**Introduction**

It’s inevitable that in any working and learning environment, conflict will arise. To assist in resolving differences, PLU has procedures in place to deal with conflict in appropriate ways. The University also has established a Dispute Resolution Committee (previously known as the University Grievance Committee) whose members provide mediation services and help people in the campus community improve their conflict resolution skills. PLU strongly encourages informal problem resolution whenever possible.

**Informal Resolution**

Students and members of the faculty and staff who have concerns or who have been sexually harassed are encouraged to contact **any** of the four sources noted below to seek resolution to their concerns. Any matter involving potential violations of the University’s policy on discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct must be forwarded to the Dispute Resolution Committee as soon as possible.

**Complainant (person with concern)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Immediate Supervisor or Department Head | Next higher administrative level above Immediate Supervisor or  Department Head | Dispute Resolution Committee |

**Formal Resolution**

If a complainant is not satisfied with the results of efforts to informally resolve his/her concern,

a written complaint may be filed with the Dispute Resolution Committee. In response to a formal written complaint, the following steps will be taken in accordance with the University’s policy statement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Maximum Timeframe** |
| **1. Filing the Written Grievance**  Grievant files written complaint --   1. If not satisfied with informal resolution  * If no informal resolution was sought | 1. 5 working days after informal process ends  * 30 working days after alleged incident |
| 2. Determination of Whether Grievance is Subject to Procedures  Dispute Resolution Committee determines if complaint falls within the purview of grievance procedures. | 5 working days |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **3. Notification to Respondent**  Dispute Resolution Committee gives copy of complaint to respondent with grievance procedures. | 3 working days |
| **4. Written Response May Be Filed**  Respondent may file a written response to the allegations. | 5 working days |
| **5. Investigation of the Grievance**  Dispute Resolution Committee investigates complaint through personal interviews and review of related written documents. | 15 working days |
| 6. Preliminary Report and Recommendations  Dispute Resolution Committee writes a report of investigation and recommendations for resolution and distributes copies to grievant and respondent. | 7 working days |
| **7. Rebuttal Statements**  Grievant and respondent may write rebuttal statements. | 5 working days |
| **8. Final Report and Recommendations**  Dispute Resolution Committee completes final report for distribution to grievant, respondent and appropriate supervisors. | 5 working days |
| **9. Review by Appropriate Supervisors**  Appropriate vice president, provost, or designee reviews report, any rebuttal statements, determines whether to accept recommendations, and begins implementation. | 10 working days |

# The Dispute Resolution Committee

The Dispute Resolution Committee is made up of representatives of academic administration, student life administration, human resources, and the faculty. Most of the University’s grievance facilitators have completed 40 hours of formal training in mediation and have many years of experience in conflict resolution. The Dispute Resolution Committee serves faculty, staff, administrators, and students – assisting those with concerns in addressing them expediently, equitably, confidentially, and at the lowest possible level of intervention.

Anyone on campus with a complaint may call any of the dispute resolution facilitators for an individual consultation. In addition, Dispute Resolution Committee members are available to join departmental meetings to provide information about the resources available on campus for the effective resolution of differences.