

INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON

Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee Procedures

(Formerly the Associate Instructor Grievance Committee)

(By Action of Bloomington Faculty Council: December 4, 2001, Amended by BFC March 21, 2017)

A. Purpose of the Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee:

A Student Academic Appointee Mediation Panel, which is composed of members of the BFC Student Affairs Committee plus graduate student members appointed by the Graduate and Professional Student Government, serves student academic appointees, faculty, and administration of the Bloomington Campus by investigating student academic appointee grievances and attempting to resolve them through mediation and consultation.

B. The Committee's Role; Relation to Other Grievance Procedures:

Student academic appointees may bring grievances concerning actions of dismissal, academic freedom, reappointment, and the nature and conditions of work. Members of a Mediation Panel shall address each grievance with impartiality, investigate it thoroughly, and base their report on a sound knowledge of University policies and procedures. The Panel should strive to resolve grievances by keeping its procedures flexible and encouraging discussions between the parties to the grievance. If the grievance is not resolved, the Panel shall report its findings in writing to the grievant and all parties named in the grievance. On request from the grievant, the Panel informally may give its opinion of the merit of the grievance and whether it should be taken to the Student Academic Appointee Board of Review. This opinion shall not constitute evidence before the Board. On request, the Panel shall assist the grievant in drafting a statement of the grievance and may assist the grievant in other ways in preparing a case for presentation to the Board. However, members of the Mediation Panel may not represent the grievant before the Board.

Any student academic appointee, grader, or graduate student involved in teaching or teaching-related activities whose appointment includes responsibilities on the Bloomington Campus may bring a case before the Committee, to try to resolve matters without invoking the formal procedures of the Board of Review. In specific cases, a student academic appointee may opt to seek mediation through another appropriate university office such as the Student Advocates Office. Student academic appointees pursuing such alternative avenues of mediation may not concurrently bring a case before a Mediation Panel.

C. Organization of the Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee:

Members of the BFC Student Affairs Committee shall serve, as needed, as members of SAA Mediation Panels. In constituting the Student Affairs Committee, the Bloomington Faculty Council's Nomination Committee should therefore give consideration to representation across academic ranks and among divisions of the University. A Mediation Panel shall be composed of five members, including three members designated by the chair of the Student Affairs Committee from among the members of that Committee, and two graduate student members nominated by the Graduate and

Professional Student Government. In appointing members of an SAA Mediation Panel, preference should be given, whenever possible, to faculty members who have had experience supervising SAAs. Although the membership of the Student Affairs Committee varies from one academic year to the next, it is expected that the same Panel shall complete the investigation and mediation of any case they have begun to consider. No member serving on the Student Academic Appointee Board of Review can serve concurrently on a Student Academic Appointee Mediation Panel.

D. Procedures of the Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee:

The meetings of a Mediation Panel shall be informal with no stenographic record kept.

Complaints addressed to a Panel should be in writing and shall specify the nature of the grievance and the remedy requested. The Panel shall provide to the grievant a written summary of the information which it deems relevant to the case and a complete list of items made available to it in the process of its investigation. The University's administrative officers and the grievant shall cooperate with the Panel in its requests for information; in the event that information the Panel thinks relevant is not provided, this fact shall be made part of the written report. All confidential material relevant to the case under consideration shall be made available to the Panel. Confidential material shall be treated in consonance with the policies and principles set forth in Bloomington campus policies concerning access to employee records.

All investigations and mediation undertaken by a Panel shall be completed and its final report and advice submitted within 45 days of the time the initial letter of complaint is received from the SAA.

E. Restrictions:

In cases of non-reappointment, dismissal, or any other action of which specific written notice is given, the student academic appointee shall bring his or her grievance with reasonable promptness, but not later than 30 days after receipt of the notice. A Mediation Panel may, at its option, waive this time limit.

F. Disqualification:

If a member of the Student Affairs Committee is involved in a case before another Mediation Panel, or is a member of a department (or a school which is not departmentalized) from which a case arises, he or she shall be disqualified to hear or to investigate the case. A member of a Panel shall disqualify himself or herself from hearing or investigating a case whenever the member believes it difficult to render an impartial judgment.

G. Publicity:

Members of a Mediation Panel and administrative officers shall not make public statements about grievances before the Committee. Nor shall the report of a Panel be made public by the grievant or by any member of the Panel.

H. Report to the Bloomington Faculty Council:

The Student Affairs Committee shall report annually to the Bloomington Faculty Council and to the Graduate and Professional Student Government the number of SAA mediation cases brought before it in each of the following categories: dismissal, academic freedom, reappointment, and the nature or conditions of work. The Committee shall also report in each category the number of cases successfully mediated and--if known--the number dropped by student academic appointee and the number taken to the SAA Board of Review.