

INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON

Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee Procedures

(Formerly the Associate Instructor Grievance Committee)
(By Action of Bloomington Faculty Council: December 4, 2001)

A. Purpose of the Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee:

The Bloomington Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee (hereafter called the Committee) 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 to the Committee grievances concerning actions of dismissal, academic freedom, reappointment, and the nature and conditions of work. Members of the Committee shall address each grievance with impartiality, investigate it thoroughly, and base their report on a sound knowledge of University policies and procedures. The Committee 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 Committee shall report its findings in writing to the grievant and all parties named in the grievance. On request from the grievant, the committee 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 (hereafter called "the Board"). This opinion shall not constitute evidence before the Board. On request, the Committee 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, the Committee 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, student academic appointee may opt to seek mediation through another organization, such as the Affirmative Action Office, the Office for Women's Affairs, the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Anti-Harassment Team, the Racial Incidents Team, the Gender Incidents Team, or the Student Advocates Office. Student academic appointees pursuing such alternative avenues of mediation may not concurrently bring a case before the Committee.

C. Organization of the Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee:

The members of the Bloomington Student Academic Appointee Affairs Committee shall serve concurrently as Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee members. In constituting the Student Academic Appointee Affairs Committee, the Bloomington Faculty Council's Nomination Committee should therefore give consideration to representation across academic ranks and among divisions of the University. The

Committee shall be composed of no fewer than five members, including no fewer than two graduate student members. Although the membership of the Committee varies from one academic year to the next, it is expected that the same roster of Committee members 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 the Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee.

D. Procedures of the Student Academic Appointee Mediation Committee:

The meetings of the Committee shall be informal with no stenographic record kept. The Committee shall accept and act upon all cases presented to it. In cases dealing with dismissal or academic freedom, the Committee will meet as a full body; in cases dealing with the nature or conditions of work and reappointment, the Committee may meet in subcommittees or panels of no fewer than two members (at least one of whom must be a graduate student).

Complaints addressed to the Committee should be in writing and shall specify the nature of the grievance and the remedy requested. The Committee 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 Committee in its requests for information; in the event that information the Committee 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 Committee. Confidential material shall be treated in consonance with the policies and principles set forth in the Bloomington Faculty Council document, "Access to Employee Records," which is attached hereto. (See DOCUMENT A-XVI.)

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

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 to the Committee with reasonable promptness, but not later than 30 days after receipt of the notice. The Committee may, at its option, waive this time limit.

F. Disqualification:

If a member of the Committee is involved in a case before the Committee, 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 the Committee 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 the Committee and administrative officers shall not make public statements about grievances before the Committee. Nor shall the report of the Committee be made public by the grievant or by any member of the Committee.

H. Report to the Bloomington Faculty Council:

The Committee shall report annually to the Bloomington Faculty Council and to the Graduate and Professional Student Organization the number of 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 Board.