

Music Department Graduate Student Complaints Process

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The Music Department at UCSB strives to be a place where students feel safe and supported in pursuing their educational goals and where they can voice their needs, express their concerns, and offer suggestions for improvement with people whom they trust and feel comfortable. There can be a wide range of dissatisfying scenarios in the music department or at UCSB, about which people may wish to voice concerns, and this procedure hopes to provide you with the resources to support you if you wish to voice and resolve a complaint.

Recognizing that there are a broad spectrum of complaints and grievances, this document summarizes in one place the following:

- A. An outline of the Music Department's procedures for dealing with a common issue in many workplaces: **handling and seeking to resolve interpersonal difficulties**. The steps below are designed to help you raise issues with department members whom you trust, and find a solution that is expedient, effective, and allows you to continue doing your best work as a graduate student at UCSB.
- B. An overview of the **offices on campus where you can report a formal complaint or labor grievance**, particularly if the issue concerns violations of your labor contract or an issue that has not been resolved at the department level.
- C. Information about **policies and resources on campus that can provide you with support for your needs as graduate students**. This includes links to policies that govern faculty, student, and staff conduct, so that you know your rights as both students and employees, as well as services to support your mental and physical wellbeing while at UCSB.

The goal of resolving a complaint is to restore—and potentially improve—a working relationship and/or work environment, so that you can do your best work as students, TAs, and citizens of the university. To this end, you will want to consider the various options outlined in this document as you decide on which path feels most comfortable for you, and which outlet provides you with the greatest likelihood of a long-term resolution. In all difficult scenarios, it is important that you feel supported by people you trust and that you take care of your emotional and physical wellbeing. We hope that in outlining a procedure for resolving interpersonal complaints within the Music Department that affected parties can work to restore trust in the aftermath of a complaint, and that students feel like they have an outlet for voicing and resolving their concerns so that they can complete their degrees in a safe work environment.

Confidential Offices on Campus

Handling difficult scenarios in the context of working and learning, particularly where power dynamics between faculty and students are involved, is stressful. It is important that you have support as you seek to resolve the issues at hand and create a better working environment to suit your needs. There are several offices on campus which are designated safe spaces—they are not subject to mandatory reporting, and you can speak with a member of staff confidentially. These are:

- [Campus Advocacy, Resources, and Education](#) (CARE): If you are wanting to discuss incidences of sexual misconduct or other forms of interpersonal violence in a confidential setting, you may

contact CARE at 805-893-4613. Unlike faculty and staff in the music department, staff at CARE are not subject to mandatory reporting of sexual violence or assault to the Title IX office.

- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS): If you find that your complaint is causing you mental distress, CAPS offers short and single therapy sessions, as well as referrals for ongoing therapy. They also offer a crisis hotline: you can submit a referral for yourself, or for others in need. CAPS is available 24/7 at 805-893-4411.
- [Office of the Ombuds](#): The Office of the Ombuds provides confidential consultation services to faculty, staff, students, parents, or anyone else with a campus-related concern. The Ombuds addresses workplace issues, interpersonal conflict, academic concerns, policy questions, and many other problems, whether as a first step, last resort, or at any point along the way.

The purpose of this department-specific guide is to help illustrate the diversity of problem-solving options and resources available to you, but not to limit your agency or access to resources in any way. **While we have tried to provide a comprehensive overview, you might decide to utilize different resources than the ones presented here, or in a different order than we have presented here.**

A. Internal Avenues: Options for Voicing Complaints within the Music Department

1. Consider Discussing your Concerns with a Trusted Party and Evaluate the Nature of your Concern

Deciding to raise a concern within the music department, particularly when it relates to interpersonal behavior, can cause you stress. An important first step is to connect with a faculty or staff member whom you trust and with whom you can make some key decisions about the nature of your concern and the options that are available for a resolution.

- A trusted party within the department may include:
 - The Staff Graduate Advisor
 - The Faculty Director of Graduate Studies
 - Your Dissertation Advisor / Performance Instructor or other committee member
 - The Department Chair or Vice Chairs
 - A Member of the Executive Committee: this committee consists of the Chair, Vice Chair, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Director of Graduate Studies, and Chair of the DEI Committee
- If you feel unsure about whom to contact with your concern and would like to discuss your options in a confidential manner prior to voicing your complaint within the department, we recommend reaching out to the [Ombuds Office](#), as a first step.

During your preliminary conversations about your experiences, faculty and staff will—to the extent permitted by UC policy and the law—try to keep all information confidential until you feel comfortable pursuing a particular course of action. Please note that if a matter involves incidents of sexual harassment, sexual violence, and/or discrimination on the basis of sex and/or gender, University employees are required by law to report these incidents to the Title IX & Sexual Harassment Policy Compliance office. We mention this not to deter you from contacting department members, but to make you aware of your rights as students and the responsibilities of faculty and staff. If you are wanting to discuss incidences of sexual misconduct in a confidential setting, we recommend that you contact CARE at 805-893-4613.

How to Start the Conversation

While the conversation with your trusted department member or Ombuds person may not lead to an immediate resolution of your concern, these initial conversations should help to develop a clearer sense of where best to address your concern to achieve an effective improvement to your experience. During your conversation you may want to discuss the following:

- **What is the nature of your concern?** Review the issue at hand and determine where it might fall on the spectrum of complaints, as this will determine the most effective outlet or office for resolving the problem based on your needs. The following document provides [an overview of how to evaluate the nature of your complaint or labor grievance](#), but you will likely want to make the determination with your trusted party, especially if you are feeling stressed by your current working conditions. Another helpful resource is the [Holistic Approach to Conflict and Adversity wheel](#) published by the Graduate Division.
- **Who are the affected parties?** The answer may vary, but it will determine the best course of action. For instance: if your complaint is about the physical conditions of your workplace, the likely resolution would involve staff in Facilities Management. If it involves a mentor, there are potentially two affected parties. In a course setting, the affected parties could include other students, and an effective resolution might involve multiple parties.
- **What are some realistic next steps to resolving this issue?** Once you have determined the nature of your concern and the affected parties, your trusted department member can help you explore your options for next steps.
- **What other support might you need to improve your workplace conditions while the complaint or grievance is being addressed?** Complaints can sometimes take time to resolve; as changes can be slow to enact. The formal grievance process involves outside campus offices following fixed procedures, which have their own timelines. It is important that during this period you have the support you need to continue your education at UCSB. With your trusted department member or Ombudsperson, you can discuss campus resources that can provide you with support for your mental and physical health, and/or short-term possibilities for diminishing the impact that your concern has on your wellbeing. Additional campus resources for supporting your emotional and physical wellbeing are provided in the “further resources” section below.

Outcome of Discussion with your Trusted Department Member:

After this discussion, your trusted department member will send a note to the Department Chair (or in the event that the complaint is about the Chair, the Vice Chair) noting that they have discussed a complaint with a student. As the student, you can inform your trusted department member how much information they may provide the Department Chair or Vice Chair at this time, except in incidences of mandatory reporting, which faculty and staff are required to report to the Title IX office. Your trusted department member will follow up with you via email in a week to check in with you, should you wish to further discuss steps for resolving the issue at hand.

Because of the nature of graduate instruction—which typically involves individual mentorship—many complaints begin as incidents of miscommunication and misunderstandings. We thus outline a few possibilities for handling complaints between two individuals below.

2. Options for Resolving Interpersonal Conflicts within the Music Department

During your conversation with your trusted party, you may decide that your preferred course of action is to consult with the offending party in the hope of achieving improved communications and working relationships. Some options for resolution of complaints involving interpersonal miscommunication could include those listed below. Your decision about which option to pursue will depend largely on the nature of your concern, your personal preferences, and your sense of communication patterns between the affected parties based on previous experiences.

- **Discussion and Negotiation between Affected Parties**
 - If you decide to raise your concern with the other department member directly, you can request a meeting in writing via email, voicing the nature of your complaint, and then follow up with a meeting in which you discuss how to resolve the conflict and improve the working relationship. If this option feels too intimidating due to power dynamics or otherwise, there are other options below.
- **Discussion and Negotiation between Affected Parties with an Internal Observer**
 - You can propose a meeting with the other department member in the presence of another department member, who could serve as a neutral internal observer of the meeting. Potential internal observers could be the trusted party with whom you initially talked through your concerns, another member of your committee, the Department Chair, Vice Chair or member of the Executive Committee.
- **Discussion and Negotiation with an Outside Mediator from the Ombuds Office**
 - The Ombuds Office offers mediation and/or conflict resolution services. You could work with the Ombuds Office to coordinate and facilitate a meeting with the other department member.
- **Intervention on your Behalf by the Chair**
 - You could meet with the Department Chair privately to voice your concerns, and decide whether you wish for the chair to talk with the other party, either with or without your presence. This option may be ideal for complaints involving multiple students in a course, or for incidents where you wish to reduce/eliminate contact with the person who is the subject of your concerns while the matter is being handled by the department or university.

3. Handling Unresolved Complaints

If the above options do not resolve your concerns, or if your concerns relate to your labor contract, you may wish to pursue a formal complaint with the appropriate campus office (see resources below).

B. External Avenues: Filing a Formal Complaint or Labor Grievance with a Campus Office

If you believe your rights as employees and/or students have been violated, you may wish to file a formal complaint or labor grievance against the party/ies in question. The Ombuds Office (linked below) and/or the trusted department member you contacted to initially discuss your concern can help you determine which office to contact, and also give you an overview of what to expect from these outlets (including timelines for possible action, procedure, and realistic outcomes). The Graduate Division has also

published an overview of Graduate Student Rights and Formal Stages of Appeal that can be very helpful if you find yourself in this unfortunate situation (linked below). A main contact at this office is the Assistant Graduate Dean, [Robert Hamm](#).

Campus Offices and Procedures for Complaints and Grievances

[Graduate Students Rights and Formal Stages of Appeal](#)

This site provides an overview of the procedures for various types of appeal if a graduate student believes they are not being treated fairly (including grade appeals, concerns with committee members, and grievances related to the various positions that graduate students hold within the university).

[Office of the Ombuds](#)

The Ombuds office provides confidential consultations to everyone in the campus community (faculty, students, staff, parents, others) about issues relating to workplace dynamics, interpersonal conflicts, academic concerns, policy questions, or other problems. They are often a first point of call when you have an issue on campus and wish to talk through possible resolutions or campus resources.

[Office of Human Resources](#)

This site provides links to policy documents and staff members who can help with addressing workplace conduct related to non-academic employees. The website includes information about labor relations, and details about the university's policy on abusive conduct in the workplace.

[Student Grievance Procedure](#)

This document outlines the procedure for students reporting an incident of discrimination, harassment, or other type of policy violation. Note that it does not apply to grade appeals, unless the grade appeal is connected to a claim of discrimination or harassment.

[Office of Title IX and Sexual Harassment Policy Compliance](#)

The Title IX office is responsible for ensuring that UCSB's community members fulfill their commitment to create an environment free from sexual harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence. On their website you can find the campus policies on sexual violence and discrimination, and also file a report with the Title IX office.

[Office of Equal Opportunity and Discrimination Prevention](#)

The Equal Opportunity & Discrimination Prevention Office (EODP) is primarily intended for staff and faculty: they oversee the University's compliance with federal and state laws and University policies and procedures regarding affirmative action, non-discrimination, and retaliation. On their website you can find information about diversity initiatives on campus, and you can contact their office to report incidents of bias and discrimination, including workplace discrimination.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

This office adjudicates violations of the student code of conduct, both behavioral and academic. This website has links to the student code of conduct, and a link for submitting an incident report. The office also facilitates the campus' [Restorative Justice](#) program, which seeks to address harmful incidents, co-create resolution agreements, and restore relationships.

[Academic Senate Charges Officer](#)

You can contact the Charges Officer of the Academic Senate to file a complaint against a faculty member who may have violated the Faculty Code of Conduct. Complaints can be filed directly, or with the assistance of a faculty member who can sometimes file a report on your behalf.

Quick Links to Forms for Reporting Policy Violations on Campus

The following websites allow you to report incidents of bias, intolerance, and violations of the faculty code of conduct or federal and state laws.

[Abusive Conduct Intake Form](#)

This form is to be used to report violations of the Abusive Conduct in the workplace policy.

[Complaint form for Violations of the Faculty Code of Conduct](#)

This brief form allows you to report a violation of the faculty code of conduct (the code itself is provided in the “know your rights” section below). Your completed form would go to the [Charges Officer](#) of the Academic Senate (see above).

[Office of Student Life: Bias Incident Reporting](#)

On this page students can submit a report of bias within the university community. You can submit anonymously if you wish, and you can also submit reports for yourself, or on behalf of an impacted party.

[Office of Equal Opportunity and Discrimination Prevention](#)

On this page, individuals can report incidents of concerns from faculty and staff regarding behaviors involving discrimination in employment and/or in access to education that may constitute discrimination as covered by university policies.

[University of California Systemwide Intolerance Report Form](#)

On this page, faculty and staff can report incidents of bias, hate speech, hate crimes, graffiti/vandalism, intimidation, bullying or physical violence, incidents of a hostile climate, or other campus climate issues. This page is for the entire UC system: the report can be made anonymously or you can provide identifying details.

[Whistleblower Hotline for Violations of Federal and State Laws](#)

On this page UC community members can confidentially report suspected violations of federal and state laws. More information about the types of violations that can be reported through this outlet are found on the homepage.

C. Further Resources

Knowing Your Rights and Expectations

As students and employees at UCSB, you are entitled to a workspace that is bound by the following policies. These policies aim to provide all members of UCSB’s community with an environment that is free from discrimination, racism, sexism, and harassment. If you are employed as a teaching assistant, student researcher, or within other branches of the university system (e.g. at the library), your labor is also protected by your Union. By knowing your rights, you can better assess the nature of your concern and whether it would be best handled as a complaint within the department or filed as a grievance with the relevant university office.

[Graduate Division Best Practices and Guidelines for Mentoring](#)

This page gives you a sense of what to expect from your mentors at UCSB. These documents can be the start of a conversation between you and your mentor about how to make the most of your time at UCSB and use your degree to further your career and personal goals.

[UCSB Student Code of Conduct](#)

At this link you will find the most recent copy of the UCSB student code of conduct. It addresses the rights and responsibilities of members of the University community and provides campus-wide standards for implementing regulations. The code of conduct is overseen by the [office of student conduct](#), and includes information about reporting violations.

[UCSB Faculty Code of Conduct](#)

At this link you will find the most recent copy of the UC wide faculty code of conduct. The document lays out both the university's responsibilities to support faculty in their positions, and standards of professional conduct for faculty behavior.

[Graduate Students Collective Bargaining Agreement for TAs and Student Researchers](#)

At this link you will find a copy of the UAW 2865 contract, which guarantees student-workers rights and protections. If you hold a TA or research position in the department, it is bound by this contract.

[Policy on Abusive Conduct in the Workplace](#)

At this link you will find a copy of the University of California's policies for ensuring a healthy working environment, where individuals are treated with respect. This policy applies to all university employees, unpaid interns, and third parties, and at all UC campuses.

Promoting a Safe and Welcoming Workplace at UCSB

In addition to all of the above-referenced processes, students might wish to avail themselves of the following resources to affirm their identities and find intellectual, emotional, and structural support during their time at UCSB.

[Departments and Services at the Division of Student Affairs](#)

This page offers a guide to services available to students through the division of student affairs, including those related to academics, physical and mental wellness, and links to campus offices that support different student identities.

[Student Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

The university offers students a range of mental health resources through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), including individual and group counseling. You can find an overview of their services and contact information at this site.

[Campus Advocacy, Resources, and Education](#)

This is a confidential advocacy and education office for interpersonal violence (sexual violence, relationship violence, and stalking). They offer free and confidential services to those in the UC community who are impacted by interpersonal and gender-based violence.

[Campus Learning and Assistance Services](#)

CLAS offers students services that can help them succeed academically, including consultations about writing, language skills, math and science subject sessions, as well as study skills such as time management, preparing for exams, and writing larger projects.

[Disabled Students Program](#)

The disabled students program helps students with temporary and permanent disabilities register for academic accommodations in their classes. At their site you can register with DSP, and get an overview of their services.

[Academic and Staff Assistance Program](#)

ASAP offers faculty and staff resources to help manage work-related and personal concerns that can affect job performance and relationships. These services include confidential short-term therapy, wellness workshops, and assistance with threat management.