The Grievance Panel met two times during the 2015-2016 academic year. The first meeting was held on Thursday October 15, 2015. The purpose of this meeting was to go over the role and procedures of the committee, choose a Chair, pick a 5-person panel (Hearing Board) to hear the grievance that was filed, and talk further about some bylaw changes discussed last year. Jeff Zabel was chosen as Chair of the Grievance Panel and also as head of the Hearing Board that would oversee the grievance case that was filed in the fall. Jeff Berry, Peggy Cebe, Hugh Roberts, and Mary Shultz also served on the Hearing Board.

The second meeting was held on Thursday April 14, 2016. Special guests were Dana Fleming, Assistant General Counsel, Lili Palacios-Baldwin, Tufts Associate General Counsel, Sabina Vaught, previous Grievance Panel member and Ombudsperson, and Jill Zellmer, Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and vote on changes to the Grievance Panel Bylaws, to provide a brief Summary about recent grievance case and the need to update the Grievance Panel Procedures based on the experience with this case, and to elect a Chair and Ombudsperson for next academic year.

Proposed changes to the Bylaws:
1. Remove the position of secretary as an office of the Grievance Panel
2. Extend the term of elected members from 3 to 5 years.
3. Extend the term of the Ombudsperson to three years and extend eligibility to Grievance Panel members in their second year

Rationale for changes:
1. This position is obsolete
2. Grievances have been rare in recent years and there is little institutional memory. Longer terms should not be unduly burdensome, since the committee rarely has any business, and this would both allow members to gain some useful experience over a longer term and is a necessary context for the third proposed change to the Bylaws.
3. Recent Ombudspersons have become painfully aware of the fact that they are untrained and relatively inadequate for a position of considerable importance and sensitivity. They would like to see the Ombudsperson serve for a longer period so that he/she can gain competence from experience. We would also welcome receiving some professional training (if the university will pay for this, which then becomes another argument for a longer term).

There was unanimous approval of these three proposed changes. There will be an official vote next fall and then they will be brought before the faculty for approval.
It was decided that the Chair and the newly elected Ombudsperson would work with Lili Palacios-Baldwin and Jill Zellmer over the summer to develop alternatives for the Ombudsperson position that will be brought to the Grievance Panel next fall.

Jeff Zabel was re-elected as Chair and Mary Shultz was elected as Ombudsperson for the Grievance Panel.

For the Committee:
Jeff Zabel  Economics Department and Chair
Steven Hirsch  Classics Department and Ombudsperson
Jeff Berry  Political Science Department
Peggy Cebe  Physics and Astronomy Department
Luis Dorfmann  Civil and Environmental Engineering Department
Soha Hassoun  Computer Science Department
Tama Leventhal  Child Study and Human Development Department
Sara Lewis  Biology Department
Hugh Roberts  History Department
Rosalind Shaw  Anthropology Department
Mary Shultz  Chemistry Department