

UCB/UCSF Joint Graduate Group in Bioengineering  
University of California, Berkeley and University of California, San Francisco

Internal Appeals Procedure for the Joint Graduate Group in Bioengineering

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this procedure is to afford graduate students in the UCB/UCSF Joint Graduate Group in Bioengineering (JGGB) an opportunity to resolve within the structure of the JGGB complaints about dismissal from graduate standing, placement on probationary status, denial of readmission to the same program, and other administrative or academic decisions that terminate or otherwise impede progress toward academic or professional degree goals. This procedure may also be used to resolve disputes over joint authorship of research in accordance with joint authorship policies at UCSF and UCB. These internal JGGB procedures are suggested as a first step of complaint resolution but do not preclude or override formal procedures at the campus level (see below).

The scope of this procedure is limited to the matters listed above, and excludes complaints regarding denial of admission, denial of readmission to a program different from the one the student originally pursued, student records, grades in courses of instruction, student employment, student discipline, and auxiliary student services (such as housing, child care, etc.). This procedure may not be used for complaints regarding actions based solely on faculty evaluation of the academic quality of a student's performance, or decanal evaluation of a student's appropriate academic progress, unless the complaint alleges that the actions were influenced by non-academic criteria.

A. INFORMAL JGGB RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

A student may pursue informal resolution of a complaint by scheduling a meeting with the Head Graduate Adviser or Chair of the Executive Committee to discuss the complaint and explore possible avenues of resolution. If informal resolution is pursued, it must be initiated, and should be completed, within 30 days. At any point in this process, if a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, the student may initiate a full JGGB resolution by submitting the complaint in writing.

B. Full JGGB RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

Initiating a full JGGB resolution procedures requires a written complaint that must include information regarding the action being complained of and the date it occurred, the grounds upon which the appeal is based, and the relief requested. The complaint must be based on one or more of the following grounds:

1. Procedural error or violation of official policy by academic or administrative personnel;

2. Judgments improperly based upon non-academic criteria including, but not limited to, discrimination or harassment on the basis of gender, race, national origin, color, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability;

3. Specific mitigating circumstances beyond the student's control not properly taken into account in a decision affecting the student's academic progress.

A written complaint must be received by the Head Graduate Adviser of the home campus or the Chair of the Executive Committee within 30 days from the time the student knew or could reasonably be expected to have known of the action that is the subject of the complaint. The JGGB should complete its investigation and notify the student of the outcome of the complaint within 60 days of the date it was received.

If the complaint is about an action taken by the Head Graduate Adviser, the complainant may elect to take the complaint directly to the Executive Committee Chair of the Joint Graduate Group. In such a case, the time limits set out in the preceding paragraph still apply.

The time frame for filing a written complaint may be extended by the JGGB if the student has been involved in continuing efforts toward resolution, and the initial resolution process was initiated within 30 days of the time the student knew or could reasonably be expected to have known of the action that is the subject of the complaint. All time frames referred to in this procedure refer to calendar days. Summer and inter-semester/quarter recesses are not included within these time frames.

Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Head Graduate Adviser/Chair of the Executive Committee will assign an ad hoc committee of two to four full members of the Program to investigate the complaint and to make a recommendation to the Head Graduate Adviser/Chair of the Executive Committee regarding the outcome of the complaint. The investigation will include an interview with the complainant, a review of any relevant written materials, and an effort to obtain information from available witnesses (i.e., interviews or written statements or documents). The Head Graduate Adviser/Chair of the Executive Committee will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the complaint.

#### C. APPEAL TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint under the JGGB procedure, he or she may bring the complaint to the level of Formal Appeal and Grievance Procedures available at their home campus. The formal appeal must be received in the Office of the Dean of the Graduate Division, of the home campus within 15 days of the date of the written notification of the result of the JGGB level procedure. For detailed information see: for UCB-based students: <http://www.grad.berkeley.edu/degrees/pdf/gradappeal.pdf>.; and for UCSF-based students: <http://www.ucsf.edu/senate/0-bylaws/stugr.html>.

#### D. COMPLAINTS INVOLVING DISCRIMINATION

If the complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment on the basis of gender, race, national origin, color, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability, the JGGB will consult the appropriate campus compliance officers prior to commencing a resolution..

