

# 11. ACADEMIC APPEALS

Students who have good reason to believe they have been subject to mistaken, improper, or unjust treatment with respect to their academic work have the right to appeal to the Committee on Academic Appeals. An appeal must be based on solid evidence and not merely on injured feelings. This Committee's jurisdiction extends only to individuals currently enrolled at the University or enrolled during the previous academic year and dismissed, (i.e., the Committee's jurisdiction does not apply to individuals whose application for admission to a program at the University has not been accepted).

Please see Academic Regulation 18 (<https://smu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/undergraduate/academic-integrity-student-responsibility/>), for appeals arising from Academic Integrity reports.

Academic Appeals shall be governed by the following procedures:

## a. Appealing of Final Grades

The only grades that may be appealed are official final grades. Students should be aware that when a grade appeal is launched, the grade can be raised, lowered, or remain unchanged.

(i) Students who wish to appeal a grade must first consult the instructor concerned within one month of receiving the grade and, if unsatisfied, should then consult the Associate Dean of the Faculty in which the course is offered. If informal resolution is not possible and the student wishes to pursue formal appeal, the student shall forward the appeal form and supporting documentation to the Committee on Academic Appeals through the University Secretariat. Academic Appeals must be submitted within three months from the last day of the semester in which the course is taken. In their appeal documentation, the student must provide specifics as to when the instructor, and the Associate Dean were consulted, together with any other information the student considers relevant. A form to launch an appeal is available from the Service Centre (<https://www.smu.ca/webfiles/AcademicAppeal.pdf>). It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the appeal form is submitted within the deadlines stated in this regulation. Appeals that fall outside of the stated deadlines will not be accepted and/or considered.

(ii) It is the responsibility of students to provide the Committee with the completed appeal form, copies of any communication with the instructor related to the appeal, any returned, graded work directly related to the grade you are appealing, and any returned, graded work on which your overall course grades were based.

(iii) It is the responsibility of instructors to provide the Committee with all relevant available material on which the grade was based. A student's course documentation should include grade history and copies of any retained graded materials on which the student's grades were based (i.e. exercises, reports, papers, tests, examinations). This documentation shall be retained on-campus for a minimum of twelve months from the deadline of submission of grades.

(iv) When all relevant appeal documentation is received, as soon as possible the Committee will meet to review the evidence presented and reconsider the grade. If necessary, the Committee may appoint a qualified examiner to review the grade. The examiners will submit their report and the evidence reviewed to the Committee for a final decision.

(v) Instructors and students are provided with the option of a five minute interview with the committee to personally present their case. Students

may bring a friend, peer, or student advocate to this interview. These individuals are for support purposes only and have no active role during the meeting.

(vi) The decision of the Committee shall be final.

(vii) Reference Academic Regulation 18 (<https://smu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/undergraduate/academic-integrity-student-responsibility/>), **General Procedures**.

(viii) Withdrawal requests from courses with ongoing Academic Integrity investigations will not be processed until the investigation has concluded. The date of receipt of the withdrawal request will be considered in such cases.

(ix) A student cannot withdraw from a course in which they receive the sanction of failure for an Academic Integrity violation.

A student is able to appeal their grade under Academic Regulation 11 even if there has been an academic integrity incident brought against them in the same course, as long as:

- a. the academic integrity process has been completed
- b. the reason they are appealing is not related to the academic integrity incident.
- c. it is understood that any appeals or appeal related decision under Academic Regulation 11 shall not override any decisions resulting from the academic integrity process under Academic Regulation 18.

## b. Other Appeals

On appeals other than those for a change of grade (Example: Submissions for LOP and transfer credit), the procedures shall be as follows:

(i) Normally within one month of the event or the decision being received by the student, the student shall first consult the office concerned and, if unsatisfied, should then consult the Associate Dean of the appropriate Faculty. If informal resolution is not possible and the student wishes to pursue formal appeal, the student shall submit the appeal form and supporting documentation to the Committee on Academic Appeals through the University Secretariat.

(ii) The Administrator shall forward a copy of the appeal to the Dean of the appropriate Faculty, and, if relevant, to the Chairperson of the Department and the instructor.

(iii) On 5 May 1993, the Academic Senate of the University passed an Enabling Motion which reads in part "...that the Executive Committee of Senate [be] empowered to deal with all appeals concerning graduation which may be made prior to Convocation." Procedurally, these appeals are made to the Registrar.

(iv) The decision of the Committee shall be final.

Reference Academic Regulation 18 (<https://smu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/undergraduate/academic-integrity-student-responsibility/>), **General Procedures**: Students may not normally submit a Non-Grade Appeal to withdraw from the course in which there is an Academic Integrity charge against them.

## c. Decision

If possible, within one month of receiving any appeal under (a) or (b) above, the Committee shall render and communicate its decision through the University Secretariat to all parties concerned. In cases where an

appeal is upheld and/or changing of the grade is required, the Registrar's office will make the change of grade in accordance with the decision of the Academic Appeals Committee.

**Notes:**

- (i) The Committee shall consult with the appellants and instructors.
- (ii) The appellants and instructors will be invited to appear before the Committee(s) hearing the appeal.
- (iii) Members of a committee cannot participate in the hearing of an appeal arising from an action to which they were a party.