a complaint with the Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE) only after completing all steps of the UAEACC Academic Grievance Procedure. Additional information and the ADHE Student Grievance Form are available at:

<https://adhe.edu/institutions/ADHE-Grievance-Form>

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE COMPLAINT AND RESOLUTION FORM

This form is for a student filing an Academic Grievance. Complete the form fully and attach all supporting documentation. The form serves, without amendment, as the source document for the grievance process. Use a separate form for each occurrence. Matters governed by another University policy must follow that policy. The grievance procedure must be initiated and completed before the end of the term following the term in which the incident occurred, excluding summer terms.

Student Name:	Program or Course Subject to Grievance:
Official UAEACC Email:	Student Phone Number:
Student Mailing Address:	Instructor Name:
Student ID Number:	Term and Year:

Grievance Statement

Address all five (5) elements below. Attach additional pages if needed. All deadlines exclude weekends and University holidays unless otherwise stated.

1. What was the date of occurrence, and what specific behavior, condition, or violation of policy or procedure occurred?

2. How has the student's course grade or standing in the program been materially adversely affected?

An Academic Grievance is a complaint seeking action to address an issue that materially affected or is likely to materially affect a student's grade, academic standing, progression, or status in a course or program.

3. What specific action has the student taken to reconcile and improve the situation, including discussing it with the instructor, and what was the outcome?

Step 1 must be completed before the student requests Step 2. The student must meet with the instructor, discuss the concern, and attempt to reach an agreement.

4. What evidence supports the complaint?

5. What specific remedy does the student request?

Date of Meeting with Instructor: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Acknowledgment of Receipt and Step 2 Outcome

Date Grievance Received by Supervisor: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date of Step 2 Meeting: _____

☐ The following remedies were agreed upon to resolve the grievance:

☐ No resolution could be reached.

Student Signature: _____

Instructor Signature: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____

Date: _____

Step 3: Administrative Review

To begin Step 3, the student must submit this form and all supporting documentation to the Area Administrator within seventy-two (72) hours of the Step 2 meeting.

Date Received by Area Administrator: _____

Student Signature: _____

Area Administrator Signature: _____

Date: _____

Outcome of Step 3

☐ The Area Administrator grants the student's requested remedy.

☐ The Area Administrator recommends the following alternative remedy:

☐ The grievance is dismissed for lack of merit or actionable claim. Rationale:

☐ The grievance is dismissed for failure to follow the appropriate procedure. Rationale:

☐ Decision communicated by official UAEACC email.

☐ Decision communicated by U.S. Mail.

Date Decision Communicated: _____

Area Administrator Signature: _____

Step 4: Academic Grievance Committee Review

If the student does not accept the Step 3 decision, the student may request review by the Academic Grievance Committee within seventy-two (72) hours of receiving the Administrative Review decision.

☐ I request review by the Academic Grievance Committee.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date Request Received by Area Administrator: _____

Area Administrator Signature: _____

Initial Committee Review Outcome

Date of Initial Committee Review: _____

- ☐ The Committee finds insufficient grounds for a hearing, and the grievance is dismissed. Attach the written rationale.
- ☐ The Committee finds sufficient grounds for a hearing.

Scheduled Hearing Date and Time: _____

Committee Chair Signature: _____

Date: _____

Committee Hearing Outcome

Date of Hearing: _____

- ☐ The Committee grants the requested remedy.
- ☐ The Committee recommends the following alternative remedy:

- ☐ The Committee dismisses the grievance. Attach findings and rationale.

Date Decision Communicated: _____

Committee Chair Signature: _____

Step 5: Chancellor's Procedural Review

The student or instructor may request a procedural review by the Chancellor within forty-eight (48) hours of receiving the Committee's decision, excluding weekends and University holidays. The review is limited to whether the established policies and procedures were followed.

- ☐ Student requests Chancellor's Procedural Review.
- ☐ Instructor requests Chancellor's Procedural Review.

Requesting Party Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date Request Received: _____

Chancellor's Decision

- ☐ The Committee followed applicable policies and procedures. The Committee decision stands.
- ☐ The matter is remanded to the Committee for further consideration because of the following procedural concern(s):

Chancellor Signature: _____

Date: _____

The Chancellor's decision is final.

Document Routing and Records

- ☐ Student receives a copy of the final decision.
- ☐ Instructor receives a copy of the final decision.
- ☐ Area Administrator retains the official grievance record in accordance with applicable UAEACC recordkeeping requirements.