



**PONTIFICAL JOHN PAUL II INSTITUTE**  
**FOR STUDIES ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**  
**AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA**

**Institutional Grievance Policy: Students**

**Informal Grievance Resolution:**

- A. Personal Action:** Person-to-person grievances and disagreements are often most easily and amicably resolved through the individuals who perceive that they have a grievance with another student or an employee of the Institute by dealing with the situation on a personal (individual) basis. As mature and professional individuals, students are encouraged to address irritations, minor complaints, or day-to-day minor issues of inconvenience on a personal basis (one-on-one), reflecting respect for, and sensitivity concerning, the other person(s) and the opinions, perceptions, and situations of the other person(s) involved. If these efforts are not successful, administrative and faculty personnel of the Institute are available to assist, upon request.
- B. Informal Assistance:** If individual efforts are unsuccessful in resolving the matter, informal assistance may be sought from the administration. The student with the grievance should contact the Associate Dean for Programs and Administration (if the grievance is with a staff member or another student) or the Dean (if the grievance is with a faculty member) and discuss the issue. Working with the student, and if necessary, such other institutional personnel as may be appropriate, the Associate Dean or Dean should make every effort to assist in the resolution of the grievance as expeditiously and discretely as possible, respecting both decorum and the dignity and sensitivity of the persons involved. If the grievance is resolved, the Associate Dean or Dean should briefly record the circumstances and the resolution in the event follow-up actions are required. If not already involved and as appropriate, the Dean should be made aware of the issue and its resolution.

**Formal Grievance Resolution:**

- A. Formal Grievances--Initial Inquiry:** In the event that the matter cannot be resolved in an informal fashion, or the student is dissatisfied with the proposed resolution, the matter may be referred to the Dean (if not previously involved) or to his designee for further investigation and consideration. This referral may be initiated by the student or by the Associate Dean or Dean, or another involved person who perceives that the matter may escalate into a larger or more involved matter of greater consequence. Such referrals may be delivered in writing or in person but should always be committed to writing once made, to preserve the record and foster clarity.
- B. Formal Grievances--Process:** The Dean has great latitude in deciding how to address grievances. The resolution may take place with individuals, may involve additional third parties, or may involve more formal procedures. Nothing shall prevent the Dean from seeking or taking advantage of all internal or external resources or counsel in pursuit of

- the grievance resolution. In all cases, the Dean shall ascertain the relevant facts and render a decision within a reasonable time as to how to address a particular matter and notify the parties thereto in an appropriate and timely fashion. The Dean shall develop a record of all grievance complaints, their proceedings, and the rationale for and the substance of the resolution.
- C. **Grievances Involving the Dean:** In the event the grievance involves the Dean, the alleged grievance should be referred to the Provost, who possesses great latitude in the handling of such complaints. The resolution may take place with individuals, may involve additional third parties, or may involve more formal procedures. Nothing shall prevent the Provost from seeking or taking advantage of all internal or external resources or counsel in pursuit of the grievance resolution. In all cases, the Provost shall ascertain the relevant facts and render a decision within a reasonable time as to how to address a particular matter and notify the parties thereto in an appropriate and timely fashion. The Provost shall develop a record of all grievance complaints, their proceedings, and the rationale for and the substance of the resolution.
- D. **Grievances Involving the Provost:** In the event the grievance involves the Provost, the alleged grievance should be delivered directly to the Chair of the Institute's Board of Trustees, as that body is the group that has jurisdiction over the operations of the institution and is responsible for the oversight of all employees, including the Provost. Such communications should be delivered by registered U.S. mail to the Chair of the Board at the address of record for that individual, or to the Chair, in care of the Institute's formal address. The Chair of the Board of Trustees possesses great latitude in the handling of such complaints. The Chair shall maintain a record of such events and treat such incidents as matters of confidence, respecting the privacy rights of all involved parties. As appropriate, the Chair may acknowledge and report such incidents to the full governing board, along with other information as is deemed appropriate, including the nature and resolution of the matter.

All grievances and resolutions shall be treated as matters of confidence and should be discussed with other parties only to the extent necessary to resolve the dispute.