

# **UMass Global's Student Complaint Procedures**

## **Office of Student Concerns Procedures for Dispute Resolution**

### **Purpose and Philosophy**

The purpose of the Office of Student Concerns ("OSC") is to objectively review and investigate student complaints and identify options and strategies for resolution. The office strives to find a fair resolution by giving equal attention to the rights of all parties involved.

### **Who may file a complaint?**

Students who have a question, concern, or complaint regarding their UMass Global experience should contact their Student Service Center representative(s) for initial guidance and possible resolution. However, there may be circumstances when students are still uncertain as to university policies and procedures, appropriate channels of communication, or alternative options available for resolving disputes. In those instances, students are encouraged to contact the OSC for guidance.

The OSC provides informal and confidential information to students in assisting with resolving conflicts, disputes, or misunderstandings.

\*Submitting an OSC ticket ensures that no adverse action will be taken against the student.

### **Issues reviewable by the OSC:**

- Questions about policies and procedures that may not be available online, in the UMass Global catalog, or through their Student Service Center representative(s) (i.e., academic advisor, One-Stop).
- Issues or conflicts related to the University where resolution is unavailable through other campus resources.
- When dissatisfied with the results of a conflict within the University and the student wants to know what their options are.
- Academic advising or One-Stop advising concerns.

### **Issues not reviewable by the OSC:**

- Grading decisions and Grade Appeals
- Academic integrity violations
- Academic dismissals, suspension, or expulsions
- Satisfactory academic progress (SAP)
- Matters that have already received a determination by UMass Global's executive leadership (i.e., Deans, Vice Chancellors, the Chancellor, etc.)
- Complaints about instructor conduct or teaching performance
- Complaints about a program or course

### **OSC Review Process:**

After determining whether your complaint is an issue reviewable by the OSC, you may file a complaint by filling out a ticket through the [OSC website](#).

Students presenting complaints should submit the complaint within thirty (30) days of the incident prompting the complaint.

\*The OSC will not review any matters outside of 3 years from the date of the incident that prompted the complaint.

### **Step 1: The Initial Process**

Upon receipt, the OSC will review the complaint to determine whether it is a reviewable matter. After that determination, the matter will be assigned to a representative within the office. The student will be contacted within three (3) business days after the review process. If the complaint is determined to be not reviewable, the OSC will attempt to contact and redirect the student to the appropriate department or individual who can assist.

### **Step 2: The Investigation**

If the student's complaint is determined to be reviewable by the OSC and all relevant information has been submitted, an investigation will be initiated. During the investigation phase, the representative from the OSC will attempt to gather information from all relevant parties including the complainant, all parties identified by the complainant, and any other individuals that are likely to have relevant information related to the complaint. The representative will also request and review any documents or relevant evidence related to the complaint.

The OSC will attempt to conclude its investigation within ten (10) business days. However, the timeline for completion of this stage may vary depending on the complexity of the complaint, and the cooperation of the parties involved in the complaint.

### **Step 3: Evaluation and Response**

At the conclusion of the investigation, an OSC representative will evaluate all the relevant information available to determine a fair recommendation for resolution. The OSC representative may consult with other individuals within the OSC, as well as UMass Global's senior leadership, on the investigation findings and recommendations for resolution. After the evaluation process has concluded, and a recommendation has been made, the OSC will prepare a formal written response to the complainant. The response letter will be sent to the student's UMass Global email.

### **Appeal of OSC Decision:**

Students who are not satisfied with the resolution presented by the OSC may appeal within five (5) business days of the date of the response letter. The appeal should be submitted to the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Conduct & Compliance via email at, [Jhoward4@umassglobal.edu](mailto:Jhoward4@umassglobal.edu).

Students may appeal the determination of the OSC on the following grounds:

- To consider new information that was not available at the time of the original OSC investigation.
- To determine whether there was a deviation from the written policies and procedures during the investigation that may have impacted the outcome.
- To challenge the reasonableness of the findings and/or outcome of the OSC investigation, based on the evidence presented during the investigation process.
- To determine whether the representative exhibited a lack of impartiality during the investigation that may have influenced the outcome.

**The Appeal Process:**

Within three (3) business days of the receipt of the appeal, the University will review the appeal:

- To ensure that one of the grounds for appeal is documented within the email.
- To ensure that the documented grounds for appeal are accompanied by relevant information or documents to support the appeal request.

If an appeal does not state appropriate grounds for appeal and/or does not include relevant supporting information or documentation, the complainant will be notified via email that the appeal is not eligible for processing. The complainant will have three (3) business days after receipt of this email to amend and cure the appeal request, or the matter will be considered closed by the University.

**Appeal Evaluation & Determination:**

If the appeal is eligible for review, the University will render a final written decision within ten (10) business days from the date the appeal was accepted for review. The EVC of Enrollment and Student Affairs will use the preponderance of the evidence standard to review all the relevant information available and make a determination. The preponderance of the evidence standard is met if the EVC of Enrollment and Student Affairs determines it is more likely than not that the student's grounds for appeal are supported by the available information. The EVC of Enrollment and Student Affairs determination shall be final.

**State Appeals:**

Students may file a complaint with the state agency that oversees complaints in their home state at any time. Contact information is available [here](#).

**Accrediting Agencies:**

**WASC Senior College and University Commission**

1080 Marina Village Parkway  
Suite 500  
Alameda, CA 94501  
Phone: 510-748-9001  
Fax: 510-748-9797

**Other resources:**

For information about policies and procedures outside of the OSC's purview, please review the UMass Global catalog and the [Student Affairs Portal](#) for comprehensive information.

Discrimination claims: email [civilrightscomplaints@umassglobal.edu](mailto:civilrightscomplaints@umassglobal.edu)