

College of Education
Student Appeals and Hearings for Academic Matters & Academic Dishonesty

All students (undergraduate and graduate) have the right to appeal decisions related to Academic Matters (such as grading or removal from a course or program) as long as the appeal is limited to claims of prejudice, capriciousness, or error. Additionally, when students are charged with Academic Dishonesty, they have the right to an appeal and a hearing.

The purpose of this document is to describe the appeal and hearing procedures for Academic Matters, if the matter cannot be resolved without a formal hearing. This document also refers to Academic Dishonesty, as governed by UW Reg 6-802. When disputes cannot be settled between a student and a faculty member, the student (for Academic Matters) or the faculty member (Academic Dishonesty), after meeting with the department head, may bring the issue to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies to begin the appeal or hearing process.

Academic Matters

Students who believe they have been evaluated in a way that involves prejudice, capriciousness, or error may contact the Associate Dean to file an appeal and request a hearing. The appeal and hearing request must take place within 15 calendar days of notification of the academic issue (such as a grade being posted at the end of the semester or receipt of a letter of program suspension). The appeal must be in writing and include a complete description of the problem, including the steps that have been taken to resolve the issue with the faculty member and the department head, as well as the basis for the appeal (prejudice, capricious evaluation or treatment, or error).

The following conditions form the only bases for appeal: prejudice toward the student, capricious evaluation or treatment, and error. For the purposes of student appeals, these terms shall be defined as follows:

- Prejudice is an adverse, preconceived judgment about the student based on personal characteristics or group membership.
- Capricious evaluation is the application of different standards of evaluation to members of the same course without legitimate reason. It may also involve grading assignments or assigning course grades in a manner inconsistent with the articulated standards of evaluation for the assignment or course.
- Capricious treatment is an unpredictable or inconsistent action that affects the student in an adverse way.
- Error occurs when the instructor makes a mistake in evaluating the student.

The Associate Dean will notify both the instructor and the department head of the appeal. The instructor, department head, and student will have 10 working days to provide any additional written information to the Associate Dean. After the 10-day period has elapsed, the Associate Dean will make one of the following determinations:

1. The evidence for an appeal is sufficient. The Associate Dean will convene the Student Appeals Committee for a hearing.
2. The evidence is insufficient for further consideration and the appeal is dismissed.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty is governed by UW Reg 6-802; please see this Regulation for details, including the UW definition of Academic Dishonesty.

The Hearing Process for Academic Matters

The Student Appeals Committee will consist of three faculty members and two students (one undergraduate student and one graduate student). A chair of the Committee will be selected from the faculty when the Committee meets for the first time each year. The chair's term shall be one year. If a committee member has a conflict of interest in a specific appeal case, the Associate Dean will excuse him/her from the case; the Associate Dean will identify a temporary replacement member.

The hearing should be held as soon as possible but within 45 working days of the initiation date of the appeal. The Associate Dean will provide a copy of the complaint to the instructor. Within 10 working days of notification, the instructor may provide to the Associate Dean a written reply to the complaint, including any supporting documents. The written evidence will be provided to both parties and to the Committee at least five working days prior to the scheduled hearing. Any additional written evidence brought to the hearing is subject to acceptance or rejection by the Committee. Either party may bring witnesses to the hearing to provide additional, relevant information for the case. Either party may also bring one advisor to the hearing; the advisor is not a spokesperson but is present only to provide support or advice.

Hearings are not open to the public. Typically the hearing will take no more than two hours. The hearing shall proceed as follows:

1. A member of the Committee will be selected to take minutes of the hearing. The hearing will be audio-recorded. Audio recordings will be securely stored by the Dean's office.
2. Both parties and advisors may be present during the entire hearing except during the Committee's deliberations. Either party may attend the hearing by phone or provide testimony in advance if unable to attend in person.
3. Both parties will be allowed a reasonable amount of time to make their statements. The order will be as follows: statement of student, instructor's response, rebuttal from student, rebuttal from instructor, and student's final summary.
4. Witnesses will be permitted to make statements but will generally be limited to no more than 5 minutes each, as determined by the Committee.
5. Committee members may ask questions of either party or the witnesses.
6. Immediately following the hearing, the Committee will deliberate to determine its ruling. The deliberation will not be audio-recorded. All Committee members, including the chair, will have voting privileges. The Committee Chair will provide the Associate

Dean with a summary of the evidence presented and a brief statement of the committee's ruling as soon as possible but within at least 10 working days of completion of the hearing.

7. All documents and copies will be collected by the chair and returned to the Dean's office at the completion of the hearing. The audio-recording will be stored by the Dean's office and used only as necessary for the Associate Dean's review or for use by Academic Affairs.
8. The Dean or Dean's designee will review cases of Academic Matters and either uphold or reverse the Committee's decision. The final ruling will be provided to both parties and to the Student Appeals Committee members.
9. If the student chooses to request a further review of a case involving Academic Matters, he/she must contact the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs within 30 days of being notified of the College's ruling. The Dean or Dean's designee will forward all documents and Committee proceedings to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

The College of Education faculty and administration take issues related to Academic Matters and Academic Dishonesty very seriously. We hold high standards for our students and our faculty. When concerns are raised that indicate a possibility of prejudice, capriciousness, error, or academic dishonesty, we will make every effort to treat all parties with fairness and respect.