



Procedure 303-06 Academic Appeals

Sponsor: Academic and Student Affairs

Purpose

This procedure describes the process by which a student may appeal a grade or other academic decision affecting completion of course and/or program requirements including decisions regarding academic integrity violations (see Procedure 303-11 Academic Integrity).

Definitions

Academic Appeal A request to alter a grade or other academic decision based upon sound reasoning and/or clear and compelling evidence.

Academic Appeals Committee An ad-hoc committee comprised of the Provost (chair), an academic leader (Dean, Associate Dean, or Lead Faculty), a full-time faculty member, the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee), and a student (where possible) will be convened for each Level 3 appeal. Committee members will be selected from among those without a direct interest in the academic appeal being reviewed to avoid a conflict of interest.

Procedure

The Academic Appeals procedure is to be used for appeals of grades and other academic decisions only. Student complaints regarding other items are described in Procedure 503-05 Student Complaint, while descriptions of department-specific appeals processes (such as registration appeals, financial aid appeals, and parking citation appeals) can be found on the department's website. Students wishing to pursue a grievance regarding other items that are not already addressed through other specific College policy and procedures, including issues with faculty conduct, should follow the Procedure 503-05 Student Complaint procedure. If another appeal procedure exists for the grievance in question, the student will be referred to the appropriate procedure. Potential intervention by third parties or examination of educational records during the academic appeals process is subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) as amended. Students who pursue appeals under false pretenses may be subject to disciplinary action under Procedure 503-01 Student Code of Conduct. Failure to begin the informal complaint process within the timeframes set forth in this Procedure shall constitute a waiver of the complaint. Failure at any step of this Procedure to appeal to the next level within the specified timelines described herein shall be deemed acceptance of the decision rendered at that step and there shall be no further right of appeal.

Level 1 – Informal Academic Appeal Process

The goal of the informal academic appeal process is to provide information to the student that answers their questions and concerns and/or to come to a resolution agreeable to both the student and the College.

To address academic appeals in a timely fashion, the student must begin the informal process within ten (10) College working days of the disputed grade or academic decision being issued by the instructor.

Every effort will be made to resolve the appeal at the lowest level. When a student wishes to dispute a grade or academic decision, they should attempt to resolve the issue by:

1. First, conferring directly with the instructor who issued the grade or academic decision and attempting to resolve the appeal.
2. Second, conferring with the instructor's immediate supervisor if the instructor does not address the appeal to the satisfaction of the student. Lead faculty are the immediate supervisors of part-time faculty, and academic deans are the immediate supervisors of full-time faculty.

Students, instructors, and supervisors (when applicable) will each take notes regarding the informal appeal and resolution and keep these notes in their personal records.

Level 2 – Formal Academic Appeal Process

If a student has followed the informal academic appeal process and the academic appeal was not addressed to their satisfaction, they may file a formal written academic appeal with the Dean of Arts & Sciences (A&S) for issues involving faculty in the A&S division or with the Dean of Career & Technical Education (CTE) for issues involving faculty in the CTE division (see College organizational chart for reporting lines).

To address academic appeals in a timely fashion, the student must begin the formal process after the informal appeal process has concluded and within thirty (30) College working days of the disputed grade or academic decision being issued by the instructor.

The formal academic appeal must contain the following information:

1. Name of the student(s) filing the formal academic appeal.
2. Name of the instructor.
3. Statement of facts and nature of the formal academic appeal.
4. Date(s) of the incident(s).
5. Resolution being sought by the student(s).
6. Student's signature.

The Dean receiving the formal academic appeal will forward a copy to the instructor and their lead faculty supervisor (in the case of part-time instructors only). The Dean will work with all parties involved and the other instructional Dean to mediate the appeal in a timely manner. Within ten (10) College working days, the Dean will notify the student of the outcome in writing. If all parties accept the decision, it will be considered final.

Deans will take notes of all formal academic appeals proceedings and keep them in their personal records.

Level 3 – Appeal Procedure:

Within ten (10) College working days of the Level 2 resolution being offered, a student or instructor wishing to appeal the Level 2 decision must submit a copy of their completed appeal form and any additional evidence to support the appeal to the Provost for consideration by the Academic Appeals Committee. Within twenty (20) College working days of receipt of the appeal form, the Academic Appeals Committee will conduct an investigation of the unresolved appeal, render a decision, and inform the student, instructor, lead faculty (where applicable), and Dean of the decision in writing. The Committee may take one or more of the following actions:

1. Uphold the Level 2 decision.
2. Overturn the Level 2 decision in light of procedural concerns and/or new evidence.

3. Remand the appeal to the dean for further consideration in light of procedural concerns and/or new evidence.

The Academic Appeals Committee's decision on an academic appeal is final. The provost (or designee) will take notes of all Level 3 proceedings and keep them in the provost's personal records.

References

Procedure 303-11 Academic Integrity

Procedure 503-01 Student Code of Conduct

Procedure 503-05 Student Compliant

20 USC §1232g: Family Educational and Privacy Rights (FERPA)

Procedure History

06/03/2003 New

04/06/2004 Revised

10/13/2008 Revised

05/13/2009 Revised

05/08/2013 Revised and approved by College Council

09/24/2015 Revised (removed department chair reference)

02/25/2021 Revised, Renamed (from Academic Appeals) and approved by Executive Leadership Council

Legal Review

None