

# Skidmore College

## Disability Service Guidelines

### *Grievance Procedure*

Student Academic Services at Skidmore College is committed to a thorough and effective process of identifying and implementing reasonable accommodation. If at any time a student feels that they have been denied reasonable accommodation based on disability status or that an approved accommodation has been inappropriately administered, redress can be sought by filing a grievance with the Director of Student Academic Services (SAS). The grievance should be in writing and should address any concerns regarding decisions made or actions taken by persons or committees involved in identifying reasonable accommodation or implementing approved reasonable accommodation. Complaints of discrimination against faculty should be addressed according to the Faculty Handbook Part Six-VI C. Allegations of discrimination against students will be resolved according to procedures outlined in the Student Handbook and those against staff members, including those who teach, will be resolved according to procedures outlined in the Employee Handbook.

Appeals regarding reasonable accommodation should adhere to the following guidelines:

- A detailed letter describing the circumstances should be submitted to the Director of Student Academic Services.
  - The letter should be signed, dated, and include return contact information.
  - The letter should identify the individual/s involved in the grievance.
- Grievances must be filed within 60 days of the precipitating event. Failure to adhere to the 60 day threshold may result in dismissal of the grievance on grounds of untimely reporting.
- Grievances may be submitted by hand, mail, or fax to the Director of Student Academic Services, Skidmore College, 815 North Broadway Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Fax; (518) 580-8149; Phone (518) 580-8150.

Upon receipt of a formal letter of grievance the Director of SAS will inform the individual/s identified in the letter, summarize in writing the nature of the grievance, and request a written response that will be due within 10 days of notification. The Director will also inform the Dean of Students and Vice President of Student Affairs that a grievance has been filed. If a faculty member is involved the Dean of the Faculty and Vice President of Academic Affairs will also be informed. Once a written response from those indicated in the letter of grievance is received, the Director of SAS will contact all involved parties to explore interest in an informal resolution of the grievance. If sufficient interest exists with all parties the Director will meet with them informally to attempt to resolve the grievance. In the event a resolution is identified the Director will summarize the agreement in writing and forward the agreement to all involved parties and to the Dean of Student Affairs. The grievance will be considered resolved and no further action will be taken regarding the matter. In the event sufficient interest for an informal resolution does not exist or is not achieved the Director of SAS will initiate a formal review according to the guidelines outlined below.

- The Director of SAS will form a 3 person review committee. The committee will consist of three full time administrators from Student and/or Academic Affairs. If a faculty member is

involved, at least one member will be from Academic Affairs. Selected members must not be aware of or involved in the grievance. The committee will be formed and will begin a formal review within 7 days of receipt of a written response from the individual/s identified in the letter of grievance or of the date it is determined an informal resolution cannot be agreed upon. As part of the review the committee reserves the right to interview the grievant, the subject/s of the grievance, and any other individual/s identified in the letter of grievance. The committee may also consult with any other College employee regarding clarification of institutional policy and procedure that may relate to the grievance. The grievant and the subject/s of the grievance may also submit additional names and contact information of witnesses or others who they believe have pertinent information regarding the facts of the grievance or other relevant information. The committee will make every reasonable effort to contact those identified by the grievant and subject/s of the grievance and may interview them by telephone or in person. Interviews may be recorded.

- The committee will seek to complete the review process within 14 days of initiation. If additional time is needed to ensure that the review is adequate, reliable, and impartial the grievant and the subject/s of the grievance will be notified. An extension in review time may not exceed 30 days beyond the original date of initiation of the formal review process.
- At the completion of the review process, the committee will make a determination by majority rule and a written report will be provided to the grievant, subject/s of the grievance, and Dean for Student Affairs, and if appropriate, the Dean of the Faculty within 7 days of the conclusion of the review. If appropriate, the Director of Student Academic Services will work with the CAS and other College officials to implement corrective actions or additional academic accommodations.

## ***Appeal Process***

Either the grievant or the subject of the original complaint may appeal the outcome of the formal review. Appeals will only be accepted in the event new information that was unavailable to the original review committee is identified or the grievant or the subject of the grievance indicates procedural errors occurred during the formal review. The grievant or the subject of the grievance may submit a letter of appeal to the Dean of Students and Vice President of Student Affairs. In the event a faculty member is the subject of the grievance, appeals should be filed with the Dean of the Faculty and Vice President of Academic Affairs. The letter of appeal must be in writing, signed by the person making the appeal, and must be delivered to the appropriate Dean within ten calendar days of the date of the letter regarding the outcome of the formal review. If the letter of appeal is not received by the Dean within this time period, no additional action shall be taken in regard to the appeal.

If a timely appeal is filed, the Director of Student Academic Services will forward all written materials and recordings of the initial hearing to the corresponding Dean for review. The Dean will have 10 calendar days for a review and issuance of a determination. The Dean's decision will be final and a written report will be provided to the Director of Student Academic Services, the grievant, and subject/s of the grievance.