

ARTICLE XX. GRIEVANCE & ARBITRATION

Tentative Agreement April 11, 2025

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Section A. The Union may process a grievance in accordance with the procedure outlined in this Article. A grievance is any dispute concerning the interpretation, the application, or claimed violation(s) of a specific provision(s) of this Agreement.

Section B. Initial Oral Discussion

1. The Parties support the resolution of problems at the lowest possible level and, therefore, encourage but do not require informal discussions to resolve problems. An Employee has the right to Union representation for such informal discussions or meetings.
2. Unless agreed to by both the Union and the University, the timeline set forth in Section C for filing a grievance is not tolled by any informal discussions that may have taken place under this section.
3. Mutual resolutions of the complaint at the initial oral discussion shall be in writing, final, and shall not be precedential nor inconsistent with this Agreement. If the parties wish to make such a resolution precedent-setting, the Union and the University shall execute a memorandum of understanding in consultation with the Office of Labor and Employee Relations.

Section C. Only the Union may file grievances under this Article. Regardless of any efforts to informally resolve a complaint, any formal grievance must be filed by the Union at Step One of this Article within thirty-five (35) business days after the event, or after the Employee or Union (whichever date is earlier) should have become aware of the event giving rise to the grievance. In the event an Employee is required by their employment to be temporarily away from the Harvard campus, the Union may file a grievance on that Employee's behalf within forty (40) business days following their return to campus.

Section D. Step 1 of Grievance

The Union may file any grievance with the first line supervisor or department chair or comparable director in units with no department chair for resolution in accordance with this Article.

1. The Step 1 grievance shall be in writing and state pertinent facts of the case; the provision(s) of the Agreement alleged to have been violated; and a statement of the desired outcome. A copy of the grievance shall also be sent by the Union to the Director of the Office of Labor and Employee Relations.
2. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of the Step 1 grievance, the supervisor or department chair or designee, director or designee shall meet with the Union representative(s) to discuss the grievance in an effort to reach a resolution.

3. Following the meeting, the first line supervisor or department chair or director or their designees shall have fifteen (15) business days after the meeting to provide a written response to the grievance.

Section E. Step 2 of Grievance

1. In the event the response to the Step 1 grievance is unsatisfactory, then within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the Step 1 response, the Union may appeal the grievance to the Dean or designee or to the next level of management above the first line supervisor for those who do not report through academic lines.
2. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of the grievance, the Dean or designee or the individual at the next level of management above the first line supervisor or designee shall meet with the Union representative(s) discuss the grievance and explore potential resolution.
3. Following the meeting, the University representative at this level shall have fifteen (15) business days to provide a written response to the grievance.

Section F. Arbitration

1. In the event the response to the Step 2 grievance is unsatisfactory, then within thirty (30) business days of receiving the Step 2 response, the Union may appeal the decision to arbitration by submitting written notice to the University. Only the Union may process a grievance to arbitration.

The parties shall attempt to agree upon an arbitrator. If such agreement is not reached within ten (10) business days after the Union's written demand for arbitration, the Union may request in writing to the American Arbitration Association or Labor Relations Connection that the arbitrator be selected in accordance with the agency's rules applicable to labor arbitrations.

2. Arbitration will be conducted in accordance with the rules of the American Arbitration Association or Labor Relations Connection.
3. Each party shall bear the expense of preparing and presenting its own case. The compensation, fees, and expenses of the arbitrator shall be borne equally by the Union and the University. If the parties agree to have the hearing transcribed, the parties will share equally in the cost of the transcription.
4. Unless otherwise mutually agreed, each arbitration hearing shall deal with no more than one (1) grievance.
5. The arbitrator shall have no power to add to, subtract from, modify or disregard any of the provisions of this Agreement.

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6. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding on the parties, although each side retains whatever rights it has under state or federal law to challenge the decision and award.
7. The arbitrator shall render a decision on the grievance within thirty (30) calendar days of the close of the hearing, or the filing of briefs, whichever is later. The decision shall be in writing and shall set forth the findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions on the issues submitted.

Section G. Time Limits

1. Failure by the Union to comply with the time limitations of this Article at any of the Steps, including the initial filing of the grievance, shall constitute a forfeiture of the right to pursue the grievance and shall preclude any further processing of the grievance.
2. Failure by the University at any Step to communicate its response within the specified time limits shall permit the Union to proceed to the next Step.
3. All time limits herein may be extended by mutual agreement expressed in writing.

Section I. Employees who are dismissed or suspended shall be permitted to file their grievance at Step 2.

Section J. The filing or pendency of a grievance under the provisions of this Article shall not prevent the University from taking the action complained of, subject, however, to the final decision of the arbitrator.

Section K. Unless otherwise stated in writing by the University and Union, any mutual resolution of grievances at any step shall not be precedential nor inconsistent with this Agreement.

* Parties disagree on term "University"