

School of Social Work

Grievance Procedures for Postdoctoral Fellows

This policy is intended to provide an opportunity for the resolution of disputes involving postdoctoral fellows in a fair and equitable manner. The procedures listed below establish a formal mechanism for postdoctoral fellows to request review and resolution of certain disputes arising out of their academic relationships with mentors, departments, school or college. Such issues may arise regarding fair and equal treatment in the conduct of, for example, access to resources, attribution in publications or other issues concerning the perceived equity and fairness of treatment in their employment. Formal procedures described in this policy are intended to be used only when matters cannot be resolved informally.

All records and information related to grievance proceedings shall be kept confidential to the degree permitted by law. Parties to the grievance, their counsel, and other relevant administrators and faculty (including witnesses, presiding officers, and panel members) shall respect the confidentiality of information and records and the privacy of all parties whose interests are affected by a grievance. The School of Social Work Fellow Grievance Official (FGO) for Postdoctoral Fellows is Jorge Delva, PhD, Associate Dean for Research, and may be reached at jdelva@umich.edu or 734-936-3898.

The following procedures are available to postdoctoral fellows who wish to complain of any action or inaction, within the jurisdiction or control of the School of Social Work, which the fellow alleges to be in violation of law or University policy or to be unfair, arbitrary, or capricious.

- A. The fellow should seek to resolve the matter by informal means through his/her mentor/supervisor. Fellows are encouraged to discuss concerns and/or complaints with their mentors to attempt resolution at an early stage.
- B. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, the fellow shall then seek resolution by informal means through the Associate Dean of Research.
- C. If the matter is still not satisfactorily resolved, the fellow may request resolution by the Dean of the School of Social Work. The fellow shall file a written statement with the Dean stating the alleged wrong, the facts that the fellow believes support the allegations, and the disposition of the matter at prior informal steps.
- D. The Dean shall seek to resolve the matter promptly.
 1. The Dean may seek advice from the Executive committee or establish an ad hoc committee for advice on the matter.
 2. Before the Dean decides a case, he or she should consult with the Office of Academic Human Resources or the Office of the General Counsel to assure correct and consistent interpretation of University policy and/or the law.

When the Dean decides the matter, the Dean or his or her designee will convey to the fellow in writing the decision and the reasons for it.

- E. If the postdoctoral fellow does not believe the matter has been resolved satisfactorily, he or she may request a resolution by the Dean of Rackham Graduate School. The fellow shall file a written statement with the Dean at Rackham stating the alleged wrong, the facts that the fellow believes support the allegations, and the disposition of the matter at prior steps.

When the Dean of Rackham decides the matter, the Dean or his or her designee will convey to the fellow and the Dean of the School of Social Work in writing the decision and the reasons for it.

A postdoctoral fellow may request the Rackham Ombudsman to assist with informally resolving complaints prior to instituting a complaint through formal channels. The Rackham Ombudsman provides confidential and informal assistance in resolving these conflicts and promotes fair and equitable treatment within the University. The Rackham Ombudsman is also available to coach postdoctoral fellow on how to manage conflict and discuss options for mediation. The postdoctoral fellow may discuss issues and concerns with the Ombudsman without committing to further disclosure or any formal resolution. Information concerning any visit will not be disclosed without the visitor's permission, absent compelling reasons (e.g., a court order or a potential threat to safety). You can contact the Rackham Ombudsman by e-mail [contact the Rackham Ombuds by e-mail](#), or by phone, (734) 936-1647. Please remember e-mail is not recommended for confidential discussions.