

COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES

Constructive controversy promotes increased learning in a collaborative culture. It encourages better problem solving, creativity, and involvement because it influences individuals to view problems and issues from different perspectives and to rethink their response. Students are encouraged to:

- make every attempt to first resolve conflicts with the person(s) involved
- value different viewpoints and remain open to be influenced by new ideas and information
- focus the controversy on ideas and determining the best direction or decision
- reflect on one's actions, thoughts and the reaction of others
- communicate information accurately and clarify miscommunication
- recognize and communicate feelings as they relate to the issues being discussed

Academic Grievance

- An academic grievance is an educational issue or condition that a student believes to be unfair, inequitable or a hindrance to a student's education. All other grievances not covered by these policies should be directed to the Dean of Students Office.

Step By Step Process:

1. Identify the issue or concern.
2. Talk with the person/people involved.
3. Did talking with the person resolve the situation? Yes - monitor situation and revisit if necessary.
4. If situation is not resolved, if the concern is with:
 - a. A staff member - write an email to the Department Director (or immediate supervisor)
 - b. A faculty member - write and email to the Academic Program Chair
 - c. Make sure to describe the conflict or concern and include any documentation you have. The director or chair decides the next steps.
5. Has your situation been resolved? Yes - monitor situation and revisit if necessary.
6. If situation is not resolved, write a letter to the Academic Dean (for class concerns) or the Dean of Students (for concerns outside of class). Describe the conflict or concern and include any documentation.
7. Has your situation been resolved? If yes - monitor situation and revisit as necessary.
8. If not, the student may speak with the Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Enrollment & Success. All decisions are final at this step.

Please see the following pages for instructions on non-academic grievances or complaints:

Sexual Assault, Harassment, and Misconduct (Title IX) (<https://www.alverno.edu/Civility-Sexual-Misconduct-and-Harassment/>)

Bias Incident Protocol

Conflict Resolution (Student) Nursing Programs

Conflict Resolution, Student (JMSNHP)

POLICY:

All members of the Alverno community are expected to communicate in positive ways to resolve issues and conflicts. Communication and constructive controversy promote increased learning in a collaborative culture, encouraging better problem solving, creativity and involvement, and influencing individuals to view problems and issues from different perspectives and rethink their response. Constructive controversy is most productive in an atmosphere where individuals:

- make every attempt to first resolve conflicts with the person(s) involved;
- value controversy and different viewpoints;
- focus the controversy on ideas and determine the best direction or decision;
- are open to be influenced by new ideas and information;
- reflect on one's actions, thoughts and the reaction of others;
- communicate information accurately and clarify miscommunication; and
- recognize and communicate feelings as they relate to the issues being discussed.

All members of the Alverno academic community are expected to act in ways that contribute to a supportive academic environment. Students, faculty, and staff are expected to use skills in communication, social interaction, and problem solving in positive ways to resolve conflicts. All students are accountable for adhering to this process. When academic performance is at issue, students must review their own progress using feedback and assessments of faculty and attempt to resolve conflicts with persons involved.

PROCEDURE:

Learning how to navigate an organizational structure to accomplish goals and resolve conflict is a necessary and critical step in the student's professional development in the JMSNHP. In health care settings, this structure is conceptualized and operationalized as "chain of command." In the JMSNHP students should initially seek to resolve conflict with the person most closely involved. If unable to come to satisfactory resolution, the student should then contact the person at the next level in the JMSNHP organizational structure; if subsequently, the conflict has still not been resolved, the student should seek assistance from the person at the next level, and so on.

At times students may wish to share opinions in a formal way with the JMSNHP, individual faculty, or staff member. Additionally, conflict may arise when a student disagrees with various policies or actions taken by individual faculty or staff members, JMSNHP Committees, or JMSNHP leadership. The following procedures have been established to assist students in sharing viewpoints and resolving conflicts:

1. Clarify and describe the concern or viewpoint and consult any appropriate source materials, such as syllabi or handbooks, to ensure that the issue is clearly identified.

2. Approach the person (course faculty, advisor, program directors, staff member, or peer) *most directly involved* with the concern and discuss it using any necessary documents (assignments, assessments, memos, handbook references, syllabi, etc.). The faculty advisor assists the student in following the JMSNHP conflict resolution process. If the student cannot resolve the conflict after talking to the person most directly involved, the following steps are pursued by the student, providing supporting documentation whenever appropriate along the way:
 - a. **If the conflict is course related:** The student contacts the course faculty and makes an appointment to discuss the concern. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with the course faculty, they may write, as appropriate, to the Chair of Undergraduate Programs, Director of DEMSN-MKE, Director of DEMSN-Mesa, Director of the FNP or PMHNP Program, or Director of the DNP Program.
 - i. If in the opinion of the *undergraduate* student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with their program Chair, they may seek the assistance of the Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum Committee (UGNCC) by contacting the Chair of UGNCC (contact formation located on the Undergraduate Nursing Critical News Board in Brightspace). If in the opinion of the undergraduate student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with UGNCC, they may write to the Dean of the JMSNHP. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed, after meeting with the Dean, they may write to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA).
 - ii. If in the opinion of the *graduate* student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with their program Director, they may write to the Chair of Graduate Nursing Programs. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with their program Chair, they may seek the assistance of the Graduate Nursing Curriculum Committee (GNCC) by contacting the Chair of GNCC (contact information is posted to the respective Critical News Board). If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with GNCC, they may write to the Dean of the JMSNHP. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed, after meeting with the Dean, they may write to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA).
 - b. **If the issue is one of academic progression:** The student contacts the faculty advisor and makes an appointment to discuss the concern. The faculty advisor assists the student in processing the concern through the UGNAA or GNAA, as appropriate.
 - i. If in the opinion of the undergraduate nursing student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with the Chair of UGNAA or their designee or the full committee, they may write to the Dean of the JMSNHP. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed, they may write to the VPAA.
 - ii. If in the opinion of the graduate nursing student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with the Chair of UGNAA or their designee or the full committee, they may write to the Dean of the JMSNHP. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed, they may write to the VPAA.
 - c. **If the issue is a viewpoint, opinion, or concern related to an undergraduate nursing program:** The student clarifies and describes the opinion, viewpoint, issue, concern, and/or request by communication with the Chair of Undergraduate Nursing. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with their program Chair, they may write to the Dean of the JMSNHP. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed, after meeting with the Dean, they may write to the VPAA.
 - d. **If the issue is a viewpoint, opinion, or concern related to a graduate nursing program:** The student clarifies and describes the opinion, viewpoint, issue, concern, and/or request by communicating with the Director of the DEMSN-MKE program, Director of the DEMSN-Mesa program, Director of the FNP program, Director of the PMHNP program or Director of the DNP program, as appropriate. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed, after meeting with their program Director, they may write to the Chair of Graduate Nursing Programs. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed after meeting with their program Chair, they may write to the Dean of the JMSNHP. If in the opinion of the student, their concern has not been resolved or sufficiently addressed, after meeting with the Dean, they may write to the VPAA.
 - e. **If the conflict is related to a situation outside the classroom or School:** The student submits a written description of the circumstances to the Dean of JMSNHP and the Dean of Students in the College. After an interview with those involved, the Dean of Students may convene a committee to address the issue.
3. If the student has a justifiable basis for not going directly to the person involved, a formal complaint can be made without having made an informal complaint. For more information, the student may contact the Dean of Students.
4. If unsure about how to deal with the situation or if assistance is needed in how to proceed, the student may contact a member of the Office of Student Development and Affairs for assistance. If, after following the above procedures, the student believes the concern has not been resolved, they may pursue the matter further by way of the Complaints and Grievances policy of Alverno College.