

Boston College
Student Grievance Procedures
Students with Disabilities

If a student believes that he or she has been discriminated against in connection with any University program or activity because of a disability, he or she has the right to seek a review of such concerns. It is Boston College policy that no qualified student with a disability shall be denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any University program or activity. In response to a request made by a qualified student with a properly documented disability, the University will arrange for the provision of reasonable accommodations determined by the University to be necessary to afford the student the opportunity to participate in University programs. The Disability Services Office within the Office of the Dean of Student Development is available to assist all undergraduate and graduate students in obtaining reasonable accommodations for hearing, visual, mobility, medical, and psychiatric disabilities. In addition, the Connors Learning Center provides academic services to students with learning disabilities and can assist in arranging for reasonable accommodations for such disabilities.

Grievances Covered

These Student Grievance Procedures are applicable to grievances arising from disagreements regarding requested accommodations or other complaints alleging that the University has violated applicable disability anti-discrimination law. However, these Procedures are not intended for the resolution of disputes arising from requests for modifications or waivers of academic requirements or standards. Any student who seeks a review of the denial of such a request, or who has a grievance that is primarily academic in nature, shall be referred to the academic standards committee or other appropriate body of the relevant school. The school will handle the student's complaint in accordance with the school's grievance procedures and in compliance with applicable law. Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to require the University to fundamentally alter its programs by modifying or waiving academic requirements that it deems essential to a course of study, or materially altering applicable codes of conduct or academic integrity.

Informal Complaints

Before initiating a formal complaint process under these Procedures, the student shall contact the Vice President for Student Affairs, who (acting directly or through a designee) shall attempt to resolve the matter through informal consultations with the student, the Director of Counseling Services, the Director of Health Services, and/or other appropriate administrators over a period not to exceed ten days. If the complaint is not resolved to the student's satisfaction in a timely manner, the student may initiate a formal grievance process as described below.

Formal Complaints

A student who has not achieved a satisfactory resolution through an informal process may submit a written complaint for review by an ad hoc grievance committee. The complaint shall be filed with the Executive Director for Institutional Diversity, who serves as the University's ADA/504 Coordinator, not later than ten days following the conclusion of the informal process, and shall include the following information:

- a. A full description of the problem and any relevant facts;
- b. A summary of the steps the student has already taken in attempt to resolve the problem, including the names of persons involved;
- c. A statement of the requested resolution and the student's rationale for the requested accommodations;
- d. Any supporting documentation; and
- e. The name, contact information and signature of the person initiating the complaint.

The ADA/504 Coordinator, or, in the Coordinator's absence, his or her designee, will promptly appoint an ad hoc grievance committee, consisting of the Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities or the Associate Director of the Connors Family Learning Center, a faculty member, an administrator, and other academic or administrative personnel the Coordinator deems appropriate. The Coordinator will notify the student as to the committee members. If the student has a basis to object in good faith to any committee member's participation, the student must respond with a written objection within two days. The ADA/504 Coordinator will either replace this member or instruct the committee to proceed without him or her.

The ad hoc committee will investigate the grievance. The committee may interview or consult with the student and any other individual the committee believes to have relevant information, including faculty, staff, and students. In addition, the Vice President of Student Affairs will, upon a timely request of the student or the committee, provide a written summary of the Vice President's investigation and any findings to the ad hoc grievance committee.

The committee will conclude its investigation and submit its findings to the ADA/504 Coordinator within two weeks of initiating the investigation. The written findings will include findings of fact and a proposed resolution, if any.

The ADA/504 Coordinator will take whatever actions he or she believes is warranted based on the findings of the committee, which may include corrective steps and measures to provide reasonable accommodations or a determination that the student is not entitled to the accommodations requested. The Coordinator will promptly communicate the resolution to the student and the relevant department or other individuals in writing. The decision of the ADA/504 Coordinator will be final and any actions taken in response will complete the grievance process.

Confidentiality

The student's confidentiality shall be maintained by each person involved in the informal or formal investigation or resolution of a student grievance under this policy. Any disclosures regarding the student or the investigation, including any disclosures of clinical information provided by the student, shall be limited to the minimum necessary to accomplish the investigation or address the student's grievance. Upon the resolution of the student's complaint, all notes, correspondence and other documents relating to the student's grievance shall be transferred to the office that originally handled the student's request for accommodations (in most cases either the office of the Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities or the Associate Director of the Connors Family Learning Center) for handling in a confidential and secure manner.