Calvin Theological Seminary Grievances and Rights of Appeal Procedures

It is our goal that every member of the Calvin Seminary will seek to provide a safe and healthy learning community for all people. We hope that individuals will approach a grievance in a spirit of Christian love and support for one another. Moreover, the grievance process should be one that leads to restoration of Christian community in which the members are affirmed and express love and respect for one another.

[Note: The procedure outlined in this policy shall be used to resolve student grievances with individual faculty or staff members or with the decisions of seminary offices or committees. Grievances covered by this policy include issues relating to classroom procedures, grade complaints, and department decisions. This policy does not cover issues of academic dishonesty or plagiarism; faculty, staff, or student grievances concerning students; or sexual harassment and discrimination. Please refer to the Student Handbook, Student Conduct Code, and/or Safe and Healthy Community Policy for specific policies and procedures for these matters. If you have additional questions after review of a specific policy or need additional clarification, please contact the Dean of Students office (Jeff Sajdak or Sarah Chun) or the Academic Dean (Ronald Feenstra).]

If students feel they have been treated unfairly in any of their dealings with Calvin Seminary, they should first follow an informal grievance procedure: Consult with the individual involved such as the faculty member, staff person, committee/chair, or head of an office. If this informal process does not bring about a resolution to the grievance, then the procedures for a formal grievance, outlined below, should be followed.

Note that a formal grievance is legitimate only when a student is personally the object of a decision or action. There are two procedures for formal grievances, depending on the nature of the grievance: Course-Related Grievances and Personal or Policy-Related Grievances. The procedures for both types of grievances are the same, except for the individual who initially receives and handles the grievances.

Course-related grievances relate to coursework, such as complaints about grades, classroom procedures, and course requirements and should be brought to the Academic Dean.

Personal or policy-related grievances relate to decisions made or actions taken by faculty or staff members, committees, or offices and should be brought to one of the Deans of Students. The procedure for addressing grievances is outlined below.

The grievance shall first be presented to the responsible Dean for resolution. (If the Deans identified above as responsible for handling the grievance are the object of the grievance or otherwise unable to serve, then course-related grievances should be presented to one of the Deans of Students and personal or policy-related grievances should be presented to by the Academic Dean. If none of the Deans are able to serve the student in this capacity, the student is directed to contact the Chief Operating Officer or the President.) The grievance should be presented promptly in writing, preferably with an oral report, to the Dean. The Dean shall investigate the relevant facts, interview the parties involved so that their stories are heard, and prepare a written response, which shall be given to the parties involved promptly (normally within 30 days, depending on the nature of the investigation required).
If either party is not satisfied with the resolution, a written grievance may then be presented to the Chief Operating Officer. The Chief Operating Officer shall review the grievance and the Dean’s resolution, meet with the parties involved in the grievance to hear their stories, investigate any additional facts, and then prepare a written response, which shall be given to the parties involved promptly (normally within 30 days, depending on the nature of the investigation). The decision of the Chief Operating Officer will be final.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Chief Operating Officer, he/she may appeal to the Board of Trustees at their next meeting.

A student also may contact the accrediting agency of Calvin Theological Seminary, the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada:

10 Summit Park Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275
Telephone: 412-788-6505
Website: http://www.ats.edu/
*request the liaison for Calvin Seminary

Distance students may also contact the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement portal agency for Michigan:

State of Michigan,
Dept. of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs
Corporations, Securities & Commercial Licensing – Schools and Licensing
PO Box 30018
Lansing, MI 48909

Michael Beamish, Manager
517.241.6806 phone
517.373.2162 fax
beamishm@michigan.gov