

**Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs  
Resolution to Revise Chapter 7 of the Faculty Handbook  
CAPFA 2024-25A**

Resolution Proposal Form Sent to University Council Cabinet	November 21, 2024
First Reading by Commission on Administrative & Professional Faculty Affairs	December 13, 2024
Approval by Commission on Administrative & Professional Faculty Affairs	February 14, 2025
First Reading by AP Faculty Senate	January 15, 2024
Approval by AP Faculty Senate	February 19, 2025
Faculty Senate Waived Right to Comment	February 14, 2025
Staff Senate Comment	December 20, 2024
Graduate and Professional Student Senate Comment	December 29, 2024
Undergraduate Student Senate Waived Right to Comment	February 14, 2025
First Reading, University Council	March 3, 2025
Approved, University Council	March 17, 2025
Approved, President	March 18, 2025
Approved, Board of Visitors	Date
Effective Date	Upon Approval

**WHEREAS**, CAPFA Resolution 2020-21A *Resolution to Approve the Constitution and Bylaws for the Administrative and Professional (A/P) Faculty Senate* was approved by University Council on February 15, 2021 and approved by the Board of Visitors on March 22, 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, the A/P Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws outline the leadership, membership, and role of the A/P Faculty Senate; and

**WHEREAS**, Virginia Tech's Faculty Handbook includes policies for all university faculty; and

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 7 of the Faculty Handbook describes the employment policies for administrative and professional faculty; and

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 7, Section 8 of the Faculty Handbook describes the grievance policy and procedures for Administrative and Professional Faculty; and

**WHEREAS**, the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate is involved in the grievance process;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the current Faculty Handbook chapter 7 be revised per the changes reflected by tracked changes in the attached document; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that these revisions will become effective for the 2025-2026 Faculty Handbook.

## CHAPTER SEVEN ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL FACULTY INCLUDING VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION FACULTY

### 7.8 Grievance Policy and Procedures for Administrative and Professional Faculty

The following procedure is provided ~~as the means for resolution of~~ to resolve grievances against a supervisor or member(s) of the university administration brought by members of the administrative and professional faculty. The steps in the grievance process will, in part, be guided by the reporting relationships of the employees involved in the grievance. Step one and two administrators ~~involved in~~ responding to a grievance should consult with the vice president for human resources and/or the vice provost for faculty affairs, who may involve additional parties as appropriate. The grievant, and those ~~involved in~~ responding to grievances, may consult ~~with the~~ Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President for additional information.

#### 7.8.1 Ombuds, Mediation Services, and Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation

**Informal Dialogue:** It should be possible to resolve most faculty concerns or complaints through informal communication among colleagues working together in the academic enterprise. Accordingly, an A/P faculty member who feels there is a grievance is encouraged to take it to the immediate supervisor in the collegial spirit of ~~problem-problem~~-solving rather than as a confrontation between adversaries.

**University Ombuds:** Any ~~member of the university community~~ university community member may visit the Virginia Tech Office of Interactive Communication and Empowerment (VOICE). The Ombuds listens ~~and explores~~ and explore options for addressing and resolving concerns or complaints. The Ombuds Office ~~does not have the~~ has no authority to make ~~decisions or to reverse any decision made~~ reverse any decisions or actions taken by university authorities. ~~The Ombuds Office~~ it supplements, but does not replace, the university's existing ~~resources for conflict resolution and its~~ conflict resolution resources and systems of review and adjudication.

Communications with the Ombuds Office are considered confidential. The ~~Ombuds Office~~ will not accept legal notice on behalf of the university, and information provided to ~~the Ombuds Office~~ will it does not constitute such notice ~~to the university. Should someone wish. However, if someone wishes~~ to make the university formally aware of a particular problem, the ~~Ombuds Office can provide information~~ office can provide instructions on how to do so. The only exception to this pledge ~~of confidentiality is where the Ombuds~~ the Office determines that there is an imminent risk of serious harm, or if disclosure is required by law.

To preserve independence and neutrality, the Ombuds Office reports directly to the president. ~~The Ombuds Office and~~ does not keep permanent records of confidential communications.

**Reconciliation:** Reconciliation is useful if the individual feels the issue may be amenable to, but will require time for, negotiation or if the individual is unsure whether the concern is a legitimate issue for a grievance, or if personal relations between the parties involved in the matter have become strained. Contact Faculty Affairs in the provost's office for information on Reconciliation.

The Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation may conduct reconciliation between an A/P faculty member and the supervisor. Reconciliation may include fact-finding and engaging the

appropriate parties in negotiating a resolution. Engaging the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation is not required ~~prior to~~before filing a grievance.

For a potential grievance issue to qualify for consideration by the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation, the A/P faculty member must contact the chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation within 30 calendar days of the date the grievant knew, or should have known, of the event or action that is the basis for the potential grievance.

Administrative and professional faculty members may also consult the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation about serious disagreements with immediate supervisors or other university administrators concerning issues that may not be eligible for consideration within the grievance process. If the chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation is unable to resolve the matter within 30 calendar days, the chair sends a letter to the A/P faculty member stating such, providing the appropriate information about the formal grievance procedure if the A/P faculty member should choose to pursue the matter, and documenting that the matter was brought forward within the prescribed 30-day period. ~~A copy of~~This letter is provided to the vice president for human resources, with and a copy is sent to the vice provost for faculty affairs when appropriate. The A/P faculty member has five weekdays after receiving the letter from the chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation to initiate a formal grievance, if so choosing, by following the procedures below and providing a copy of the letter from the chair of the reconciliation team to the supervisor, validating the timeliness of the grievance.

**Mediation and Other Conflict Resolution Services:** ~~Mediation is available through Tthe Office for Equity and Accessibility offers a range of —, conflict resolution services, including conflict coaching, mediation, and group facilitations. In general~~Generally, OEA's —mediation and other conflict resolution services are available —specializing in matters related to the office's work to maintain working environments free from discrimination.

Mediation is a voluntary, ~~confidential~~ process through which ~~one or more trained neutral third persons (mediators)~~facilitators assist ~~employees~~people to express in expressing their concerns and developing solutions to ~~at the conflict~~dispute in a ~~safe and~~ structured environment. Mediation differs from faculty reconciliation in that mediation facilitators do not conduct fact-finding or evaluate decisions. Assistance with mediation is available through Human Resources. Because mediation is voluntary, both parties must agree to participate in order for mediation to occur. Mediation may be available prior to or after filing a grievance. Any party to a grievance process may request mediation prior to step three of the process. If both parties voluntarily agree to try mediation and the university, usually through the Office for Equity and Accessibility, appoints a facilitator, then the grievance is placed on administrative hold until the mediation process is complete. If a resolution is reached through mediation, then the parties are responsible to each other for ensuring that the provisions of the resolution agreement are followed. If any party withdraws from mediation or the facilitator terminates the process without agreement, then the grievant may request that the grievance be reactivated and the process continues.

A/P faculty members and supervisors are encouraged to consider using conflict resolution services like mediation to resolve disputes or to help address a conflict between an A/P faculty member and another member of the Virginia Tech community.

**Role of Mediators:** ~~Mediators do not make judgments, determine facts, or decide the outcome; instead, they facilitate discussion between the participants, who identify the solutions best suited to their situation. No agreement is made unless and until it is acceptable to the participants.~~

**Requesting Mediation:** Mediation is available at any time, without the filing of a grievance. Additionally, mediation may be requested by any party any party may request mediation during the grievance process prior to step three. If, after the initiation of a formal grievance, both parties agree to participate in mediation after initiating a formal grievance, the grievance is placed on administrative hold until the mediation process is complete. If the parties come to a resolution of the dispute through mediation, the parties are responsible to each other for ensuring that the provisions of the agreement are followed. If the parties are not able to cannot reach a mutual resolution to the dispute through mediation, the grievant may request that the grievance be reactivated, and the process continues.

Mediation differs from faculty reconciliation in that because mediators do not engage in fact finding or in evaluation of conduct fact finding or evaluate decisions. Both mediation and reconciliation, however, however, mediation and reconciliation are voluntary; no party is required to participate in either process.

### 7.8.2 The Formal Grievance Procedure

The grievant may pursue the issue as a formal grievance through the following procedure. Supervisors and administrators will cooperate with the grievant in the mechanics of processing to process the grievance, but the grievant alone is responsible for preparation of preparing the case. See "Valid issues for Grievance" in this chapter.

The number of steps in the process is determined by the reporting line of the grievant grievant's reporting line determines the number of steps in the process. Thus, if three steps do not exist between the grievant and the president, then the available number of steps is used.

The grievance must be well described, and the relief requested requested relief must be specified on the grievance form. A/P faculty grievance forms are available on the provost's Faculty Forms page.

The Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President will maintain an active list of trained A/P faculty members who can provide consultation to consult an A/P faculty colleague who is preparing to file a formal grievance. Upon being contacted by an A/P faculty colleague who is preparing to file a formal grievance, the trained consulting A/P faculty member will be able to provide information on and answer questions about the formal grievance process, completion of the A/P faculty grievance form, and available university resources. The consulting A/P faculty member will not submit a grievance form for another A/P faculty member or serve on any panel within the grievance process in a matter to which they served as the consulting A/P faculty member.

**Step one:** The grievant must submit a written statement of the grievance to the step one administrator (the department head, chair, school director, or appropriate supervisor/director; for A/P faculty in Virginia Cooperative Extension, the district director or appropriate step one administrator) and to the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President within 30 calendar days of the date identified, or the grievant should have known, of the event or action that is the basis for the grievance. If appropriate, the step one administrator will provide a copy of the grievance to the supervisor of the grievant grievant's supervisor.

**Grievability Panel:** The Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President, within ten weekdays of receiving a copy of the grievance form, will convene a grievability panel. The panel consists of comprises the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President and

two A/P faculty senators. The panel meets to deliberate and determine the admissibility of the matter to the grievance process. (See "Valid Issues for Grievance" in this chapter) A written report summarizing the deliberation and documenting the ruling of the grievability panel will be provided to all parties. The decision of the grievability panel is final. If the issue is deemed grievable by the panel, the step one administrator provides a written response to the grievant within five weekdays of receiving the grievability panel's written response. Step one, the administrator's written response, should cite reasons for action taken or not taken. If the written response of the department head, chair, school director, or appropriate supervisor/director is satisfactory to the grievant, that ends the matter.

If the grievability panel determines the issues presented by the grievant are not grievable, then the process is concluded.

**Step two:** If the resolution of the grievance proposed in the written response by the step one administrator is not acceptable, the grievant may advance the grievance to the step two administrator (usually a dean or vice president) by checking the appropriate place on the grievance form and sending it within five weekdays of receiving the written response. The step two administrator for Extension A/P faculty (such as Extension agents) is the dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Following receipt of the grievance form, the step two administrator or designated representative meets with the grievant within five weekdays. The grievant may request that a chosen representative from ~~among~~ the university general faculty be present. Unless the grievant is represented by a ~~member of the faculty~~ faculty member who is also a lawyer, the step two administrator does not have legal counsel present.

If the grievance involves a programmatic issue for an Extension A/P faculty member ~~where responsibility for that program lies with~~ whose program is under the responsibility of a different dean, the designated step two administrator consults with the programmatic dean before ~~rendering~~ making a decision.

The step two administrator gives the grievant a written decision within five weekdays after the meeting, citing reasons for the decision. If the step two administrator's written response to the grievance is satisfactory to the grievant, it ends the matter.

**Step three:** If the resolution of the grievance proposed in the written response by the step two administrator is not acceptable, the grievant may advance the grievance to the step three administrator. The step three administrator is the vice president for human resources or the vice provost for faculty affairs. The grievant must advance the complaint to the step three administrator within five weekdays of receiving the written response from the step two administrator. If the grievant works in a college or academic vice president's division, the step three administrator will provide the provost a copy of the grievance ~~to the provost~~.

Advancement of a grievance to step three includes consideration by an impartial Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate hearing panel unless the grievant petitions the step three administrator to bypass the hearing panel and rule on the grievance. If the step three administrator accepts the request to rule on the grievance, there is no subsequent opportunity for the grievance to be heard by an Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate hearing panel. If the step three administrator does not accept the petition, an Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate hearing panel is formed to review the grievance as outlined in these procedures. An Administrative

and Professional Faculty Senate hearing panel may also be convened to determine whether a complaint may be grieved under university policy.

Within five weekdays, the step three administrator, or appropriate designated representative, acknowledges receipt of the grievance ~~and forwards a copy of the "Hearing Procedures of the Committee on Administrative and Professional Faculty Grievances" to parties in the grievance process. The step three administrator also~~ and forwards a copy of the grievance immediately to the ~~chair of~~ Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President. Within five weekdays, the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President acknowledges receipt of the grievance and forwards a copy of the "Hearing Procedures for Administrative and Professional Faculty Grievances" to parties in the grievance process.

**Hearing Panel:** A grievance hearing for A/P faculty is conducted by an ad hoc panel selected by the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President from the current A/P Faculty Senate membership, including Senators and Alternates. A hearing panel consists of three A/P Faculty Senators or Alternates, an alternate panel member, and the non-voting chair. The chair polls all appointees to ensure ~~that they have~~ no conflict of interest in the case. Either party may challenge one of the appointments, including the alternate. Other replacements are made only for cause. The alternate serves as a replacement panel member if the need arises.

To ensure uniformity in practice, the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President serves as the non-voting chair of each hearing— panel. If the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President has a conflict of interest concerning a case, ~~they~~ the chair appoints a replacement from among the Administrative and Professional Faculty senators who serve on the Commission for Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs (CAPFA) ~~at large~~ to serve as chair of the hearing panel. In the unlikely event that all A/P faculty senators and alternates have a conflict of interest concerning a case, the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President, in consultation with the A/P Faculty Senate ~~president~~ President, and an appropriate senior administrative official (president, provost, vice president for human resources), will appoint a non-voting chair and panelists from the A/P faculty at large.

**Hearings:** After the ~~members of the hearing panel~~ hearing panel members are appointed, the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President requests that each party to the grievance provide relevant documentation to be shared among the parties and the hearing panel. The panel holds its initial hearing with both principals present within 15 weekdays of receipt of the grievance by the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President. If the panel ~~feels it~~ needs to investigate the case further, ~~or~~ requires more information, or desires to hear witnesses, the hearing is adjourned until the panel completes the necessary work or scheduling can occur. The hearing is then reconvened as appropriate (and within the 45-day period required by this policy, unless agreed upon by both parties).

Each party to the grievance may have a representative present during the ~~sessions of the hearing~~ hearing sessions ~~at, during~~ which testimony is presented. The representative may speak if requested. Representatives may also be legal counsel; if both parties are ~~so~~ represented, but if the grievant does not wish to have legal counsel ~~at a hearing~~ present, neither party ~~to the grievance~~ may have legal counsel present.

These impartial panel hearings are administrative functions, not adversarial proceedings. Therefore, if legal counsels are present, they must understand that the proceedings do not follow courtroom or trial procedures and rules. ~~Participation by~~ Legal counsel ~~participates~~ at the

invitation of the parties they represent and is subject to the rulings of the chair of the hearing panel.

**Findings and Recommendations:** The hearing panel concludes its work and makes its recommendations within 45 ~~week~~days of receipt of the grievance by the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President. The time limit for consideration may be extended by agreement of both parties.

The hearing panel formulates written findings and recommendations regarding the disposition of the grievance and forwards copies to the step three administrator and parties to the grievance.

**Action of the Step Three Administrator:** The step three administrator meets with the grievant within 10 weekdays after receiving the findings and recommendations of the hearing panel to discuss the case and advise the grievant about the prospects for disposition of the case. Within 10 weekdays of that meeting, the step three administrator sends ~~to~~ the grievant the decision in writing concerning the disposition of the grievance. If the step three administrator's decision is satisfactory to the grievant, even if it differs from the recommendations of the hearing panel, then that ends the matter. ~~If the step three administrator's decision is entirely consonant with (or exceeds) the recommendations of the hearing panel, or if it is whether or not it is satisfactory to the grievant even if it differs from the recommendations of the hearing panel, that ends the matter, and there is no further appeal.~~

**Commented [AJ1]:** Dr. Ron Fricker recommended deleting this phrase as it's unclear what "or exceeds" means. For example, depending on the situation, it could mean being more or less punitive.

**Step four:** If the step three administrator's decision is not consonant with the recommendations of the hearing panel and it is not acceptable to the grievant ~~and not consonant with the recommendations of the hearing panel, only then may~~ the grievant ~~may~~ appeal in writing to the university president. The appeal must be made within 20 calendar days of the step three administrator's decision and it must be in writing. The president's decision is final.

### 7.8.3 Timeliness of Grievance and Procedural Compliance

A grievance must be brought forward in a timely manner. ~~It is the responsibility of the grievant to initiate. The grievant is responsible for initiating~~ the grievance process within 30 calendar days of the date identified, ~~or should have known,~~ of the event or action that is the basis for the grievance. The university administration is not required to accept a grievance for processing if the grievant does not meet the 30-day deadline, except in cases of demonstrated good cause.

**Commented [JR2]:** this is confusing to me

Scheduled commitments made ~~prior to before the time of filing or advancement of filing or advancing~~ a grievance that precludes action by either of the parties to the grievance automatically extend time limits for their duration unless this would be demonstrably harmful to the fair processing of the grievance. In such cases, on written request by the grievant to the appropriate office for that step, the grievance is advanced to the next step in the grievance process.

If the grievant does not follow the time limits specified in the grievance procedure it is assumed that the last proposed resolution is accepted as satisfactory. If the grievant desires to advance the grievance after the appropriate specified time limits have lapsed, the administrator who receives the late submission notifies the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President in writing, who determines if there was ~~good~~reasonable cause for the delay. If so, the grievance proceeds. If not, the process ends with the most recently proposed resolution in force. The finding on the matter by the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President is communicated to both parties in writing.

If either party to a grievance charges the other with procedural violations, other than time limit issues, the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President rules on the question, as in disputes about the validity of procedural issues qualifying for the grievance procedure. The Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President has the following options: The Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President can either find no significant procedural violation occurred, in which case the grievance process continues unaffected, or that a ~~significant~~**substantial** procedural violation did occur. If the step one or step two administrator committed a significant procedural violation, the grievance automatically qualifies for advancement to the next step in the grievance process. If the grievant committed a ~~significant~~**substantial** procedural violation, the grievance process ends at that point for that grievance with the last proposed resolution established as the final disposition of the case.

#### 7.8.4 Valid Issues for Grievance

For this process, a grievance is defined as a complaint by an A/P faculty member alleging a violation, misinterpretation, or incorrect application of a **university** policy, procedure, or practice ~~of the university~~ that directly affects the grievant. Some examples of valid issues for filing a grievance are termination for cause; improperly or unfairly determined personnel decisions that result in an unsatisfactory annual performance evaluation; unreasonable merit adjustment or salary level; excessive teaching load/work assignments; reprisals for activities protected by law or policy; substantive error in the application of policy; matters relating to academic freedom.

**Issues not open to grievance.** While A/P faculty disputes with the university administration may be dealt with using this grievance policy, the following issues may not be made the subject of a grievance: appropriate application of policy by the university administration or the university governance system; contents of university policies and procedures; the routine assignment of university resources (e.g., space, operating funds, parking, etc.); ~~normal~~**everyday** actions taken, or recommendations made, by administrators or committee members acting in an official capacity in the grievance process; those items falling within the jurisdiction of other university policies and procedures for example, complaints of unlawful discrimination or harassment, complaints related to unprofessional or unethical conduct, complaints related to non-reappointment, promotion, or abolition of position).

See chapter two of this handbook for information regarding “Allegations of Unprofessional or Unethical Conduct” against an A/P faculty member.

The Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate does not consider the subject of a grievance while it is simultaneously under review by another committee or panel of the university.

#### 7.8.5 Particular Concerns and Definitions

Timelines stated in the grievance policy indicate the number of days within which the other party should receive notification. Electronic submission from a departmental or school office within the specified time frame is acceptable. ~~This is immediately followed by submission by mail of the original form and any related materials.~~

Time limits are subject to an extension by written agreement of both parties. The grievant and the administrator involved at that step of the discussion make such an agreement. (An agreement form to extend the grievance response time is available on the [provost's Faculty Forms page](#).)

~~At step three, if necessary, the principals and the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President, if necessary, negotiate extensions of time limit~~ **negotiate time limit extensions at**



~~step three.~~ In case of disagreement, the ~~Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate~~ Vice President rules on time extensions and procedural questions or recommendations designed to expedite the proceedings while providing a peer review of the grievance.

If an A/P faculty member is away from the assigned work location at the time the event or action is discovered that is the basis for a grievance, the 30-day period during which the grievant must meet with the supervisor or step one administrator to initiate the grievance process begins when the A/P faculty member returns to the assigned work location. If the date of return causes a delay of such length that the grievance, or its resolution, is not timely, the grievant may submit the written grievance as prescribed in step one by mail or email attachment during absence from the primary work location.

"Weekdays," as used in this procedure, include Monday through Friday only ~~and only~~ when the university is open ~~and t~~. Those days are not national, state, or religious holidays relevant to the principals in the grievance.

To protect a grievant from undue pressure in the pursuit of a grievance, if a grievant becomes ill and takes sick leave, the grievance process stops until ~~such time as~~ the grievant can resume duties. Exceptions to this provision are made at the ~~request of the grievant~~ grievant's request, but only if the grievant obtains and produces medical certification that proceeding with the grievance will not ~~be harmful to the health of the grievant~~ harm the grievant's health or exacerbate the ailment that required taking sick leave.

~~All costs of legal counsel employed by a grievant are borne by the~~ The grievant bears all costs of legal counsel employed by a grievant.

If a grievant is employed ~~away from~~ outside of Blacksburg and ~~is required to~~ must travel ~~away from~~ their duty station ~~in resolution of to resolve~~ their grievance, the university pays all travel costs permitted under state regulations.

~~In the event that~~ if an A/P faculty member discovers there is a grievance about actions by an administrator above the level of the supervisor that directly involve the A/P faculty member, or with actions by an administrator not in the department/unit or school that directly involve the A/P faculty member, the grievant initiates the grievance process by seeking the intervention of the supervisor within 30 calendar days of the date when the grievant knew or should have known of the event or action that is the basis for the grievance. If that effort does not resolve the grievance satisfactorily, the grievant, after consulting the supervisor, may file the grievance form for A/P faculty at the appropriate level or with the ~~appropriate~~ proper administrative office to initiate a response from the administrator perceived as the source of the action causing the grievance. The grievance process then proceeds from that level onward in ~~the~~ usual fashion.

A grievance filed by an A/P faculty member concerning an action of either the provost, ~~senior executive~~ vice president and chief ~~business operating~~ officer, vice provost for faculty affairs, or the vice president for human resources is handled by the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President and an impartial hearing panel. ~~but~~ Still, the findings and recommendations of the hearing panel are sent to the president for ruling. A grievance filed by a faculty member concerning an action of the ~~president of the university~~ university's president is dealt with by a special panel appointed by the provost in consultation with the ~~chair of the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs~~ Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President.

Any final resolution of a grievance must be consonant with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and university policy.

Once a grievance is resolved, either to the satisfaction of the grievant, or, if not ~~to the satisfaction of the grievant~~, by the action of the senior administrator in consonance with the hearing panel recommendations, or by the ruling of the president, that specific grievance is closed and may not be ~~made~~ the subject of another grievance.

**7.8.6 Overview of the Formal Grievance Process for Administrative and Professional Faculty**

Below is an abbreviated overview of the grievance process and deadlines. ~~Refer to,~~Refer to “The Formal Grievance Procedure” in this chapter ~~for specific details and options available at each step for specific details and options available in each step of the grievance process.~~

Time limits are subject to extension by written agreement of both parties. The grievant and the administrator involved at that step of the discussion make such an agreement. (An agreement form to extend the grievance response time is available on the [provost's Faculty Forms page](#).)

The ~~validity of a grievance under university policy can be determined by the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate~~Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate can determine the validity of a grievance under university policy ~~CAPFA~~ at any point in the process.

Step One	Step Number	Description
Within 30 days of event	1a.	Grievant submits written grievance to step one administrator (for Extension A/P faculty this is usually the district director) and Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President.
	1b.	<a href="#">Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President CAPFA chair</a> acknowledges in writing to grievant that copy of grievance has been received
Within 10 weekdays	1c.	Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President convenes a grievability panel to determine the admissibility of the issue to the grievance process per chapter seven, “Valid Issues for Grievance.” The grievability ruling will be documented and a written report on the deliberation sent to all parties concerned.
	1d.	If the issue is not grievable, the grievance process concludes.
	1e.	If the issue is grievable, the step one administrator responds to grievance in writing on the grievance form.
	1f.	If step one administrator’s response is satisfactory to grievant, that ends the matter.

	1g.	If step one administrator's response is not satisfactory to the grievant, move to step two within 5 weekdays.
<b>Step Two</b>	<b>Step Number</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Within 5 weekdays</b>	2a.	Grievant submits written grievance to the step two administrator, usually the dean or vice president (for Extension A/P faculty, this is the dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences). If the grievance involves a programmatic issue for an Extension A/P faculty member where responsibility for that program lies with a different dean, the designated step two administrator consults with the programmatic dean before rendering a decision.
	2b.	Step two administrator meets with the grievant and provides a written response
	2c.	If step two administrator's response is satisfactory to grievant, that ends the matter.
	2d.	If step two administrator's response is not satisfactory to grievant, move to step three within 5 weekdays.
<b>Step Three</b>	<b>Step Number</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Within 5 weekdays</b>	3a.	Grievant advances grievance form to the step three administrator (the vice president for human resources or the vice provost for faculty affairs) who then, depending on reporting structure, shares a copy of the grievance with the provost.
<b>Within 5 weekdays</b>	3b.	Step three administrator acknowledges receipt of grievance and forwards copy to Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President.
<b>Within 5 weekdays</b>	3c.	Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President acknowledges in writing to grievant that copy of grievance has been received from the step three administrator <u>and forwards a copy of the "Hearing Procedures for Administrative and Professional Faculty Grievances" to parties in the grievance process-</u>
<b>Within 15 weekdays</b>	3d.	Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Vice President convenes a hearing panel that holds its initial meeting with both principals.

Within 45 weekdays	3e.	The hearing panel concludes its work and makes recommendation to step three administrator and grievant.
Within 10 weekdays	3f.	Step three administrator meets with grievant.
Within 10 weekdays	3g.	Step three administrator notifies grievant in writing of the decision.
	3h.	<u>If the step three administrator's decision is satisfactory to the grievant, even if it differs from the recommendations of the hearing panel, then that ends the matter. If the step three administrator's decision is fully consonant with the recommendations of the hearing panel, whether or not it is satisfactory to the grievant, that ends the matter and there is no further appeal.</u> <del>If the step three administrator's decision is fully consonant with (or exceeds) the recommendations of the hearing panel, or if it is satisfactory to the grievant even if it differs from the recommendations of the hearing panel that ends the matter.</del>
	3i.	<u>If the step three administrator's decision is not consonant with the recommendations of the hearing panel and it is not acceptable to the grievant, only then may the grievant appeal to the university president. The appeal must be made within 20 calendar days of the step three administrator's decision.</u> <del>If the step three administrator's decision is not acceptable to the grievant and not consonant with the recommendations of the hearing panel, the grievant may appeal in writing to the president within 20 calendar days.</del>
<b>Step Four</b>	<b>Step Number</b>	<b>Description</b>
Within 20 calendar days	4a.	Grievant appeals in writing to president.
	4b.	The president's decision is final.

**Commented [AJ3]:** Dr. Ron Fricker recommended deleting this phrase as it's unclear what "or exceeds" means. For example, depending on the situation, it could mean being more or less punitive.



**Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS)**

25 Graduate Life Center (0186)

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Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Email: [gpss@vt.edu](mailto:gpss@vt.edu)

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***Comment on CAPFA 2024-25A:***

The Graduate and Professional Student Senate waives its right to comment on CAPFA 2024-25A: Resolution Updating Language in Chapter 7 of the Faculty Handbook on the A/P Faculty Grievance Process.

On behalf of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate,  
Ronnie Mondal  
President



**2024-2025  
EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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# Staff Senate

<http://www.staffsenate.vt.edu/>

**December 20, 2024**

**To: Vice President of Policy and Governance**

The Staff Senate Committee on Policy and Issues has reviewed and approves CAPFA Resolution 2024-25A. We do have a few comments for consideration.

It appears that there is the addition of several duties to the office of A/P Faculty Senate Vice President. We hope that these duties will be made clear to any candidate for this office. Additionally, these duties could constitute quite a workload for the Vice President if there are multiple grievances within a semester that must be handled in a timely fashion. What happens if the workload for this process becomes too great for the Vice President to handle in addition to their normal A/P faculty position responsibilities?

We have no further comment.

**Thank you,  
Amber Robinson, Chair Staff Senate Policies and  
Issues Committee**