

**FACULTY OF NATIVE STUDIES
ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURES
UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

PREAMBLE

This document sets out the Faculty of Native Studies regulations governing informal and formal appeals. The Faculty recommends that students consult with the Office of the Student Ombuds for advice in formulating appeals and to act as advisors at appeal hearings (780-492-4689, ombuds@ualberta.ca).

INTRODUCTION

Decisions regarding students' academic standing as well as grades in individual courses may become the subject of an informal or formal appeal. This document sets out the informal procedures to be followed by students before initiating a formal appeal. The Faculty of Native Studies encourages students to seek early support and guidance from the Faculty of Native Studies Student Services office, as well as the Office of the Student Ombuds. If the matter is not resolved through informal measures, this document also outlines the formal regulations by which academic decisions may be appealed.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Standing - Any matter covered in a Faculty's academic standing regulations as approved by General Faculties Council (GFC), its Executive, or the GFC Academic Standards Committee (ASC) and as published in the Calendar, including such matters as continuation in a program, graduation and the [Requirement for a Student to Withdraw](#) (RTW). This section of the University Calendar sets out the academic standing regulations that apply for undergraduate degree programs in the Faculty of Native Studies.

Advisor - An individual selected by the student or the Associate Dean to advise the student or Associate Dean during the appeal process; normally the Senior Coordinator of Admissions and Student Services for the Faculty of Native Studies.

Appeal - A request to overturn a grade-point judgment in a course offered by the Faculty of Native Studies, whether it is undergraduate or graduate.

Appellant - A student appealing a decision made by the Faculty of Native Studies.

Associate Dean - refers to the Associate Dean who acts on authority delegated to them by the Dean to oversee the Faculty of Native Studies appeals regulations. For FNS Undergraduate programs it is the Associate Dean Academic. For FNS Graduate programs it is the Associate Dean Graduate Studies.

Chair - The Chair of the Faculty of Native Studies Academic Appeals Committee.

Discipline Officer - The person appointed to receive a recommendation from the Dean for Severe Sanctions.

FNSAAC - The Faculty of Native Studies Academic Appeals Committee.

Formal Appeal - Appeal submitted to the Faculty of Native Studies Appeals Committee once all other means of appeal have been exhausted.

GFC - The University of Alberta's General Faculties Council.

GFC AAC - The General Faculties Council Academic Appeals Committee.

Grade - A grade point reflecting a judgment of a student's achievement made by the instructor(s) based on absolute achievement and/or relative performance in a class.

Hearing - The opportunity for the appellant and the respondent to present the case in person to the Faculty of Native Studies Appeal Committee.

Informal Appeal - Consultation about a grade with the instructor or the Associate Dean.

Reappraisal - A remarking of a final examination (only) arranged through the Registrar's Office, for which there is a charge.

Respondent - A person designated by the Dean to represent the Faculty of Native Studies during an appeal. Normally the Associate Dean will act as the respondent.

Working Day - is defined as a day on which University administrative offices are open.

1. APPEALS

Advice on the preparation and submission of appeals is available from the Senior Coordinator of Admissions and Student Services, Faculty of Native Studies and from Student OmbudService.

Appeal procedures pertain only to courses taught in the Faculty of Native Studies. Students appealing grades received in courses taught outside the Faculty of Native Studies must follow the appeal guidelines of the Department &/ Faculty in which the courses are taught.

While a student is entitled to an explanation of why any grade was awarded, the following do not constitute grounds for an appeal:

- 1) disliking the instructor's marking scheme;
- 2) coming close to the instructor's cut-off point for a higher grade;
- 3) disagreeing with the instructor's judgment about the quality of submitted work.

Only the following may constitute grounds for an appeal:

- a) errors in calculation;
- b) procedural errors;
- c) failure to consider all relevant factors;
- d) bias and/or discrimination.

2. INFORMAL APPEALS

2.1 Grade appeals of Faculty courses should first be directed to the instructor concerned.

2.2 If after consulting the instructor(s) the concerns have not been resolved, the student may submit an Informal Grade Appeal, in writing with supporting documentation, to the Associate Dean. The appeal letter may be delivered electronically or by letter mail, and must include:

- Student name and University of Alberta student identification number
- Student contact information (telephone number, mailing address and email address)
- Relevant information or details about any errors in grading, procedural errors, extenuating circumstances or failure to consider all relevant factors, bias or discrimination against the student
- Supporting documentation (where relevant)
- Signature of the student

- 2.3 Deadlines to submit an Informal Grade Appeal to the Associate Dean are:
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| February 15th | for Fall term courses |
| June 15th | for Winter term courses and full-year courses |
| July 15th | for Spring term courses |
| September 15th | for Summer term courses |
- 21 Working Days after posting grades for Deferred Examination, Reexaminations and Grades of IN.
- 2.4 The Associate Dean may, in consultation with the instructor, select an impartial reader to reassess the final major paper/project. An unmarked copy of the final major paper/project will be provided to the impartial reader. The reassessed grade will stand, whether it is the same as the original grade, higher or lower grade (see Grounds for Appeal 1a, b, c, d). For final examinations please see 5.0 Final Examination Reappraisal.
- 2.5 In the event that the Associate Dean upholds the original decision of the instructor, the student may submit a Formal Grade Appeal to the Faculty of Native Studies Academic Appeals Committee.
- 2.6 Students wishing to pursue a Formal Grade Appeal must do so within 21 Calendar Days of the deemed receipt of the decision of the Associate Dean.
- 2.7 Grade appeals will not be considered in cases where a deferred examination or reexamination was granted but not written.
- 2.8 The Associate Dean will consider an appeal from a specific appellant for the final grade in the same course only once.
- 2.9 Students will be informed by electronic communication to their University of Alberta email accounts of decisions of the Associate Dean, normally within 21 Calendar Days of receipt of the Informal Grade Appeal. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that it is possible for him/her to receive, access, read and act upon all emails from the Faculty in a timely fashion.
- 2.10 Electronic communications sent by the Faculty of Native Studies will be deemed received by the next University business day after the day the email was sent, regardless of any error, failure notice, internet service provider problem, virus, or auto-reply related to the student's email, unless the error or problem originated with the University. (see [Electronic Communication Policy for Students and Applicants](#)).

3. FORMAL GRADE APPEALS

A formal appeal involving a final grade may be heard if the informal appeal route failed to resolve the problem and if the grounds for appeal include one or more of the following:

- a) errors in calculation;
- b) a procedural error;
- c) failure to consider all factors relevant to the decision being appealed;
- d) bias and/or discrimination.

- 3.1 The Faculty of Native Studies Academic Appeals Committee, acting on delegated authority from the Faculty of Native Studies Faculty Council, shall hear the appeal.
- 3.2 A formal appeal to the Faculty of Native Studies Academic Appeals Committee shall be initiated by delivery of a written appeal signed by the appellant, to the Senior Coordinator, Admissions and Student Services (in person to 2-30 Pembina Hall or by email to nsadvisor@ualberta.ca) within 21 Calendar Days following deemed receipt of the Associate Dean's response to the informal appeal.
- 3.3 The appeal must provide a description of the nature of the appeal, including any available

supporting documentation; the relief being sought; and the steps the appellant has taken within the informal route.

- 3.4 If information, not previously provided at any level of the appeal process to date, is provided during the course of the hearing, the Committee members may agree to adjourn the hearing to allow further investigation.

4.0 THE FACULTY OF NATIVE STUDIES ACADEMIC APPEALS COMMITTEE

- 4.1 The Associate Dean is normally the chair of this committee. However, if the student has been involved in informal discussions with the Associate Dean it creates the potential for a conflict of interest, and the Dean or the Faculty of Native Studies Executive Committee will select an alternate Chair. Its members will include two other faculty members, one of whom must be from the Faculty of Native Studies and the second from among the faculty members who serve on the Faculty of Native Studies Council. The instructor and the student involved in the appeal will not be a part of the committee. The committee will also include a student normally from the Faculty of Native Studies Students' Association for undergraduate students; or a graduate student (s) elected by the Graduate Students' Association. The Faculty of Native Studies Executive Committee will normally select the members of the committee.
- 4.2 The Faculty of Native Studies Academic Appeals Committee shall have no jurisdiction to hear an appeal until the appellant has exhausted all informal procedures available within the Faculty.
- 4.3 The Faculty of Native Studies Academic Appeals Committee shall hear an appeal from the same appellant against the same decision only once.
- 4.4 The decision of the Faculty of Native Studies Academic Appeals Committee in matters of grade appeals is final. Normally, no further appeal will be considered beyond the faculty level.

5.0 FINAL EXAMINATION REAPPRAISAL

- 5.1 If a final grade is disputed in whole or in part because of the grade for the final examination, the student should apply for a formal [Reappraisal](#) of the exam (see Grounds for Appeal 1a, b, c, d). Students must pay a final examination Reappraisal Fee to the UAlberta.
- 5.2 To have an examination reappraised, the student should apply in writing to the Department or Faculty offering the course. The application must include a statement of whether the objective is to raise or lower the grade. The deadlines for reappraisal are February 1 for Fall-term courses; June 22 for Winter-term or Full-term courses; and within thirty days of publication of grades for Spring/Summer term (i.e., thirty days after grades are posted on Bear Tracks).
- 5.3 The number of reappraisals is limited to: two examinations in each of Fall and Winter terms; and two examinations in Spring and Summer terms combined.
- 5.4 The reappraised grade is the final official grade, whether it is higher or lower than the original grade.
- 5.5 The only portion of the course reappraised is the final exam. Other aspects of the grade are not considered in this particular process and if the dispute is related to any portion of the grade other than the final exam, reappraisal does not apply.

6.0 ACADEMIC APPEALS

6.1 *Academic Standing*

Students may appeal adverse academic standing decisions to the Associate Dean within ten (10)

working days of deemed delivery of notification of the original decision. Examples of decisions that may be appealed in this section include such matters as continuation in a program, denial of recommendation for graduation and the requirement for a student to withdraw from the FNS. Students who wish to appeal a ruling that affects Academic Standing are advised to follow informal levels of appeal, as well as to review the University procedures that are outlined in the [University Calendar](#).

Normally, course grades cannot be appealed beyond the faculty level.

6.2 ***Required to Withdraw***

6.2.1 If a student is Required to Withdraw, formal notification will be sent in two ways: by UAlberta email and by mail to the address provided by the student to the University. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that these two different forms of contact are up-to-date on Bear Tracks or that alternate contact information has been provided to the Faculty.

6.2.2 Students who wish to appeal a Required to Withdraw are advised to follow informal levels of appeal, as well as to review the University procedures that are outlined in the [University Calendar](#).

6.2.3 Students who are on Academic Warning and fail any or all of the conditions of their Warning cannot appeal their requirement to withdraw.

6.2.4 A student can appeal a “Required to Withdraw” within fifteen (15) Working Days of notification having been deemed to have been received by submitting a written request to appeal the faculty decision to the Associate Dean. The appeal letter may be delivered electronically or by letter mail, and must include:

- Student name and University of Alberta student identification number
- Student contact information (telephone number, mailing address and email address)
- Relevant information or details about any errors in grading, procedural errors, extenuating circumstances or failure to consider all relevant factors, bias or discrimination against the student
- Supporting documentation (where relevant)
- Signature of the student

The student is advised to consult with the University Ombudservice in preparing the letter of appeal. The Associate Dean will set a date for the hearing.

6.2.5 If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the hearing, they will have fifteen (15) Working Days from when the adverse decision was reached and notification was sent to the student to make a formal appeal to the GFC Academic Appeals Committee. This Committee will only hear appeals that are based on a miscarriage of justice.

7.0 VIOLATION OF THE CODE OF STUDENT BEHAVIOUR (Inappropriate Academic Behaviour)

7.1 If an instructor suspects a student of Inappropriate Academic Behavior, they must first speak to the student directly. Sometimes this discussion will clear up what may be simply a misunderstanding. If the instructor still believes there has been a breach of the Code of Student Behavior, a written report must be submitted to the Associate Dean, and an investigation will follow. The Associate Dean will provide a written report. If there is a possibility for a Severe Sanction, the Associate Dean must also refer this situation to the University Discipline Officer, who is appointed by the Provost. The student is strongly encouraged to consult with the Student Ombudservice during this process.

7.2 The Discipline Officer will meet with the student to hear the student’s version of events, conduct an investigation, and provide a written decision, including details of the investigation and reasons for the decision.

7.3 The student can appeal the decision by the Associate Dean or by the Discipline Officer to the

University Appeal Board by submitting a written request to the University Appeal Board within fifteen days from the student will be deemed to have received notification of the decision of the Associate Dean or Discipline Officer.

- 7.4 Students will normally be notified of decisions in two ways: by UAlberta email and by mail or courier to the address provided by the student to the university. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that these two different forms of contact are up-to-date or that alternate contact information has been provided to the Faculty. The student can also arrange in advance to pick up any materials or decisions

Resources and Contact Information:

[University of Alberta Calendar](#)

[Code of Student Behaviour](#)

[Student Conduct and Accountability](#)

[Office of the Student Ombuds](#)

Location: 2-702 Students' Union Building
Phone: 780-492-4689
Email: ombuds@ualberta.ca

[Graduate Student Ombudsperson](#)

Email: gradomb@ualberta.ca

[Student Legal Services](#)

Email: slsoed@ualberta.ca
Phone: 780-492-2226

[Appeals Coordinator/University Governance](#)

Phone: 780-492-2655

Approved by Faculty of Native Studies Council May 04, 2020