A. Introduction

These procedures for students are designed to cover complaints and grievances alleging arbitrary or capricious institutional behavior in regard to: a) admission to a teacher education program; b) admission to student teaching or other clinical experience; c) dismissal from the teacher education program, including clinical or student teaching experiences; d) evaluation of the candidate's performance in courses, clinical or student teaching settings, or any other regularly provided or required activity having a direct bearing on the candidate's being recommended for certification or for employment; and e) failure to recommend the candidate for certification, when required, in a timely fashion. These procedures are appropriate when the complaint or grievance concerns alleged violations of policies contained in the *Code on Campus Affairs and Regulations Applying to All Students* or when the grievance procedures established by the college or department involved can not be used.

These complaint and grievance procedures apply to the actions of faculty and/or staff on appointment with the Council on Teacher Education, faculty and/or staff designated and acting as academic advisors or supervisors of teacher education candidates.

A distinction is made here between a complaint and a grievance. A complaint is an informal and oral allegation about the dissatisfaction of a student with some situation(s) or event(s). By contrast, a grievance is a formal and written allegation of such action.

A grievance must be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days from the time that the grievant knows or reasonably should be expected to know that the alleged act of arbitrary or capricious institutional behavior has taken place. This time limit includes time spent in efforts to resolve the matter at the informal complaint level. The burden of complying with the time limitation for filing a grievance shall be on the grievant. This time limitation may be extended by the Executive Director of the Council on Teacher Education if just cause is given by either party.

In fairness to all parties involved, complaints and grievances will be treated confidentially.

B. Precomplaint Advisory Service

On this campus, there are several service offices or committees available for students. In part, the purpose of these services is to assist and advise students who have complaints and who seek information as to the procedures that might be followed,

1. Students enrolled in teacher education curricula who believe that they are being treated in an arbitrary or capricious manner in any area covered by these grievance procedures should contact the Executive Director of the Council (505 East Green Street, Suite 203; 333-2804).

2. In addition, the Office of the Ombudsperson (107 Levis Center) and the Dean of Students Office (130 Fred H. Turner Student Services Building) can be consulted. Each office contains...
knowledgeable staff members who can informally advise and counsel students who have a complaint.

3. The above precomplaint advisory services do not prohibit individuals from seeking assistance through other campus offices, student groups or individuals.

C. Informal Complaint Procedures

1. In these procedures, informal complaints are always initiated by the complaining party and shall be directed to the person whose action is believed to have given rise to the complaint issue. The Executive Director of the Council shall receive the complaint. Students must make every effort to resolve complaints by working informally with the person who is the subject of the complaint and with the Executive Director of the Council on Teacher Education.

2. The parties may mutually agree to invite others to serve as resource persons. The use of resource persons shall not relieve either party of the responsibility for attempting to resolve the matter informally.

3. Informal complaint procedures, if followed in good faith by all parties, should lead to a fair and prompt solution to most problems. If, however, the complaint cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the student may file a formal grievance in writing.

D. Formal Grievance Review Procedures

1. A formal written grievance is always initiated by the aggrieved party (the grievant) and is usually directed to the Executive Director of the Council on Teacher Education. On occasion, the Executive Director and the individual who is the subject of the grievance may be one and the same person. In such instances, the grievance is to be directed to the Executive Director and to the Chair of the Council.

2. The formal grievance must be as specific as possible giving the date, time, and place of the action which precipitated the grievance; stating who was involved in the action; stating what efforts were made to resolve the matter informally; giving the results of these efforts; and stating the redress sought.

If the grievance is because of the actions of someone other than the Executive Director, the person who is the subject of the grievance shall receive a copy of the grievance and shall be asked to respond in writing before the Executive Director acts on the grievance.

3. The Executive Director of the Council on Teacher Education shall consider and answer the formal grievance within thirty (30) calendar days. Copies of the answer to the charge will be sent to the person(s) whose actions have caused the complaint to be filed. If the Executive Director fails to answer within thirty (30) calendar days or the answer does not provide a resolution acceptable to either party, either party may file a written grievance within fifteen (15) calendar days to the Chair of the Council on Teacher Education, forwarding the initial complaint and the Executive Director's response.

4. The timelines specified in these grievance procedures (except for the initial filing of a grievance) may be extended when mutually agreeable to both parties or when necessitated by scheduling problems. An extension will be granted only by the Chair of the Council.

5. The Chair of the Council has authority for the final decision on the substance of a grievance.

6. To assist persons having difficulty in determining the proper routing of formal grievances, students may contact any of the offices previously mentioned.

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7. At this stage or any subsequent stage of the formal grievance procedures, either party to the case has the right to be represented by a person, including an attorney, of his or her choice.

E. Review

1. In the event that the review by the Executive Director does not resolve the matter successfully, either party may appeal to the Chair of the Council on Teacher Education for a formal hearing on the grievance.

2. The Chair of the Council will meet with the parties involved. If the problem is not resolved at this meeting, the Chair of the Council will establish a special ad hoc Hearing Committee to hear the grievance. The Committee will consist of five voting members and a non-voting chair, all of whom are knowledgeable about teacher education. One member of the Committee must be a student. The hearing must be held within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of the appeal.

3. A hearing procedure is initiated when the Chair of the Council refers the matter to the Hearing Committee. The chairperson of the Committee shall preside at the hearing and will prescribe the ground rules for the hearing. The Committee is not bound by formal rules of evidence. The grievant may be accompanied or represented by an attorney or another individual at the hearing. The grievant shall present his/her case first followed by a response by the appropriate University official who is in a position to explain the decision or action being grieved.

4. The Chair of the Committee shall be responsible for preparing a record of the hearing. The record shall include: the names and roles of the people in attendance, a copy of all materials presented as exhibits, a copy of any written statements submitted by the parties in support of their positions, and the findings and recommendations of the Committee. The record must be forwarded to the Chair of the Council within fifteen (15) calendar days of the conclusion of the hearing. A copy of the hearing record shall be provided to either party upon request.

5. The deliberations of the Hearing Committee will be in private and only the members of the Committee will be present and participate in these deliberations.

6. The Chair of the Council will review the findings and recommendations of the Committee and issue a written decision. The decision of the Chair of the Council must be rendered within thirty (30) calendar days. Copies of the decision will be sent to the grievant, to the Executive Director of the Council on Teacher Education, and to the person(s) whose actions caused the grievance to be filed.

G. Record Keeping Requirements and Retaliation Prohibition

1. The Executive Director of the Council on Teacher Education will retain all records of grievances filed by students.

2. Neither the complainant/grievant nor the person(s) who is the subject of the complaint/grievance shall in any way harass, intimidate, or otherwise take reprisals against any person participating in this process.

H. Further Appeal for Students Denied the Institution's Recommendation for Certification

A student who, after exhausting these grievance procedures, has received a final decision that he/she is being denied the institution's recommendation for certification may appeal to the Illinois State Teacher Certification Board pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/21-21.1 (from Ch. 122, par. 21-21.1).

This document has been adapted from the procedures for complaints and grievances for discrimination and sexual harassment of students described in the Student Code.