

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A GRIEVANCE?

Technically, you might not have a grievance even though you are feeling aggrieved. If no contractual violation is found, AAUP may still try to intervene on your behalf in a dispute involving a colleague, administrator, or department chair.

WILL I BE LABELED AS A TROUBLE MAKER?

NO. Grievances are filed in order to correct violations and clarify contract language. The parties to the Contract (Connecticut State University American Association of University Professors and the Board of Trustees for Connecticut State University) cannot envision every possible scenario that might occur surrounding particular contract language. Thus, the grievance procedure is provided to clarify language when it is ambiguous or enforce it when it is being ignored.

GRIEVANCE PHILOSOPHY

AAUP is interested in settling issues reasonably without causing hard feelings. We want to promote harmonious relationships that cultivate optimal working conditions. While this is not always possible, AAUP makes every effort to keep grievances restricted to facts and events rather than deal with interpersonal conflicts and issues beyond the scope of the Contract.

The contractual grievance system is procedural. Thus, for many issues, the question is, "Were procedures followed?" regardless of the decision that resulted. For example, in the promotion and tenure process, AAUP cannot be involved in decisions to promote or not to promote **IF** the proper procedures have been followed. AAUP wishes to preserve and enhance these faculty governance procedures and the work of collegial committees. The AAUP's role is to be certain that the proper procedures are followed before decisions are made assuring equitable treatment for all members.



The Grievance Process



What is a grievance?
How do I know if I have one?
Who can file a grievance?
When and how do I file it?
What happens next?

Questions? Call AAUP: (860) 832-3790

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THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS

A **grievance** is an allegation or complaint of a violation of the collective bargaining agreement (Contract) and/or procedures or prescribed criteria rules established expressly pursuant to the Contract.

The **Collective Bargaining Agreement**, also known as the Contract is the negotiated or arbitrated agreement between the Connecticut State University AAUP and the Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University. The Contract covers your wages, hours, working conditions and other conditions of employment.

Prescribed Criteria Rules are criteria that are specified in the contract e.g. those used for purposes of evaluation for promotion, tenure, renewal and professional assessment.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE A GRIEVANCE?

To test for the presence of a grievance ask yourself these questions:

- Has the contract been violated?
- Has a Senate document been violated?
- Has a department by-law been violated?
- Have I been treated unfairly?

If the answer to one or more of these questions is "yes," you might have a grievance.

FOUR TYPES OF COMPLAINTS

There are at least four types of complaints:

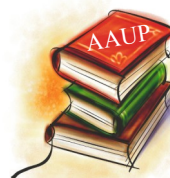
- An **individual grievance** alleging that a provision of the contract has been violated.
- A **class action grievance** on behalf of a campus, the system or some group of employees.
- An **individual complaint** having no obvious relationship to any provision of the contract, which may not be a grievance.
- A complaint pursuant to Article 4.2.3, alleging that a member's **academic freedom** was violated.

WHO CAN FILE A GRIEVANCE?

Any member or group of members of the CSU-AAUP bargaining unit or CSU-AAUP may file a grievance over an alleged violation of the Contract. GRIEVANCES ARE NOT FILED AGAINST INDIVIDUALS. Pursuant to accepted principles of collective bargaining, once a labor contract has been established, the employer has the primary responsibility for administering the contract.

WHEN DO I FILE A GRIEVANCE?

TIMING IS VERY IMPORTANT! The time limit for filing a grievance is thirty calendar days following the alleged violation or thirty days following the date you should reasonably have known about the violation. If you are in doubt about a situation that



you think might constitute a grievance, call the AAUP office for a consultation. A member may have a valid grievance but because it is not filed within the period of time designated by the Contract, the grievance will be dismissed.

HOW DO I FILE A GRIEVANCE?

As soon as you think the Contract might have been violated you should contact your local AAUP office. A staff member or AAUP representative will ask you to briefly describe your problem and will most likely refer you to a grievance officer who will contact you to discuss your problem in depth.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If the grievance officer determines that you may have a grievance, a meeting will take place between you, the grievance officer and possibly an AAUP staff member. The grievance will be drafted according to Appendix C on page 135 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The grievance will be filed at the lowest level at which a settlement can potentially be reached. The goal of CSU-AAUP is to settle as many grievances as possible to the satisfaction of the grievant within the guidelines established by the Contract. Contract Article 15 details the informal complaint procedure, representation, and the four steps of the formal grievance procedure. It is a good idea for members to turn to page 102 in the 2007 – 2012 Contract and read over and acquaint themselves with the procedures.