

# Chatham University Counseling Center-Excelsa Health Psychology Internship Consortium

## Grievance Policy

At times, there may be some challenges or conflict in the workplace that need to be addressed. We encourage all staff, including interns, to first attempt to resolve the conflict or challenge informally and encourage consultation as is helpful. We are also aware that a conflict or concern may not be resolved informally; therefore, we provide a formal process for resolving these grievances. A grievance is a conflict, complaint, or dispute that occurs in the workplace. A grievance may involve the training program or someone involved in the training program. Interns may raise concerns about any aspect of the program, including the training, policies, procedures, evaluations, supervisors, other staff, other trainees, or any aspect of the training program.

We have a four step grievance process outlined for various types of grievances that follows guidelines from the *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*.

The APA Ethics Code, Standard 1.04 notes that psychologists attempt to resolve issues of concern informally first, and as soon as is possible. This is the first step in our grievance policy, unless the intern feels unsafe in engaging in an attempt toward an informal resolution and that attempt at resolution does not violate confidentiality of any person involved.

In addition, Standard 1.07 states that grievances should be brought in good faith. Interns should know that no negative repercussions from the Counseling Center will result when grievances are made in good faith.

### Steps in Resolving Grievances

1. When an intern has a grievance, we encourage them to first discuss the issue informally with the person(s) involved.
  - Interns are welcome to consult and discuss, informally, any grievance with their primary supervisor and/or the Internship Training Director
2. If the issue cannot be resolved informally or the intern does not feel safe to proceed with an informal resolution, the intern should submit in writing, a formal grievance letter to the Internship Training Director. If the concern involves the Internship Training Director, the intern should submit their formal grievance to the Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness. The grievance letter should include the following:
  - Date of grievance
  - Name of intern
  - Name of Primary supervisor
  - Name of Internship Training director
  - Description of the grievance (please note dates of incidents, names of individuals involved, and specific details in the grievance)
  - Description of any actions taken by intern
  - Description of any actions taken by primary supervisor (if applicable)
  - Description of any actions taken by Training Director (if applicable)
  - Any additional, relevant information

- Intern signature
  - Date of submission of grievance letter.
3. The person about whom the grievance is brought will be asked to submit a response, in writing, within 5 working days.
  4. The Internship Training Director (or Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness) will meet with the intern and the individual about whom the grievance is brought, within 5 working days of the response to the grievance. The goal of this meeting is to develop a plan of action to resolve the grievance. The Internship Training Director (or Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness) will write down the plan of action.
    - In some circumstances, the Internship Training Director or Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness may request to meet separately with the intern and the person about whom the grievance has been filed.
    - This plan of action will be decided upon and signed by those involved in the grievance. The plan of action will include the following:
      - The behavior associated with the grievance.
      - The specific steps to rectify the grievance.
      - A timeframe to rectify the grievance (if longer than 10 days)
      - The procedures to ascertain whether the problem has been appropriately resolved.
  5. The intern and the person involved in the grievance will receive copies of the plan of action. The intern and the other individual involved in the grievance will be asked to report back to the Director of Training or other Training Committee member in writing within 10 working days regarding whether the issue has been adequately resolved. If additional time to rectify the grievance is documented in the plan of action, the response from the intern and other involved in the grievance will have that additional time to respond in writing if the grievance has been resolved.
    - If the plan of action (step 4) resolves the grievance, a letter of resolution will be drafted and signed by the Internship Training Director, Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness, the intern, and those involved in the grievance. The grievance will be closed. All relevant documents will be kept on files.
  6. If the Internship Training Director cannot resolve the concern to the intern, or if the intern does not report a satisfactory outcome from step 5 above, the intern can request a Review Panel be convened within 10 working days (or time frame indicated in the plan of action) of receiving the plan of action described in step 5.
    - The intern should make this request for a Review Panel to Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness, or Vice President of Student Affairs at Chatham University, if the Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness is involved in the grievance.
  7. The Review Panel will consist of the Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness and two licensed staff members, selected by the Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness. The Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness will appoint a Chair of the Review Panel.
    - If the grievance is related to the Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness, the responsibility to appoint a Review Panel will be delegated to the Internship Training Director.
    - Staff who are involved in the grievance will *not* be included in the Review Panel.

8. Within five (5) business days, the Review Panel will meet to review the grievance and to examine the relevant material presented. This material will include all previously submitted materials from the intern and the individual(s) involved in the grievance.
9. The Review Panel may request, in writing or through an interview, an update regarding the grievance from the intern. The Review Panel may also request an interview or written update from others involved in the grievance.
10. Within 3 business days after the completion of the review, the Chair of Review Panel will submit a written report to the Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness, including any recommendations for further action. Recommendations made by the Review Panel will be made by majority vote if a consensus cannot be reached. Others, including but not limited to Human Resources staff or the Title IX Coordinator if relevant, may be consulted by the Review Panel.
  - If the grievance is related to the Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness, the responsibility to appoint a Review Panel will be delegated to the Internship Training Director.
11. Within three (3) business days of receipt of the recommendation, the Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness will review the Review Panel's recommendations. The Internship Training Director (or Executive Director of Counseling and Wellness if the Internship Training Director is involved) will inform the intern, involved staff members, necessary training staff of the decision, and, if appropriate, the interns' Academic Training Director, of any action taken or to be taken.
12. If the grievance is not resolved by the meeting of the panel, the issue will be turned over to the employer agency in order to initiate the due process and grievance procedures as outlined in the employment contract.
13. All documentation will be kept in the Chatham University Counseling Center-Excelsa Health Psychology Internship Consortium permanent files.

#### Videoconferencing use

Videoconferencing will be utilized for situations that require the meetings of interns and training staff who are located in geographically different areas of Pennsylvania.