Grievance Policy

Good communication and prompt involvement of the director of graduate studies and the Chair or Program Director resolves most academic disputes that arise between faculty and graduate students. However, if discussions between the faculty mentor, student, thesis committee and program directors fail to resolve a dispute, the matter will be referred to a department/program internal advisory board composed of 3 senior faculty members and the Chair of the Department or Program Director. The Director of BRET will serve as a counselor to the board and will represent the student’s interests; the director of graduate studies will also be part of the board. A written assessment of the situation and recommendation will be provided to the parties within 30 days. This process should be initiated within 90 days of the dispute.

In the event the grievance is not settled by this process, a formal Grievance Committee will be assembled. The Grievance Committee will consist of a representative from the Dean of the Graduate School (who will serve as Chair), a senior faculty member from the home department/program of the student, and two senior faculty members from other departments/programs. All members of the committee will have had no role in advising or guiding the student, and no conflict of interest with the involved faculty.

The Grievance Committee will assemble the details of the situation, which may include meeting with the student and faculty as deemed appropriate. The committee will make a written recommendation to the department chair or program director and to the student. The faculty member's primary department chair will also be advised.

If any of the parties fail to accept or abide by the recommendations made by the Grievance Committee, the matter will be referred to the proper university body. In the case of the faculty member, this will be reported to the Dean of the Medical School. In the case of the student, this will be reported to the Student Conduct Office.

During any phase of these negotiations, it is anticipated that the parties involved will refrain from any form of harassment or intimidation. This behavior will not be tolerated. In the case of faculty, such behavior will place a faculty member at risk of suspension of mentoring privileges and disciplinary action according to the Faculty Manual. Students run the risk of being reported to the Student Conduct Office.