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Appeals & Grievances

Consistent with the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), UCSF determines disability accommodations through a deliberative and interactive process involving disability services professionals, appropriate members of the University community, and, of course, the individuals with disabilities themselves.

We recognize that there is the possibility of disagreement about the appropriateness of accommodations in any deliberative process. We also acknowledge that even with the best efforts of everyone involved with your service delivery at UCSF, a problem may occur. To this end, Student Disability Services (SDS) recommends a range of options to resolve concerns about accommodation and eligibility decisions, services received, treatment by University staff and faculty, and University policies related to students with disabilities.

Occasionally a problem arises because of a misunderstanding or miscommunication; clarification can lead to a quick and effective solution. It is often best to discuss the issue with the person(s) most closely involved with the decision or incident first, and then go to the person's supervisor or department chair if a satisfactory resolution has not been provided. We strongly encourage you to let SDS know about any problems as soon as possible so that we can work together to solve the problem as quickly as possible.

Though attempts at internal resolution are always recommended first, [external means for resolving concerns](#) are available, and may be exercised at any time.

Throughout any of these procedures you may expect to be treated with respect, receive a timely response, not experience any form of retaliation, and have your issues dealt with in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible, if so requested. The University expects that you bring up any problems early, give clear and detailed information, and be respectful of those people who are working with you. If you wish to know more about your rights as a disabled person under Federal and State law and University policy, SDS can refer you to the appropriate entity.

Disability-related law and University policy prohibit retaliation in any form against persons who file complaints.

Choose the situation that best describes your concerns:

- [I would like to appeal a decision by SDS regarding my eligibility for accommodations.](#)
- [I would like to appeal a decision by a faculty member or school regarding my accommodations](#)

- I feel that I have been discriminated against because of my disability, or I feel that the University is not in compliance with its obligations to people with disabilities under the law.

Appeals of SDS Decisions

Students who wish to appeal a decision made by SDS must do so in writing, by submitting the Accommodation Appeal Form ^[1]. Appeals are considered by Executive Director Student Life Carol Takao, PhD, (415) 502-3233. Completed Accommodation Appeal forms may be submitted by email or in person to the Student Life Offices, Millberry Union West, level 1, room 108.

The Director will review the Accommodation Appeal Form and the student's SDS file, then meet with the student to discuss their request. In order to reach a decision, s/he may also request additional documentation of a student's disability, request to consult with their treatment team or diagnostician, or consult with outside experts. The review process will be conducted as quickly as possible.

If a student disagrees with the appeal decision they may request a formal investigation by contacting the University's 504/ADA Compliance Officer:

- Director Affirmative Action EEO & ADA Compliance Cristina Pérez-Abelson ^[2], (415) 476-4753

Refer to the process for Conflict Resolution and Complaint Processing ^[3]

Appeals of Faculty/School Decisions

Occasionally, an accommodation initially recommended by SDS may not be considered feasible or appropriate for a specific course or program requirement, when the accommodation would result in a fundamental alteration of an essential aspect of the student's program. This decision would have been made through an interactive process involving the student, their program, and possibly outside experts.

If a student were to disagree with the outcome of such a decision, they are encouraged to consult informally with the Associate Dean at their School or the SDS Director. If this does not resolve the concern, students may request a formal investigation by contacting the University's 504/ADA Compliance Officer:

- Director Affirmative Action EEO & ADA Compliance Cristina Pérez-Abelson ^[2], (415) 476-4753

Refer to the process for Conflict Resolution and Complaint Processing ^[3]

Grievances

An individual who believes they have been discriminated against on the basis of their disability, or who feels that the University is out of compliance with their obligations to people with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended (ADA AA), is encouraged to work with UCSF to resolve their concerns informally. In the event that such difficulties cannot be resolved informally, students

can avail themselves of UCSF's formal grievance processes, or the external processes for resolution.

Informal resources for resolving grievances:

- Discuss with Director of Student Disability Services

Lisa Meeks ^[4], PhD, (415) 476-6595

- Discuss with Executive Director Student Life

Carol Takao ^[5], PhD, (415) 502-3233

- Discuss with the Office of the Ombuds ^[6], (415) 502-9600

- Discuss with the appropriate Dean or Associate Dean in your school

Formal means for resolving grievances:

Internal

- File a complaint with the University's Director of ADA Compliance in the Office of Diversity and Outreach

Refer to the process for Conflict Resolution and Complaint Processing ^[3]

Director Affirmative Action EEO & ADA Compliance Cristina Pérez-Abelson ^[2], (415) 476-4753

- File a grievance via the University's Student Grievance Procedures ^[7]

External

- Seek resolution through the Office of Civil Rights of the Federal Department of Education ^[8]

Voice: (415) 486-5555, TTY: (877) 521-2172

Email: ocr.sanfrancisco@ed.gov ^[9]

- Seek resolution through private legal means

UCSF developed this information in accordance with these references: Public Law 101-336; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA AA); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; applicable regulations; and the University of California Policies Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations and Students, Section 140.00.

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UCSF Main Site

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Source URL: <http://sds.ucsf.edu/policies/appeals-grievances>

Links:

[1] http://sds.ucsf.edu/sites/sds.ucsf.edu/files/PDF/SDSAppealForm_11-2013.pdf

[2] <mailto:cristina.perez@ucsf.edu>

[3] <http://diversity.ucsf.edu/node/51>

[4] <mailto:lisa.meeks@ucsf.edu>

[5] <mailto:carol.takao@ucsf.edu>

[6] <http://ombuds.ucsf.edu>

[7] <http://senate.ucsf.edu/0-bylaws/stugr.html>

[8] <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

[9] <mailto:ocr.sanfrancisco@ed.gov>