Woodbury University
Grievance Policy
Approved by cabinet and president (8/25/05)

Rationale: There is currently no standard procedure for handling the type of complaints referred to in the policy proposed below. Students are unclear concerning their rights and responsibilities and staff and faculty do not know how to advise students on these matters. For example, there is no policy regarding student concerns about FERPA violations or about faculty conduct or performance during the semester.

Policy
This grievance policy will be used to resolve grievances against decisions or actions of University faculty, staff, and agents affiliated with the university that creates a hostile environment for teaching and learning.

This procedure shall not be used for frivolous or malicious complaints. If a complaint has been made in bad faith, disciplinary action will be taken against the person bringing the complaint.

Students cannot undo what has been decided by the following administrative systems:

Disciplinary decisions, because there is a separate procedure administered by the Office of Academic Support Services (academic);
Student Code of Conduct violation, because there is a separate procedure administered by the Division of Student Affairs (non-academic);
Formal complaints of harassment (sexual and racial), because there is a separate procedure administered by Human Resources
Exceptions to the Academic Policies and Procedures, because there is a separate procedure administered by the Registrar’s Office.

Informal Process

The student is encouraged to discuss the matter of dispute with the person whom they have a grievance against and seek a mutual resolution of concerns. The student should contact the Office of Human Resources, the Office of Academic Support Services, or the Division of Student Affairs for guidance on appropriate contact persons and/or assistance with mediation.

The University believes that most grievances can be resolved at this level.

Formal Resolution

If the informal resolution process was not able to remediate the situation, then a student has the right to file a formal grievance.
Procedure
A student must submit written documentation stating which policy or procedure has been violated to the Office of Human Resources for staff and the Dean of the Faculty for faculty. It must include the time, date, and any other factual details.

The Assistant Director of Human resources will serve as the Grievance Officer concerning a staff member.

Written Response: The accused has an opportunity to respond to the allegations before the review panel meets.

Investigation: Human Resources will begin an investigation within 24 hours of the written notice being received. The investigation should take five business days.

Panel Review: The Grievance Office will convene a panel of a faculty member, staff member, and student. The Dean of the Faculty or President of the Staff Association and the Dean of the appropriate school (if applicable) will serve as ex-officio members of the review panel.

The panel review will take five business days to convene, once the investigation is completed.

Decision: A decision will be made within two weeks of the panel review.

Appeals Process: The Vice President of Academic Affairs or their designee convenes an ad hoc committee to provide due process regarding the violations of the review panel. The appeal must contain additional information that was not available before. This process is appealing sanctions that are inconsistent with the violation.

The appeals process will be the same, but the Director of Human Resources or their designee convenes the ad hoc committee.