

Vinayaka Missions Sikkim University

(Established by the Government of Sikkim & Recognized as per Section 2f of UGC Act 1956)

POLICY FOR GRIEVANCE REDRESS OF STUDENTS / RESEARCH SCHOLARS/PARENTS/STAFF MEMBERS

A. PREAMBLE

Vinayaka Missions Sikkim University is committed to providing a safe, fair and harmonious learning and work environment. Grievance Redressal Cell was set up at Vinayaka Missions Sikkim University in accordance with the University Grants Commission regulations for handling day-to-day grievances related to students, parents and staff members.

Grievance Redressal Cell facilitates the resolution of grievances in a fair and impartial manner involving the respective Dept./ Office, maintaining necessary confidentiality, as the case may be. Any stakeholder with a genuine grievance may approach Grievance Redressal Cell to submit his/her grievance in writing or send through e-mail on.

B. OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To ensure a fair, impartial and consistent mechanism for redressal of varied issues faced by the stakeholders;
- ❖ To uphold the dignity of the institution by promoting cordial Student-Student relationship, Student- teacher relationship, teacher-teacher relationship;
- ❖ To develop a responsive and accountable attitude among the stakeholders, thereby maintaining a harmonious atmosphere in the campus;
- ❖ To ensure that grievances are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality;
- ❖ To ensure that the views of each grievant and respondent are respected and that any party to a grievance is neither discriminated against nor victimized;
- ❖ To advise stakeholders to respect the right and dignity of one another, and not to behave in a vindictive manner towards any of them for any reason.

C. GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL COMMITTEE

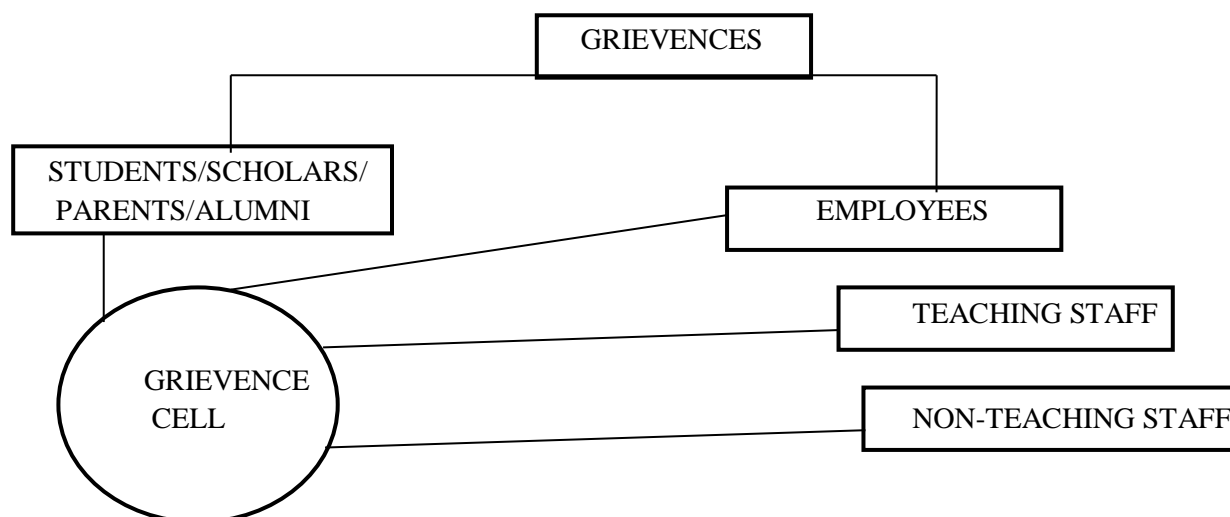
A high-power committee handles the function of remedying of grievances. It is guided by the principles of natural justice while redressing the grievances. The committee will consider only formal grievances in written or in person, and put its best efforts in order to arrive at a right decision/amicable solution expeditiously. The Grievance Redressal Committee consists of the following members:

Chairperson	A Senior Professor of the University
Member/Proctor	Dean Students Welfare or its equivalent
3 Member	3 faculties of the University at least one woman faculty, to be nominated by Vice-Chancellor
2 Member (Sol invitee)	Student's representatives (UG/PG/Research Scholar) women representative(s) as the case may be.
Ombudsperson	

Note:

- i. The term of the chairman and members shall be for a period of two years
- ii. The term of the special invitee shall be one year.
- iii. The quorum for the meeting including the Chairman, excluding the special invitee, shall be three
- iv. The Ombudsperson shall be appointed for a period of three years or until s/he attains the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier, from the date of assuming office, and shall be eligible for reappointment for another one term.

D. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANICISM



E. TYPES OF GRIEVANCES

- ❖ **Academic related issues** Admission, Examinations, Assessments, Evaluation, LibraryFacilities, Issuance of certificates, Add-on courses, Research related issues etc.
- ❖ **Placement and Internship** -On-campus or off-campus interviews, soft skills training, Internships etc.
- ❖ **Extension and Extra-curricular** -Students club registration, Award of non-academic credits, Physical Education etc.
- ❖ **General Administration** -Collection of fee-on-line fee payment gateway, ID cards, Scholarship, HR related issues, Transportation etc.
- ❖ **Amenities and Maintenance Hostel facilities**- Allocation of rooms, Standard of meal, Wi-Fi internet connectivity, Utility-stores, Computer facilities, Drinking water Sanitation & hygiene, Maintenance, Medical facilities etc.
- ❖ **Other related issues** -Safety & Security, Discipline, Misbehaviors, Emergency services etc.

F. FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

- ❖ To provide with proper advocacy to stakeholders to express their grievances freely and frankly without any fear of being victimized;
- ❖ To ensure that there is no reprisal of any kind against any applicant, witness, or any other participant in the grievance redressal process by reason of such participation in the grievance process.
- ❖ To analyze the merits of grievances and conduct formal hearings and investigation as the case maybe
- ❖ To protect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties during the investigation, consistent with and subject to the policy guidelines;
- ❖ To obtain the facts through relevant sources in a fair and objective manner, to work out a resolution of the issues involved with the parties named in the grievance application;
- ❖ To ensure speedy disposal of every grievance application within a maximum period of one month of the receipt of application;

G. PROCEDURE FOR FILING THE FORMAL COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE

- ❖ Any stakeholder may lodge a complaint
- ❖ Complaint should be made to Grievance Redressal Committee.
- ❖ Complaint may be oral, by email or in writing. If the complaint is oral, it will be converted into a written form by the GRC member who received the complaint and authenticated by the complainant under his / her signature as soon as possible.
- ❖ Upon receipt of complaint by any member of GRC, the member should forward it to Officer-in-charge grievance cell

H. PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE WITHOUT REVEALING IDENTITY

If the complainant would not like to reveal his/her name for any grievance, they can drop the grievance(s) in the drop box placed outside the Library or through mail.

I. PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING THE GRIEVANCE

- i. Upon receipt of complaint, the Chairperson of the Committee will send a response to the complainant acknowledging the receipt of grievance immediately.
- ii. At this stage, based on the nature of the complaint and severity of its possible impact, the Chairperson may take one of the two options to proceed on addressing the concerns while keeping the Chairperson, GRC copied in all communication; which can be exercised on matters that could be more routine operation:
 - a. The Chairperson of the Committee may address the issue directly with the help of the concerned department.
 - b. In this case, it is important that the complainant is apprised of the actions taken or the work-in-progress in a timely manner.
 - c. Once the matter has been resolved the Chairperson will send a final update to the complainant on the matter.
- iii. The Chairperson will maintain an updated record of all complaints, actions taken and closure status.
- iv. In case the complaint has been made against a member of the GRC or a member of the Appeal Committee for GRC, the concerned member will be barred from participating in any proceedings till the case has been closed.

J. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

Any student or parents or staff member or alumni or public wants to initiate a grievance may in the first instance bring the issue to the notice of the Head of the respective department/office, who will address the issue and try to resolve it within 7 working days of the receipt of the grievance.

If, there is no response within the stipulated time from the respective department/office or grievant is dissatisfied with response/resolution to his/her grievance, then the grievant is free to represent his/her grievance to the Grievance Redressal Cell.

If, the grievance is against the respective Head of department/office, then the grievant may directly submit his/her grievance in writing via email or submit in person at the Grievance Redressal Cell, to the Officer-In-Charge of Grievance Redressal Cell.

- ❖ **FORMAL REGISTRATION:** Any grievant with a genuine grievance will submit his/her Grievance along with necessary documents, if any, through any of the following modes: Sending via e-mail, Submitting a signed hard copy of the grievance complaint in person to the Officer- In- Charge of Grievance Redressal Cell
- ❖ **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** The Grievance Redressal Cell shall acknowledge the receipt of each grievance complainant immediately. In the case of e-mail, the sender will receive an instant auto reply acknowledging the receipt of his/her e-mail.
- ❖ **FORWARDING:** Upon receipt of grievance the Grievance Redressal Cell shall categorise, analyse the merits of the grievance, and forward the grievance to the respective department/office/individual (dealing with the substantive function linked with the grievance) requesting them to enquire into the grievance and redress within such period as may be specified, not exceeding 7 days from the receipt of grievance complaint.
- ❖ **FOLLOW UP & MONITORING:** Grievance Redressal Cell shall coordinate, monitor and ensure redressal within the stipulated time. Depending up on the seriousness of grievance the Grievance Redressal Cell will follow them up regularly till their final disposal by way of reminders.
- ❖ **SCRUTINY:** Grievance Redressal Committee will make a thorough review of the redressal process. In case the committee feels satisfied with the resolution provided by the respective department/office/individual, then it will intimate the same to the grievant via e-mail. Once the grievant indicates acceptance of the resolution at this level, then the matter is deemed closed.
- ❖ **CALL FOR HEARING:** If the Grievance Redressal Committee is not satisfied with the resolution provided by the respective department/office/individual or upon the grievant written request, the committee shall fix a date for hearing, and intimate the same to the respective department/office/individual as well as the grievant via e-mail. If, at the conclusion of the hearing, the committee feels that additional information, testimony is necessary to make a decision, it may request that the parties submit such additional information. In this event, the hearing will remain open until receipt of the requested documents(s).

- ❖ **INVESTIGATION:** If a resolution is not achieved through hearing, then it will take necessary steps to conduct an investigation (fair and impartial investigation) of the facts giving rise to the grievance as it determines necessary to reach a conclusion on the merits of the grievance application. Grievance Redressal Committee will have the right to interview witnesses, if, it determines necessary and/or helpful to the investigation including those recommended by a party to the grievance.
- ❖ **FINAL DECISION:** After the hearing or investigation the Grievance Redressal Committee shall use its best efforts to work out a resolution of the issues involved with the parties named in the grievance application - pass an order indicating the reasons for such order, as may be deemed fit.
- ❖ **COMMUNICATING THE DECISION:** Upon completion of proceedings, the Grievance Redressal Committee shall communicate the final decision to both parties via email, which shall be binding on both the parties.
- ❖ **CLOSURE OF COMPLAINT:** The complaint shall be considered as disposed off and closed when: a. the grievant has indicated acceptance of the resolution; b. the grievant has not responded within four weeks from the date of receipt of information on resolution. The proceeding concerning each grievance will be recorded in a systematic manner. The information relating to the proceedings shall be treated as confidential and can be viewed only by the members of Grievance Redressal Committee, for the purpose of investigation.
- ❖ **FEEDBACK:** Grievance Redressal Cell will collect formal feedback from relevant stakeholders (students, parents, staff, etc.) from time to time; especially from the parties involved, on account for reviewing and improving the grievance handling and redressal process.

K. EXCLUSIONS:

The following complaints/grievances shall not be construed by the Grievance Redressal Cell for consideration and disposal:

- ❖ Decisions of the Academic Council/Academic Committees constituted by the University.
- ❖ Complaints involving policy matters in which the grievant has not been affected/directly/indirectly
- ❖ Decisions with regard to the award of Fellowships, fee concessions, medals, etc.
- ❖ Decisions with regard to disciplinary matters and misconduct.
- ❖ Decisions with regard to the recruitment and selection
- ❖ Decisions by competent authority on assessment and examination result/ revaluation or remarking of answer sheets.
- ❖ Anonymous and frivolous complaints will not be entertained/ processed.

Registrar

Vinayaka Missions Sikkim University