# What is the Research and Training Conditions Committee (RTCC)?

Great question! When the bargaining team negotiated our contract in 2019, they included a provision to create a committee that would address GR concerns not covered by the contract. This resulted in the formation of the Research and Training Conditions Committee (RTCC) in 2023. The RTCC consists of both faculty and GR representatives. Their role is to hear GR complaints, and make recommendations to the Provost’s Office about how they should be resolved.

# What kind of problems can RTCC address?

RTCC is allowed to hear issues relating to a GR’s research training or expectations. They don’t have power over everything — Title IX issues are still dealt with by Title IX, for example — but any issues related specifically to your PhD project or relationship with your mentor can be dealt with here. Are you working 80 hours in the lab every week? Are you being asked to do unsafe work without adequate training or protection? Are the parameters of your project being changed without your input? These are the kinds of issues that we’re talking about. (Note: some of these are also contract violations — and there is nothing stopping you from raising a complaint with RTCC while simultaneously filing a grievance.)

# How do I file a complaint?

GRs who would like to submit a complaint can do so by filling out the intake form, which is currently housed on O2 (<https://o2.ohsu.edu/graduate-researchers/rtc-committee.cfm>) but will soon be moved to a more accessible website. A representative in the GR Administration Office will reach out to the GR and confirm they want to move forward with the RTCC process, and answer any questions the GR has. If the complaint is about an issue that RTCC is not designed to address, you will receive recommendations on other reporting options. Filing a complaint on the Intake Form does not automatically launch an RTCC investigation, so you can fill it out even if you’re not sure whether RTCC can help you.

**How does the RTCC investigate and respond to complaints?**

Once a GR has filled out the Intake Form and confirmed they want to continue with the RTCC process, a meeting will be scheduled for RTCC to hear the complaint. Meetings are currently virtual and held 4-6 weeks after the complaint is submitted. At the meeting, the RTCC will hear from the GR about the issue and ask any relevant questions. GRs may provide any additional documentation they feel is relevant. GRs can also bring a support person, including a GRU steward, and/or an attorney.

The RTCC will hear from both the GR and other involved parties. This means that if your complaint is against your PI, your PI will be notified, asked to attend the meeting, and provided an opportunity to respond to the complaint. They can also bring support persons and/or attorneys.

Once the RTCC has heard all sides and completed its review, it will submit a written recommendation to the Office of the Provost within 10 business days. The recommendation will also include a meeting summary and majority and minority opinions, and will be forwarded to all parties involved in the complaint. The Office of the Provost will then issue a final decision within 30 days. If you don’t like the final decision (or you just can’t get enough of committee meetings) don’t worry – you can appeal! Similarly, if the terms of the final decision are not being followed, there is a separate process to address non-compliance.

**I have more questions. Where do I go?**

The O2 page has more information and documents (<https://o2.ohsu.edu/graduate-researchers/rtc-committee.cfm>, or search “Research Training Conditions Committee” on O2). You can also reach out to the current GRU representatives: Sarah Taylor ([tasarah@ohsu.edu](mailto:tasarah@ohsu.edu)), Amy Chan ([chanamy@ohsu.edu](mailto:chanamy@ohsu.edu)), or Sarah Cate Baker ([bakersar@ohsu.edu](mailto:bakersar@ohsu.edu)). These positions are for 1-year terms, so you can also reach out if you’re curious about whether you’d like to be on this committee in the future.

**I think RTCC could be better. Do you take suggestions?**

Yes! RTCC is currently in its first year of operation, and will likely make changes to our process as we go along. Additionally, RTCC is required to submit a review and evaluation of its performance to the Provost’s Office every 2 years. There is definitely opportunity to incorporate student feedback.