

Department of Marine Sciences
Graduate Student Conflict Resolution Policy

Approved by the faculty May 4, 2021

Personal and ethical concerns: A student who cannot resolve serious problems with a faculty member, staff member or another student directly may consult with his or her major professor, departmental mentor, the graduate coordinator, or any other faculty member, including the Department Head and the Skidaway Institute Director. If the issue is not resolved at this point, then the student should formally meet with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), who may assemble the Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC) to consider the issue and make recommendations to the Head.

The Head's decision represents the final decision at the departmental level. No faculty member with a conflict of interest (e.g., having a personal connection with the issue at hand, having a spouse with such a connection) will participate in any deliberations related to the issue. If the DGS or Head has a conflict of interest, the other will act in their stead.

University policy requires faculty to report instances of harassment and/or discrimination to the Equal Opportunity Office (EOO). Those who wish to discuss a sensitive issue in full confidentiality may either visit a UGA Ombudsperson or contact the EOO anonymously (see below).

Academic concerns: Disagreements concerning course grades or policies should be taken up with the instructor of record as prescribed by University policy. Unresolved course disputes and complaints involving qualifying exams or degree requirements may be appealed to the GAC. Members of the GAC with conflicts of interest will not participate in any deliberations related to the appeal. If the DGS has a conflict of interest, the Head will act in their stead. The decision of the GAC will represent the final decision at the departmental level.

University procedures govern grievance cases that cannot be resolved within the Department. Students at the Skidaway campus may also take advantage of Skidaway Institute's on-site Human Resources representative.

Points of contact for some relevant University Services include:

UGA Equal Opportunity Office (EOO) (<https://eoo.uga.edu>)

Among other things, EOO administers and enforces UGA's Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy (<https://eoo.uga.edu/policies-resources/ndah-policy/>). Individuals contacting the office may remain anonymous if preferred. Look here also for information on sexual assault, and for contact information of Ombudspersons (designated individuals who serve as independent, neutral and informal resources for UGA students, faculty and staff).

UGA Ombudspersons (<https://eoo.uga.edu/policies-resources/the-ombudspersons/>)

Graduate students are encouraged to contact the UGA Ombudspersons in the EOO for conflict

resolution assistance. Ombudspersons serve as a neutral, third-party resource that may provide useful recommendations, and can route students to the appropriate office within the UGA system. Conversations with the Ombudspersons are confidential. Virtual communication for students off-campus is available.

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/caps/welcome>)
CAPS is dedicated to student mental health and well-being, including psychiatric services and crisis intervention.

Office of Legal Affairs (<http://legal.uga.edu>)
Among other things, the Office of Legal Affairs is responsible for the administration of the University's grievance and dispute resolution procedures. Look here for information Compliance, Ethics and Report Hotline.

The Graduate School (<http://grad.uga.edu>)
The Graduate School coordinates the graduate programs of all schools and colleges of the University. Look here for Academic Regulations and Procedures.

Academic Honesty & Student Appeals (<https://honesty.uga.edu/>)
This program oversees academic honesty and student appeals.

Office of Student Affairs (<http://studentaffairs.uga.edu>)
UGA's Office of Student Affairs outlines the UGA Code of Conduct (http://www.conduct.uga.edu/code_of_conduct/codeofconduct.pdf), which provides information to students and organizations regarding alleged violations of conduct regulations. The Student Affairs website also contains links for a number of relevant departments, including the Disability Resource Center, the LGBT Resource Center, Student Veteran Resources, Multicultural Services and Programs, International Student Life, Student Care and Outreach, and the University Health Center.

UGA Student Complaints Portal (<http://studentcomplaints.uga.edu>) This portal offers a way to file a complaint on a wide range of topics.

Center for Teaching and Learning (<http://wwwctl.uga.edu>)
The Center for Teaching and Learning offers support for questions related to teaching assistant duties.