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| <b>Title:</b> Fair Treatment Policy for Students                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Written by:</b> Student Affairs Committee                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Date Initiated:</b> 4/2007; 11/2017                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Date Revised:</b> 4/2009; 4/2011; 4/2014; 4/2016; 11/2017                                                                                                   |
| <b>Approved by:</b><br><br><div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> <div>Chancellor</div> <div>1/12/2016<br/>Date</div> </div> | <b>Governing Board Approval:</b><br><div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> <div></div> <div>1/12/2016<br/>Date</div> </div> |

## **PURPOSE**

To assure fair and equitable treatment of all students through open communication between involved parties; to provide students with direction to voice concerns; to protect rights under the 14th amendment; to protect faculty's right to freedom of instruction; and to ensure equal and fair student evaluation by the involved parties.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Grievance**

A student's claim of unfair and/or non-equitable treatment regarding established policies, procedures, rules and regulations.

### **Academic Grievances**

Trinity College is committed to delivering high quality programs. The Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences is open to hearing grievances concerning faculty or curricular matters.

### **Student Services Grievances**

Grievances that pertain to financial aid, bursar, admission, enrollment, career development, student organizations and activities should be referred to the Associate Dean of Students.

## **POLICY**

The purpose of the Fair Treatment Policy is to address situations in which a student (or group of students) believes that the treatment they have received is unfair. This process is formalized when a student proceeds with a grievance, which is a student's claim of unfair and/or non-equitable treatment regarding established policies, procedures, rules and regulations of Trinity College of Nursing & Health Sciences.

The student has the right to express grievances without prejudice, penalty, or recrimination. Also, those whom the grievance is being made against have the right to know what is being grieved and who is filing the grievance. Anonymous grievances will not be accepted.

The Fair Treatment Policy cannot be used to challenge an outcome of academic judgments. It may be used if the student believes the judgment was reached by an unfair implementation of the process.

All steps of the grievance procedure must be completed in proper sequence with no more than fourteen calendar days elapsing between each step. If a resolution of the grievance is obtained in any given step, that resolution is considered finalized.

It is expected students will observe Standards of Behavior as published in the catalog throughout this process.

The student may seek counsel at any time from appropriate persons, such as hospital chaplain, student services staff, involved parties' advisor, or college administration.

The Fair Treatment Policy shall be used when other means of resolving the conflict are not possible or effective. In most instances, grievances may be satisfactorily addressed and resolved by communication between the involved parties. Dissatisfaction often arises from misunderstandings between the student and the involved parties. Thus, the student(s) shall discuss the situation of unfair treatment with the involved parties prior to invoking use of the grievance procedure. If informal methods are unsuccessful, the student shall refer to this policy to proceed with a grievance through the steps outlined in the procedure.

Prior to using the grievance procedure, the student shall schedule a conference with the involved parties. The conference must be scheduled within one month of the occurrence or no later than fourteen days after semester grades are posted if the grievance relates to information not known by the student until the end of the semester.

All original documents relating to the grievance shall be maintained in a secure location in the college administrative office in a confidential grievance file. These documents will be maintained a minimum of three years.

If any involved parties are part of the fair treatment/grievance process (Student Affairs Chair, Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences, Associate Dean of Students, Chancellor, etc.) an appropriate substitution will be made.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Step I**

If the student is unable to resolve the issue directly with the involved parties, the student may file a signed written request with the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students. The signed written request shall be filed within fourteen calendar days following the conference with the involved parties. The signed written request must contain a statement of the grievance, the date or dates in which a meeting(s) was held with the involved parties, and a statement outlining the student's perception of the outcome of the conference.

The student shall make three copies of the signed original written request. One shall be kept by the student. Two copies shall be submitted to the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students who shall submit one to the involved parties and the original shall be placed in the confidential grievance file.

The Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students shall request the involved parties to write out in narrative form his/her response to the grievance. Three copies shall be made by the involved party. One copy shall be kept by the involved party. Two copies shall be submitted to the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students who shall submit one to the student and the original shall be placed in the confidential grievance file.

The Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students shall arrange to meet individually and/or together with both the student and the involved parties no later than five working days following receipt of the student's written request. The involved parties shall receive a written response to the grievance from the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students within fourteen calendar days of the conference. The original copy of the written response shall be placed in the confidential grievance file.

## **Step II**

If the grievance remains unresolved, either involved party may request, in writing, that the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students notify the Student Affairs Committee Chair. This request must be made no later than five working days after receipt of the administrator's written response in Step II.

No later than fourteen calendar days following receipt of this request, the Student Affairs Committee chair shall then set up a panel to include:

1. a minimum of one member of the Student Affairs Committee
2. one neutral faculty member from another discipline
3. one neutral student from another discipline
4. a Director at the College

The panel shall conduct a meeting for the purpose of formulating a recommendation regarding the student's grievance. The following meeting guidelines shall be used:

1. The Chair of the Student Affairs Committee or appropriate designee shall serve as chairperson of the panel. The chairperson shall serve as a non-voting member of the panel.
2. The Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students shall serve as a non-voting member of the panel.
3. The student may bring a support person who is not allowed to participate in the proceedings if they so desire.
4. The involved party may bring a support person who is not allowed to participate in the proceedings if they so desire.
5. All involved parties shall inform the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students of any support persons who will be attending the meeting at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. The involved parties shall sign a release of information allowing any non-college support persons to be in attendance at the meeting.
6. All involved parties shall provide the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students with electronic evidence they wish to present at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.
7. No electronic devices including cellular phones will be allowed at the meeting.
8. Meetings are closed.

9. Meetings are formal and confidential. Minutes shall be taken by an appointed secretary. Minutes of the meeting shall be submitted to the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences and placed in the confidential grievance file.
10. Proceedings of the meeting may be audio recorded to aid the panel in making a decision. The audio recording will be available for review by both the student and the involved parties if they desire.
11. Each panel member shall have access to written statements prior to the meeting.
12. To the extent that new information is pertinent to the case under consideration, the panel or either party may ask members of the academic community (students, involved parties, and staff) to present information.
13. The members of the panel may question both involved parties. Questions must be relevant to the issues of the grievance. Upon request from the panel, it is expected that the involved parties shall make available such documents as are pertinent to the grievance. The confidential nature of these documents shall be safeguarded.
14. A simple majority shall be required to make a decision.

The panel shall prepare a written recommendation and provide a copy to both involved parties no later than five working days following the panel's decision. The original copy of the written response shall be submitted to the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences/Associate Dean of Students and placed in the confidential grievance file.

### **Step III**

In the event that either involved party does not accept the recommendation of the panel, the involved student or involved parties may request the Chancellor review the student's grievance and the action taken. This written request must be made by the involved party no later than five working days following receipt of the panel's recommendation. The Chancellor will collaborate with the Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College/Associate Dean of Students and members of the involved parties panel (identified in Step II) to reach a decision about the grievance. The involved parties shall receive a written response to the grievance from the Chancellor within seven working days following the receipt of the request. The original copy of the written response shall be submitted to the college administrative office to be placed in the confidential grievance file. The decision made at this step is final.

**TRINITY COLLEGE OF NURSING & HEALTH SCIENCES  
FAIR TREATMENT POLICY**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Department/Program: \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Grievance:**

**Supporting Information:**

**Date or Dates of Conferences with Involved Parties:**

**Student's Perception of the Outcome of the Conference(s):**

**Step I** Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Involved Party Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences of the College or Associate Dean of Students Signature

Decision Statement:

**Step II** Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Involved Party Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Student Affairs Committee Signature  
Decision Statement:

**Step III** Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Involved Party Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chancellor Signature  
Decision Statement: