
Student Appeals Policy

Department Policy Number

079

Effective Date

September 1, 2009

Purpose

Athabasca University (the University) is committed to fairness in the application of the policy and decisions that affect a student's academic career at the University. This policy and its associated procedures provide a clear and structured approach to handling all student appeals.

Definitions

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| AU | Athabasca University |
| Appellant | The individual making an appeal. An appellant can be a Student, an Applicant, or an authorized representative of a student or applicant. |
| Applicant | Any individual who has completed and submitted a General Application Form for admission to Athabasca University ("AU"). |
| Course Coordinator | The Course Coordinator is the individual responsible for the course. This can be a Course Professor, Course Coordinator, Academic Coordinator or other individual that has been assigned this responsibility. |
| Penalty | The punishment imposed by AU on an Applicant or Student after it has been determined that the applicant or student has violated the Student Academic Misconduct or Non-Academic Misconduct Policy . |
| Procedural Grounds | Grounds for appeal that are based on University policies and procedures. |
| Substantive Grounds | Grounds for appeal that are completely academic in nature. (e.g. the grade was assigned based on other evaluation standards than those published for the course, etc.) |



Student Any individual who has completed and submitted a General Application Form and has been admitted to AU.

University Officer The AU representative responsible for investigation of alleged violation of this Policy, or with the authority to determine the penalty for violation of this Policy, or both, as set out in the [Student Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures](#).

Policy

1.0 Appealable Actions and Decisions

An Appellant may appeal

- a. the assignment of grades on substantive grounds;
- b. the assignment of grades on procedural grounds;
- c. decisions on the evaluation and assessment of transfer credits;
- d. the application of institutional policies and procedures which do not directly impact the assignment of a grade. This appeal process does not apply to policies and procedures in which a decision of an University Officer is expressed as being the final decision, or where no express provision is made in the policy or procedure in question for appeal of the decision; and
- e. the assignment of penalties resulting from decisions made under the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

2.0 Grounds for Appeal

The Appellant wishing to appeal a decision must follow the procedures and submit the appeal to the appropriate University Officer outlined in the appropriate section of the [Student Academic Appeals Procedures](#). If the appeal is misdirected, the University Officer in receipt of the appeal shall redirect the appeal to the appropriate University Officer. Where there is disagreement as to which procedures should be followed or which University Officer should review the appeal, the Chair of the Student Academic Appeals Committee shall make the final decision.

It is the responsibility of the appellant to set out the grounds on which they are basing their appeal. The University has the right to summarily refuse an appeal where the Appellant fails to set out the grounds for the appeal, or fails to follow the appropriate appeal procedure as set out in the [Student Academic Appeals Procedures](#).



3.0 Time Limits

Time limits for submitting appeals under the [Student Academic Appeals Procedures](#) are mandatory and must be adhered to. Failure by an appellant to submit an appeal within the time limits set out therein shall result in the appellant forfeiting the right to appeal. The Chair of the Student Academic Appeals Committee, the Dean (or designates), or the Department Head (or designates) may, in their sole discretion, extend the time limit for the processing of an appeal of an appellant where they consider an extension appropriate under the circumstances.

In all cases the time limit for submission of any appeal shall commence when the Appellant first becomes aware of the decision which they wish to appeal. Where notification of the decision has been sent to the Appellant by the University by mail, the time limit commences when the Appellant receives, or has been deemed to have received, the notification, whichever occurs first. Notification of a decision sent by mail to the last known address of the Appellant is deemed, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to have been received by the Appellant ten (10) business days after mailing if sent to an Alberta address and twenty (20) business days if sent to an address outside Alberta. Registered mail signed for by or on behalf of an Appellant is deemed to have been received on the day it was signed for.

Where notification has been sent to the Appellant by the University through electronic means (e-letter, e-mail, etc.), the time limit commences on five (5) business days from the date the electronic communication was generated.

4.0 Consultation

The University shall consult with staff, faculty or any other person considered appropriate in the process of reviewing an academic appeal application.

5.0 Appeal Outcomes

5.1 Appeal of the Assignment of a Grade

The appeal of the assignment of a grade and subsequent remarking shall result in one of three possible outcomes:

1. the grade remains the same;
2. the grade is raised;
3. or the grade is lowered.

5.2 Appeal on a Transfer Credit Award

The appeal of a decision on transfer credit shall result in one of two possible outcomes:

1. the transfer credit award remains the same; or
2. an award of additional transfer credit.



5.3 Appeal on the Application of University Policy or Procedure

The appeal on the application of University policy or procedure shall result in one of three possible outcomes:

1. the decision remains the same;
2. the decision will be rescinded ; or
3. the decision will be varied.

5.4 Appeal on the Assignment of Penalties from the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

The appeal on the assignment of penalties from the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#) shall result in one of three possible outcomes:

1. the penalty remains the same;
2. the penalty is altered to one that is either less or more severe in nature; or
3. the penalty is rescinded.

Procedure

[Student Academic Appeals Procedures \(079a\)](#)

Related References, Policies, and Procedures

[Student Academic Appeals Procedures \(079a\)](#)

[Student Academic Misconduct Policy \(087\)](#)

[Student Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures \(087a\)](#)

Applicable Legislation/Regulation

[The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)

[Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

Responsible Position/Department

Registrar - Office of the Registrar

Keywords

Grade Appeal

Academic Appeal

Transfer Credit Appeal

Policy Appeal

Student Academic Appeals Committee

Appeal

Procedure Appeal



History

Athabasca University Academic Council, April 29, 2009, Motion # 217-7 (revised)

Athabasca University Academic Council, November 3, 2004, Motion # 185-16 (revised)

Athabasca University Academic Council, January 22, 1997, Motion # 134-7 (revised)

February 1991 (revised)

Athabasca University Academic Council, January 17, 1989, Motion #'s 71.4 and 71.5 (approved)