

PURPOSE: TO IDENTIFY THE ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY A FACULTY OR STAFF MEMBER.

A. POLICY

It is a continuing goal of Brenau that work, study, teaching, research and service proceed unencumbered by any form of disagreement that is capable of resolution. Every individual in the Brenau community will seek to resolve problems at their point of origin. If such resolution is not feasible, mediation will be required and then the formal grievance processes outlined below should be used. Individuals at every level of leadership will be expected to assist with this process when requested to do so by one of the parties.

B. MEDIATION

Persons unable to resolve problems at their point of origin will be required to seek mediation through the Office of Human Resources. However, some circumstances can/will result in employees entering into mediation as a requirement by the immediate supervisor. The university will provide trained staff mediators who can assist disputing parties explore issues and move toward a mutually satisfactory settlement.

Mediation results cannot conflict with established Brenau policy nor can the mediation process contradict the authority of Brenau officials. Much like negotiation, mediation leaves the decision-making power primarily in the hands of the conflicting parties. Written requests for mediation should be made to the Human Resources Office.

All parties to the mediation will sign an agreement maintaining the confidentiality of the proceedings. Should the confidentiality be breached, the person breaching the confidence will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination.

Disputes not satisfactorily resolved by mediation may move to the grievance process outlined below.

C. GRIEVANCE

Where informal attempts at problem resolution do not produce solutions acceptable to the parties, aggrieved individuals may continue to attempt resolution of their concerns within the Brenau community exhausting all intra-institutional remedies before resorting to channels external to Brenau. Pursuit of these remedies will not prejudice subsequent action to resolve these concerns through channels external to Brenau.

1. Where a problem deals with the academic concerns of students and/or faculty, further review may be sought through the Department Chair, the Dean of the Academy or the Provost & VPAA, as appropriate.
2. Academic administration or personnel administration channels should be employed for appeal where problems deal with violations of Brenau policy or with the exercise of administrative discretion in such matters as pay, distribution of work, hiring, training or corrective action.

D. FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

When a grievance cannot be resolved through the normal administrative channels of the

institution, the individual affected will have thirty calendar days from the date the event giving rise to the grievance last occurred to present a formal, written request for review to the Executive Vice President/CFO. Upon receipt of this request, the Executive Vice President/CFO will appoint an impartial Review Board to hear the individual's appeal. The Review Board shall consist of five staff or faculty members. The Review Board Chairman, who shall be designated by the Executive Vice President/CFO, shall, at the earliest convenient time, but within five working days, call a meeting of the Review Board and the principal participants. The purpose of the initial meeting shall be to:

1. Schedule an appeals hearing.
2. Establish procedures for the hearing.
3. Delineate the specific role of the Committee (*i.e.*, advisory).

The appeals hearing should be scheduled at the earliest convenient time for all participants, but not to exceed ten working days following the initial meeting referred to above, except for extenuating circumstances. Notes of the appeals hearing and copies of all documents introduced as evidence at the hearing shall accompany the Review Board's recommendations, which shall be forwarded in writing to the appellant within working days of the close of the appeals hearing. The President or his designee shall have ten working days to reach a final decision. That decision shall be promptly communicated in writing to all principal participants. Should the appellant choose to appeal the findings of the committee, such appeal must be presented to the President or designee within 3 working days of the close of the appeal findings.

The appeals procedure is available to all employees except those in "provisional" status.

No person will be penalized for his or her utilization in good faith of internal or external channels available for dispute resolution.