

Appeals Process

Approved by the GWS Faculty, 11/2/2021

Appeals of academic evaluations and/or evaluations of performance in a graduate assistantship must be based on violations of a student's academic rights (e.g., being evaluated based on standards other than those provided to the student; <https://www.uky.edu/ombud/academic-rights-students>). If a graduate student believes their academic rights have been violated or they have been unfairly evaluated, they should use the following appeals process. The process for all appeals begins within the GWS Department, and most concerns can be resolved using the department process. However, if a student has gone through the entire department appeals process and their concern is not resolved, they may seek assistance from other UK offices (see below).

Please note that the appeals process does not apply to issues related to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. Any graduate student who believes that they have experienced these issues should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity (<https://www.uky.edu/eo/discrimination-harassment>).

Also, if an appeal involves an evaluator outside of the Gender and Women's Studies department (e.g., an instructor in another department), the graduate student should use the appeals process for that department. In that case, the graduate student should consult with their advisor, the GWS DGS, and/or the GWS Chair for advice and/or advocacy.

Department Process:

1. The first step of any appeal is for the student to schedule an informal meeting with person who evaluated their work. This person may be a course instructor, the student's advisor, or the supervisor of the student's TA or RA assignment. The student should meet with the evaluator to discuss the issue. The student may request that their advisor or the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) attend the meeting as well. If possible, the student should bring documentation to support their perspective.
2. If the issue remains unresolved, the student should schedule a meeting with the DGS. After meeting with the student, the DGS may request a joint meeting with the student and evaluator to attempt to resolve the issue.
3. If the issue still has not been resolved, the student should schedule a meeting with the Chair of the Department. After meeting with the student, the Chair may request a joint meeting with the student and evaluator to attempt to resolve the issue.

If there is a conflict of interest within the department process, the student should skip that step and go to the next step in the process.

External Processes:

If a student's concern cannot be resolved through the department process, they may seek assistance from the following UK offices.

Issues Involving Academic Rights:

Students who have unresolved concerns related to potential violations of their academic rights, either in specific courses or in evaluations related to progress toward their degree, should contact Academic Ombud Services (<https://www.uky.edu/ombud/>).

Issues Involving TA/RA Performance:

Expectations and evaluations for GWS graduate students are found in the GWS TA/RA Policy. Students who have unresolved concerns about performance evaluations for their assistantship should contact Human Resources (<https://www.uky.edu/hr/about/contact-hr>).

Other Resources:

Although they are not part of the appeals process, students may seek guidance from the Arts & Sciences Associate Dean for Graduate Education (<https://www.as.uky.edu/uk-graduate-students>) and/or from the Graduate School during an appeal. In addition, students may consult with Academic Ombud Services (<https://www.uky.edu/ombud/>) as they go through the department process.