

STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE

EFFECTIVE DATE February, 2000

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION Vice President Academics and Research / Vice President, Fairview, Deans, Department Chairs

CROSS-REFERENCE Student Misconduct: Academic and Non-Academic
Grading Policy
Examination Policy
Guidelines for Academic Schedule
Students Rights and Responsibilities
Course Outline Policy
Advanced Standing: Recognition of Other Learning Experiences

POLICY STATEMENT

Students have the right to fair and equitable procedures for resolving matters affecting academic standing.

PREAMBLE

The procedures as outlined in the Student Academic Grievance policy are those that a student is required to follow in the event that the actions of a faculty are deemed to be adversely affecting the student's academic standing. Examples of such actions are class conduct, course preparation, behaviour toward a student, teaching methods or non-adherence to the course outline.

Students are encouraged to seek advice and to request the presence of an advocate at any stage of the grievance process.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Standing: a student's status or rank in any course or program

Advocate: any person who will support the griever or who will plead on behalf of the griever

Informal Process:	Steps 1 and 2 of the Academic Grievance Policy including resolution sought through related policies
Formal Process:	Step 3 and 4 of the Academic Grievance Policy
Appeal Process:	An extraordinary appeal by either party of the Academic Grievance Committee's decision or an appeal of a decision made as per Student Misconduct: Academic and Non-Academic Policy, Section A – Academic Misconduct.

PROCEDURES/RULES STATEMENT

1. Confidentiality

The student is advised that the entire process of grievance, all professional personnel, faculty, staff, and administrators are bound by a code of professional ethics to hold in confidence discussions with students and names of students, unless the student specifically gives permission in writing for that information to be divulged.

2. General Procedures

Normally a dispute will be resolved at the earliest step possible.

Step 1 Informal Discussion with the Instructor

In fairness to the instructor, the student should approach the instructor and make every effort to resolve the situation causing the concern.

Step 2 Review by the Chair (informal)

If satisfaction has not been achieved as a result of discussion with the instructor, or the student is uncomfortable approaching the instructor directly, the student should carry the concern to the Chair of the Department. The Chair will normally meet informally with the student and the instructor to facilitate a timely resolution to the issue at this step.

Step 3 Review by the Dean (formal)

If the concern is not resolved at Step 2, the student will be asked to prepare a written statement of the grievance and indicate clearly the expected outcome. The Divisional Dean shall try to negotiate the resolution of the dispute at this step.

If the Dean has concerns about perception of bias, he/she may disqualify him/herself and name a colleague as a replacement. If the grievance cannot be resolved by these steps, the Dean or designate will advise the student of the process for formal grievance.

Step 4 Formal submission to the Academic Grievance Committee

If Steps 1, 2 and 3 fail to resolve the issue, the student may request a formal hearing by delivering a statement in writing signed by the student to the Dean, Student Experience. The statement prepared at Step 3 should be the basis of this submission and should be copied to the instructor, the Chair and the Divisional Dean.

Step 5 The Dean, Student Experience will inform the Vice-President, Academics and Research and/or the Vice-President, Fairview of the receipt of a formal grievance.

The Academic Grievance Committee

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of the Academic Grievance Committee is to hear matters of grievance affecting the academic standing of a student.
- 3.2 The Committee will submit a recommendation for resolution of the issue to the Dean, Student Experience

4. Membership

- 4.1 The Committee shall normally consist of five persons assembled for individual hearings:
 - 4.1.1 The Chair of the Committee shall normally be the appropriate Dean responsible for the delivery of the courses;
 - 4.1.2 Two academic staff members, one selected by the department responsible for the delivery of the courses and one nominated by the department from another department;
 - 4.1.3 Two student representatives selected by the Students' Association, one selected from the department responsible for the delivery of the courses and one selected from the Students' Association membership at large.

- 4.2 Members of the Committee may disqualify themselves from deliberating on an issue if there are concerns about perception of bias. Another member from the same constituency is named as a replacement.

5. Operation

- 5.1 The quorum of the Academic Grievance Committee is five.
- 5.2 Three affirmative votes are required to uphold the decision of the Committee. All Committee members, including the chair of the committee, must vote.

6. Term

- 6.1 The term of the Academic Grievance Committee will end after a recommendation is made to the Dean, Student Experience, the grievor and the respondent.

7. Jurisdiction of the Committee

- 7.1 The Academic Grievance Committee shall hear and determine grievances affecting academic standing at the College.
- 7.2 The Academic Grievance Committee shall have no jurisdiction to hear a grievance until the grievor has exhausted all informal procedures (Steps 1 and 2). The informal procedures may include seeking resolution under related policies.
- 7.3 The Committee has the right to request any College employee or student to appear.
- 7.4 All business of the Committee shall be conducted confidentially.

8. Procedure

- 8.1 Upon receipt of a written grievance, the Dean, Student Experience shall confirm that the informal process (Steps 1 and 2) was unable to resolve the issue. The Dean, Student Experience shall inform the Dean of the Division. The Divisional Dean shall, within five working days, ensure that an Academic Grievance Committee is formed. The Dean, Student Experience will confirm the participation of the Students' Association designates.

- 8.2 The Academic Grievance Committee will meet to consider the issue presented within five working days of the date of the establishment of the Committee, and will strive to conclude the issue within ten working days.
- 8.3 Both the griever and the respondent will be given opportunity to state their case. The Academic Grievance Committee will invite anyone they deem necessary to present information. In exceptional circumstances, written submissions or teleconference participation may be acceptable.
- 8.4 Upon conclusion of their deliberation, the Academic Grievance Committee shall prepare a brief summary of the information presented to it, to which shall be added the recommendation of the Committee and the reasons for the recommendation. The summary and recommendation shall be signed by the Chair of the committee and normally delivered to the griever and respondent within five (5) working days of the conclusion of the hearing with a copy to the Dean, Student Experience

9. The Appeal Process

- 9.1 An appeal of the Recommendation of the Academic Grievance Committee may be made by either party;
- 9.2 An Appeal of a decision made as per the Student Misconduct: Academic and Non-Academic Policy, Section A – Academic Misconduct may be made by either party.

10. Grounds

- 10.1 The grounds for an appeal shall include but not be restricted to the following:
 - 10.1.1 Procedural errors on the part of the Academic Grievance Committee.
 - 10.1.2 Failure of the Academic Grievance Committee to consider all factors relevant to the decision being appealed.
 - 10.1.3 Bias or discrimination against either party on the part of the Academic Grievance Committee.
 - 10.1.4 New information that was not available during the academic grievance procedure.

10.1.5 Failure to follow the guidelines as outlined in the Student Misconduct: Academic and Non-Academic Policy, Section A – Academic Misconduct

11. Powers of the Appeal Panel

- 11.1 The Appeal Panels has the authority to determine if the appeal is to be heard based on Item 10.1.
- 11.2 The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be either
 - 11.2.1 to uphold the appeal and make such order as is required,
 - or
 - 11.2.2 to deny the appeal.
- 11.3 The panel shall hear an appeal from the same appellant against the same decision only once.
- 11.4 The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final and binding.

12. Procedures

- 12.1 Within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the decision of the Academic Grievance Committee, an appeal shall be instituted by delivering a statement in writing signed by the appellant to the appropriate Vice President. The statement must set forth the decision being appealed, the grounds for the appeal, the nature of the injustice, and the relief requested.
- 12.2 The Vice President will convene a meeting as per membership described in section 13.1.
- 12.3 The Appeal Panel shall meet within ten (10) working days of receipt of the written statement.
- 12.4 Prior to hearing evidence, the Appeal Panel shall determine that the appeal falls within its jurisdiction.
- 12.5 The Appeal Panel shall hear evidence from all involved parties.
- 12.6 An advocate or an advisor may accompany the appellant and the respondent.

- 12.7 Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Appeal Panel shall prepare a brief summary of the evidence and argument presented to it, to which shall be added the decision of the Appeal Panel and the reasons for the decision. The summary and decision shall be signed by the Chair of the committee and normally delivered to the appellant and respondent within five (5) working days of the conclusion of the hearing.

13. Membership

- 13.1 The panel shall consist of three members:

13.1.1 the appropriate Vice-President will act as Panel Chair (based on the campus of the appeal).

13.1.2 the Vice President may designate an alternate Vice President to select and chair the panel, if perception of bias is a concern),

13.1.3 one student named by the Vice President,

13.1.4 one faculty member outside the Department named by the Vice President.

14. Records Management

- 14.1 The Grievance Committee and the Appeal Panel will create and maintain, in confidence the record of proceedings and outcomes. The records will be stored/destroyed as per the Records Management Policy of the College.
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