

REHABILITATION & MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF CHILD & FAMILY STUDIES
College of Behavioral & Community Sciences
University of South Florida
Tampa, Florida

Problem Resolution Process

The Department of Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling is committed to resolving issues at the earliest possible point. The Problem Resolution Process is internal to the Department and is not meant to replace the University Academic Grievance Procedure (AGP). If at the *end* of the Department's Problem Resolution Process when final action is taken that affects a student grade, and a student feels that s/he has been treated in a manner that violates university policy, the student may file a formal Academic Grievance. The Academic Grievance Process provided in USF Policy 10-002: (<http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-10-002.pdf>). In addition, the Student Grievance Processes and Non-Academic Grievance Policy is USF Policy 30-053: <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-30-053.pdf>.

General Guidelines:

It is important to note that if an instructor or field supervisor deems that a student's behavior or academic performance creates a safety or disruption risk, the instructor or field supervisor may take immediate action and remove the student from a classroom or placement with a review through the academic grievance process. Unless directed otherwise by an instructor or field supervisor, students with concerns must continue to meet the directives and participation requirements of a placement and must complete all assignments in a timely fashion until the end of the process. Failure to fully participate and complete assignments may result in a failure or dismissal.

CONCERNS INITIATED BY STUDENTS

If a student experiences a problem in any area of academic performance, whether it is department or agency-based, with an individual faculty member, field supervisor, or field placement coordinator, the following process is used to resolve the problem. These steps must be followed in this order:

If the concern is **classroom-based**:

NOTE: It is strongly recommended that the student discuss concern(s) with his/her advisor, or a trusted faculty member, prior to initiating the formal problem resolution process. The advisor will keep all communications about the student's concerns confidential.

The student will discuss concern(s) with the USF course instructor within 7 days of onset of the problem.

1. If resolution is not reached by talking to the instructor within 7 days, the student will contact the Problem Resolution Process Committee, in writing, stating the elements in the concern being raised.
2. The Problem Resolution Process Committee will review the written concern within 7 days and contact the student, in writing, regarding their review outcome.

3. If the student disagrees with the Problem Resolution Process Committee's written report received within 7 days, the student will contact the Chair of the Department of Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling stating, in writing, that the concern remains unresolved.
4. The Department Chair will respond to the student, in writing, within 7 days.

If the concern is **field-based**:

1. The student will discuss the concern with the agency field supervisor within 7 days.
2. If a resolution is not reached within 7 days of discussion with the field supervisor, the student will contact the course instructor and state the concern.
3. The student will request a field visit via phone or face-to-face as an intervention to address the concern within 7 days. The course instructor will document the action plan. A copy of the report will be placed in the students file and sent to the Field Placement Coordinator.
4. If resolution is not reached, the student will contact the Field Placement Coordinator in writing, stating the elements in the concern being raised. The Field Placement Coordinator will respond, in writing, within 7 days.
5. If resolution is not reached, the student will contact the Chair of the Department of Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling, in writing, within 7 days stating the elements in the concern being raised.
6. The Department Chair will respond to the student, in writing, within 7 days.

CONCERNS INITIATED BY FACULTY

(Classroom or Agency Based)

Any Department of Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling instructor or agency-based supervisor having questions about the capacity, performance, or continuation of a student in the master's program, will address the concern in this order:

If concern is **classroom-based**:

1. The instructor will discuss the concern with the student within 7 days of the concern becoming identified as one not meeting standard for pre-professional and/or academic work.
2. The instructor will give the student an opportunity to address/correct the concerns within an agreed upon time frame. S/he will document the concern and will place a copy of the report in the student file.
3. If resolution is not reached as defined in the Instructor Report, the instructor will contact the Problem Resolution Process Committee, in writing, regarding the concern(s) within 7 days.
4. The Problem Resolution Process Committee will review the written concern and meet with the instructor and the student. After the meeting, the Problem Resolution Process Committee will offer

written feedback within 7 days that, when appropriate, will include a resolution plan. The resolution plan, which *may* include the option of immediate dismissal, is:

- Designed to address specific concerns
 - A time line is assigned for completion and review of the plan
 - Immediate dismissal from the program
5. If a resolution is not obtained through demonstration of satisfactory progress on the resolution plan identified in # 4, the Problem Resolution Process Committee will present a written statement to the Chair of the Department of Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling within 7 days.
 6. The Department Chair will take the concern under review. If the issue is resolved satisfactorily, the student will be notified in writing and a copy of the notification will be placed in the student's file. If the student is dismissed, he/she will be notified via certified mail.

If the concern is **agency-based**:

1. The student and/or the field supervisor will identify the problem and create a written plan to resolve it.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the student and/or field supervisor should consult with the course instructor and make another attempt to resolve the problem.
3. If the problem is still not resolved, the course instructor will facilitate a meeting between the student and the field supervisor. This meeting may also involve the Field Placement Coordinator if necessary. At this meeting, a written contract with time frames for resolution will be developed to address the problem. The course instructor will distribute copies of the written contract to the field supervisor, Field Placement Coordinator and student within five days following the meeting.
4. If the problem remains unresolved, and the contract mandates the student's removal from the placement, the Department Chair will notify the student of that action. If further review of unsuccessful contract mandates is necessary, the Department Chair or designee will be notified.

NOTE: The field placement Agency may request USF to withdraw any student whose conduct or work performance is not in accordance with the Agency's policies and standards. Although the department strongly prefers prior notification of a withdrawal it is not required.

Policy for Changing Field Placement

Field placements are chosen after a thoughtful process that includes the student, the agency, and the Field Placement Coordinator. Once a field placement has been confirmed, it is expected that the student will complete the entire placement at that agency. Disruption of a field placement is not taken lightly. The course instructor, the field supervisor, the student and the Field Placement Coordinator will make any needed placement changes jointly. Other individuals, such as the student's academic advisor or the agency director, also may be asked to participate in the decision. **Students who leave an internship without prior approval of their Field Placement Coordinator and Instructor risk failing the practicum or internship course.**