

# Department-Level Procedures for Graduate Student Performance Assessment, Disciplinary Actions, Contract Terminations, and Grievance Process

## 1. Evaluation Process:

### 1.1 Annual Evaluation:

- Timeline: Conduct annual evaluation conferences between Graduate Assistants and their supervisors by **April 15th**.
- Documentation: Supervisors must provide a written report summarizing the evaluation to the Graduate Assistant, Associate Dean of Research of the College of Engineering, and Dean of the Graduate School (see evaluation forms at the end of the document). Retain the evaluation in the Graduate Assistant's personnel file in the Office of Human Resource Administration.
- Acceptance and Comments: Graduate Assistants can accept the evaluation as written or append their comments.
- Default Satisfactory Rating: If evaluations are not completed by May 1st, performance is deemed satisfactory for the period.

### 1.2 Less than Satisfactory Evaluation:

- Improvement Steps: Supervisors must articulate necessary steps for improvement in cases of less than satisfactory evaluations.
- Direct Observation: Either the Graduate Assistant or the supervisor can request direct observation during the regular evaluation process or at a mutually agreed time.

### 1.3 Alternative Evaluator:

- If the designated supervisor cannot complete the evaluation, the Graduate Assistant may request an evaluation by the Graduate Program Director or their designee.

## 2. Disciplinary Actions and Contract Terminations:

### 2.1 Progressive Discipline:

- Authority: The University and the Board have the authority to reprimand, suspend, dismiss, or take other appropriate actions against a Graduate Assistant for just cause.
- Progressive Steps: Discipline should be progressive, with dismissal resulting from serious and/or repeated misconduct.
- Dismissal Definition: Defined as the discharge of a Graduate Assistant before the end of the appointment period.
- Compensation: Compensation, including tuition and fee remission, will be prorated to the termination date, with a minimum one-month grace period for repayment.

### 2.2 Written Statement and Appeal:

- Documentation: Graduate Assistants must receive a written statement of reasons for any disciplinary action.
- Appeal: If the disciplinary action is considered improper, Graduate Assistants may appeal the decision through the grievance procedure.

### **3. Grievance Process:**

#### **3.1 Purpose and Informal Resolution:**

- Encourage open communication between URIGAU and administration to resolve issues before initiating a formal grievance.
- Informal discussions and resolutions are encouraged at any stage.

#### **3.2 Grievance Steps:**

##### **STEP 1 - Immediate Supervisor:**

- Initiation: Present the grievance to the immediate supervisor within 15 working days of the incident.
- Resolution: The supervisor attempts to settle the grievance within two working days. Notify the Union of the disposition.

##### **STEP 2 - Dean's Level:**

- Escalation: If unresolved at Step 1, submit the grievance to the Dean of the Graduate School and the Dean of the College within three working days.
- Hearing: The Deans grant a hearing within ten working days and provide a written decision within seven working days after the hearing.

##### **STEP 3 - Presidential Level:**

- Final Escalation: If unresolved at Step 2, submit the grievance to the President or their designee within three working days.
- Hearing: The President grants a hearing within ten working days and provides a written decision within seven working days after the hearing.

#### **3.3 Time Limits and Flexibility:**

- Maximum Time Limits: Time limits specified are maximums; expedite the process whenever possible. Extend time limits by mutual agreement.

#### **3.4 Witnesses and Records:**

- Participation: Either party can call witnesses. The Board will produce necessary records.
- Compensation: University employees and grievant receive regular pay for time spent processing grievances, subject to approval by the appropriate dean.

#### **3.5 Group Grievances:**

- Representation: Only one grievant and a union representative are in pay status as spokespeople for group grievances involving like circumstances.
- URIGAU Assistance: URIGAU representatives have the right to assist at any step.

#### **3.6 Immediate Escalation for Dismissals:**

- Direct to Step 3: In cases of dismissal or suspension, the aggrieved may go immediately to Step 3.

#### **3.7 Decision Notification:**

- Distribution: Forward decisions to URIGAU and the aggrieved Graduate Assistant.

### **4. Arbitration Process:**

#### **4.1 Request for Arbitration:**

- If unresolved under the grievance procedure, refer the grievance to the American Arbitration Association.

**4.2 Binding Decision:**

- The arbitrator's decision is final and binding unless it requires legislation, in which case it is binding only if legislation is enacted.

**4.3 Scope:**

- Only grievances related to the contract's application, interpretation, or violation can be submitted to arbitration.

**4.4 Submission Timeline:**

- Submit grievances to arbitration within 15 working days after the grievance procedure decision.

**Implementation:**

- Ensure all department faculty, staff, and Graduate Assistants are informed of these procedures.
- Regularly review and update the processes to ensure compliance and effectiveness.