

**RYERSON UNIVERSITY  
POLICY OF SENATE**

**UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION AND APPEALS**

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Ryerson University is committed to promoting academic success and to ensuring that students' academic records ultimately reflect their academic abilities and accomplishments. The University expects that academic judgments by its faculty will be fair, consistent and objective, and recognizes the need to grant academic consideration, where appropriate, in order to support students who face personal difficulties or events. Academic consideration is the general name given to a number of different alternate arrangements that may be made, dependent upon the circumstances and what is appropriate for both the students and the University, such as the extension of a deadline for an assignment, re-weighting of an exam or assignment because of missed work, the permission to continue on probationary status. It should be understood that students can only receive grades which reflect their knowledge of the course material.

This Policy<sup>1</sup> provides the process by which students may seek academic consideration. It is expected that requests for academic consideration will be made as soon as circumstances arise which will impact their academic performance. The policy also describes the grounds and process by which students may appeal when they believe the academic consideration provided is not appropriate or when they have been unable to resolve course-related issues with their instructors.<sup>2</sup> The University is responsible for dealing with student appeals fairly and must adhere to the timelines established in this policy.

Students should refer to University publications (the Calendars, the Student Guide, and the Senate web site) for detailed information on the various types of academic consideration that may be requested; necessary documents such as appeal forms, health certificates and forms for religious accommodation; and procedural instructions. Students are responsible for reviewing all pertinent information prior to the submission of a formal academic appeal. Incomplete appeals will not be accepted. Students are responsible for ensuring that a formal appeal is submitted by the deadline dates published in the calendar, and must adhere to the timelines established in this policy.

The Academic Appeals process reflects decision-making in an academic environment and, as such, cannot be equated to decision-making in the judicial system. The principles of natural justice and fairness will apply to all decisions made.

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<sup>1</sup> The "Graduate Student Academic Appeals Policy" applies for the Yeates School of Graduate Studies.

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this document, "instructor" shall mean any person who is teaching a course at Ryerson University.

## **1. ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION**

### **1.1. GENERAL REGULATIONS**

- 1.1.1.** It is the student's responsibility to notify and consult with either the instructor, or the Chair/Director of the teaching or program department/school, depending on the situation, as soon as circumstances arise that are likely to affect academic performance.
- 1.1.2.** It is the student's responsibility to attempt to resolve all course-related issues with the instructor as soon as they arise, and then, if necessary, with the Chair/Director of the teaching Department/School. Failure to do so may jeopardize the success of an appeal made at a later date.
- 1.1.3.** It is the instructor's responsibility to respond in a timely fashion when students raise grading or course management issues.
- 1.1.4.** It is the responsibility of the Department/School to ensure that Department/School handbooks have up-to-date contact information published outlining who in the school/department is responsible for academic consideration and appeals.
- 1.1.5.** When issues are not resolved with an instructor, or when a student does not receive a timely response from an instructor, the Chair/Director should normally be contacted for an informal resolution, where possible.
- 1.1.6.** It is the Chair/Director's responsibility to be accessible to discuss matters that cannot be resolved between the instructor and the student.
- 1.1.7.** If academic concerns are not resolved informally with the instructor or the Chair/ Director, students may file an appeal with their Department/School.
- 1.1.8.** If the Chair/Director is the instructor for a course in which an accommodation or alternate arrangement is being requested and the matter cannot be resolved, he or she should request that the Dean appoint an appropriate replacement to act as Chair/Director in the process.
- 1.1.9.** Students who do not receive their final grades because of outstanding debt to the University, risk missing the deadline for filing an appeal. Grades will not be officially released to students with outstanding debt.
- 1.1.10.** Students who are appealing their Required to Withdraw or Permanently Withdrawn standing may continue in their program and shall be registered in courses on the basis of a probationary contract until the standing appeal is resolved. Students must pay all appropriate fees. If the appeal is denied and they remain Required to Withdraw or Permanently Withdrawn, they will be given a full refund of the fees charged for the program courses in which they enrolled that semester.

- 1.1.11. Appeals not filed by the published deadlines and incomplete appeals will normally not be accepted. In extenuating circumstances, students or university administrators may request that a Chair/Director, Dean, or the Secretary of Senate, depending upon the level, provide an extension.
- 1.1.12. Ryerson program students are required to maintain a Ryerson e-mail address. (See Policy 157: Establishment of Student E-Mail Accounts for Official University Communication).

## 1.2. ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENTS

- 1.2.1. **Accommodation for Missed Examination and/or Assignment: Religious, Aboriginal and Spiritual Observance:** Students must have filed the necessary forms for accommodation of religious, aboriginal or spiritual observance as required by Policy 150: Accommodation of Student Religious, Aboriginal and Spiritual Observance.
- 1.2.2. **Accommodation for Disability:** Students who have approved accommodations with Academic Accommodation Support (formerly the Access Centre), must activate the sending of an accommodation letter via AAS' online system to each of their instructors outlining their approved accommodation(s) for each course. This should be done as early as possible, prior to a graded assignment, test or exam, according to Academic Accommodation Support Policies and Procedures. (See Section 3 and Policy 159: **Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.**)
- 1.2.3. Alternate Arrangements for Missed Examination and/or Assignment: Health or Compassionate
  - 1.2.3.1. Students shall inform their relevant instructor(s) (*via* email whenever possible) in advance when they will be missing an exam, test or assignment deadline for health or compassionate reasons. When circumstances do not permit this, the student must inform the instructor(s) as soon as reasonably possible.
  - 1.2.3.2. Alternate arrangements are based upon the severity of the circumstances and the amount of work missed. Generally, normal employment commitments will not constitute grounds for academic consideration. However, changes to normal employment commitments as a result of a more complex issue may be part of a request for academic consideration.
  - 1.2.3.3. In the case of illness, a Ryerson Health Certificate, or a letter on letterhead from an appropriate regulated health professional with the student declaration portion of the Ryerson Health Certificate attached, is required to be submitted to the office of the student's own program. For non-program students enrolled in courses at The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, the Ryerson Health Certificate is required to be submitted to the Chang School. In all these cases, documentation is required within three (3) working

days of the missed work. In extraordinary circumstances, exceptions to the 3-day requirement to provide documentation can be granted if the health illness, including documented mental health issues, prevents a student from seeking health attention or documenting their illness in a timely fashion.

- 1.2.3.4. Documentation required for reasons other than illness should be submitted to the office of the student's own program. For non-program students enrolled in courses at The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, such documentation is required to be submitted to the Chang School.
  - 1.2.3.5. All faculty and staff are required to exercise discretion and adhere to the principles of confidentiality regarding any documentation received.
  - 1.2.3.6. Once an alternate arrangement is accepted, it is final unless subsequent events interfere with the fulfillment of that alternate arrangement, and the grade in the course may not be appealed based upon an allegation of the original arrangement being unfair.
  - 1.2.3.7. Students who are either not offered an alternate arrangement or who do not accept the alternate arrangement offered by an instructor, may consult with the Chair/Director. If the test or assignment for which an alternate arrangement has been made becomes a point of contention in the final course grade or violates Policy 166: Undergraduate Course Management or the course outline, the student may appeal the final course grade at the end of the term, on the original health or compassionate grounds
  - 1.2.3.8. Normally a student who misses a final exam will be given an incomplete (INC) and given a make-up exam as soon as possible.
  - 1.2.3.9. Unless an incomplete grade (INC) is applicable, the instructor cannot grant extensions beyond the final date for submission of grades as part of an academic consideration.
- 1.2.4. Arrangements for Inability to Complete Term Work in More Than One Course:**
- 1.2.4.1. Students who are unable to complete their term work in more than one course, due to circumstances that arise during the semester, should consult with the Chair/Director of their program Department/School as soon as possible. Failure to do so may jeopardize the ability to provide consideration and to launch a future appeal.
  - 1.2.4.2. When seeking alternate arrangements, students must submit supporting documentation to their program Chair/Director who should advise them as to what to do on a course-by- course basis as soon as possible. A copy of the suggested arrangement will be kept on record in the Department/School, and each instructor should be

informed of the suggested arrangement. Students must contact each instructor to verify that the suggested arrangement is acceptable to the instructor.

- 1.2.4.3. Instructors should not require documentation to support the request for an alternate arrangement, as the Chair/Director has already made an assessment.
- 1.2.4.4. While it is advisable for students to discuss dropping a course with the instructor, courses may be dropped at the time of the consultation with the Chair/Director. The Chair/Director must inform the involved faculty member that the student has dropped the course. The Registrar will review documentation and contact the Chair/Director should any clarification be required as to why a student should be granted an INC or course drop after the deadline. The Registrar has final approval of both retroactive course withdrawal without academic penalty and any possible financial arrangements that may result.
- 1.2.5. **Advance Consideration of Academic Standing:** If, during the semester, students experience health or compassionate circumstances that may later affect their academic standing, it is the students' responsibility to bring the situation to the attention of the Chair/Director at the earliest possible time.

### 1.3. GRADE REASSESSMENT

**This portion of the policy has been retired, and consolidated with its graduate studies counterpart in a new policy. Please see the Grade Reassessment and Grade Recalculation Policy.**

- 1.4. **COURSE MANAGEMENT ISSUES:** Students who have concerns about how a course is taught or managed should first consult with the instructor as soon as the concern arises. However, if they feel that the matter cannot be discussed with the instructor or if the matter cannot be resolved, students should consult with the Chair/Director.
- 2. **ACADEMIC APPEALS – GRADE AND STANDING:** Academic Appeals are reserved for issues related to grades and academic standings that could not be resolved informally with an instructor or a Chair/Director. Where appropriate, appeals may be filed at any time during the term.
  - 2.1. **GROUNDS FOR APPEALS:** There are four grounds that may be considered for grade and academic standing appeals: Health; Compassionate; Prejudice; and Procedural Error. In addition, Course Management may also be considered as grounds for grade (but not academic standing) appeals. With the exception of Procedural Error, no new grounds may be introduced at subsequent levels.

### **2.1.1. Health**

- 2.1.1.1.** An appeal may be filed on Health grounds when an unforeseen health condition occurs during the term that impacts a student's ability to meet academic obligations. It is expected that students who need an alternative arrangement for meeting academic obligations will submit appropriate documentation for work that is missed, and will make alternate arrangements for either a single course or for all courses in that term (see section 1.2 on **Alternate Arrangements**). Alternate arrangements are based upon the severity of the circumstances and the amount of work missed.
- 2.1.1.2.** Students must submit a fully completed **Ryerson Health Certificate**, or a letter on letterhead containing all of the information required by the health certificate and signed by an appropriate regulated health professional for the applicable period of time, with the signed affidavit portion of the Ryerson Health Certificate appended. The documentation should explain the duration of the health condition and the impact of the health condition on the student's ability to perform during that period. Where circumstances do not permit this, the student must inform the instructor as soon as reasonably possible. The University may seek further verification of health claims.
- 2.1.1.3.** Students must submit applicable health documents within three (3) working days of any test, exam or assignment due date to receive consideration for that work. In extraordinary circumstances, exceptions to the 3-day requirement to provide documentation can be granted if the health issues, including documented mental health issues, prevents a student from consulting a health professional attention or documenting their illness in a timely fashion.

### **2.1.2. Compassionate**

- 2.1.2.1.** Appeals may be filed on Compassionate grounds when there are events or circumstances beyond the control of, and often unforeseen by, the student, which seriously impair that student's ability to meet academic obligations. Instructors should have been informed of these circumstances as soon as they affected a student's ability to complete his/her work so that alternate arrangements could be made. Failure to have done so may jeopardize the appeal. Alternate arrangements are based upon the severity of the circumstances and the amount of work missed. Changes to normal employment commitments as a result of a more complex issue may be appealed on compassionate grounds.
- 2.1.2.2.** Students must submit applicable documentation within three (3) working days of a test, exam or assignment deadline to receive consideration for that work. In extraordinary circumstances, exceptions to the 3-day requirement to provide documentation can be granted.

### **2.1.3. Course Management**

- 2.1.3.1.** Appeals may be filed on the ground of Course Management when students believe that a grade has been adversely affected because an instructor has deviated from the Course Management policy of the University or from the course outline, or has demonstrated personal bias or unfair treatment.
- 2.1.3.2.** Students should have brought course management issues to the attention of the instructor and/or the Chair/Director when the concern arose. Failure to have done so may jeopardize the appeal.
- 2.1.3.3.** Students must provide the course outline or policy reference when it is relevant to their appeal, detail where the deviation, or personal bias or unfair treatment occurred and explain how their academic performance was affected.

### **2.1.4. Prejudice**

- 2.1.4.1.** Claims of prejudice are limited to prohibited grounds as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code (e.g. race, sex, sexual orientation, disability, etc.). Students who believe their grade has been adversely affected by another form of personal bias or unfair treatment should appeal under the ground of Course Management.
- 2.1.4.2.** When filing an appeal on the grounds of prejudice, students must submit a copy to, and consult with, Human Rights Services (formerly the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Office). That Office will do an assessment and make a recommendation to the Chair/Director before the appeal will proceed. This may result in a delay in the appeals process.
- 2.1.4.3.** If Human Rights Services determines that there is insufficient evidence to support a claim of prejudice on a prohibited ground and the student wishes to proceed on the basis of personal bias or unfair treatment, the appeal may be amended to be filed on the ground of Course Management.
- 2.1.4.4.** If, during the course of any level of appeal, it is determined that there may have been prejudice on a prohibited ground, which was not investigated by Human Rights Services, it will be referred to that Office and the decision will be delayed until that Office has assessed the claim and made a recommendation.

### **2.1.5. Procedural Error**

- 2.1.5.1.** Appeals may be filed on the ground of Procedural Error when it is believed that there has been an error in the procedure followed in the application of either this policy or any applicable policy of the University that has impacted a student's grade or standing. Appeals granted on this ground will rectify the procedural error.

- 2.1.5.2.** Where students claim that an academic regulation or policy was improperly applied or not followed, they must reference both the policy and the alleged error, and explain how this procedural error has affected their academic record. This may include such things as a failure to recalculate a grade or remark an exam, or when a response deadline has been missed.

## **2.2. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **2.2.1. Burden of Proof**

- 2.2.1.1. Grade Appeals:** In all grade appeals it is the student's responsibility to demonstrate that the final grade they have received in a course should be reviewed. Students will only receive grades which reflect their knowledge of the course material.
- 2.2.1.2. Academic Standing Appeals:** In all academic standing appeals the responsibility is on students to demonstrate that their academic standing should be changed. Since Academic Standing is determined by students' academic performance, students must provide substantial reasons why their current standing is not appropriate. Students should normally have consulted with the Chair/Director as soon as the situation that affected their academic performance arose.

### **2.2.2. Filing an Appeal**

#### **2.2.2.1. Levels of Appeal**

- 2.2.2.1.1. Department/School Level:** Students who wish to file either a grade or standing appeal based on one of the grounds in section IIA, must first appeal to their Department/School (or The Chang School for grade appeals in continuing education (CE) courses) by the deadline outlined in the Ryerson calendars.
- 2.2.2.1.1.1.** Grade appeals must be submitted to the Department/School in which the course is taught. Grade appeals for all CE courses are to be submitted to The Chang School, and the appropriate Program Director will coordinate the response with the appropriate Department/School.
- 2.2.2.1.1.2.** Standing appeals are submitted to the student's program Department/School.
- 2.2.2.1.2. Faculty Level:** Students who wish to appeal the decision of the Department/ School must do so to the Dean within ten (10) working days of the date of the decision letter from the Department/School. Students must indicate in their letter where they disagree with the Department/School decision.
- 2.2.2.1.3. Senate Level:** Students who wish to appeal the decision of the Faculty must do so to the Senate within the (10) working days

of the date of the decision letter from the Faculty. Students must indicate in their letter where they disagree with the Faculty decision.

#### **2.2.2.2. General Regulations**

- 2.2.2.2.1. Students must use the appeals forms available on the Senate website, and must retain a copy for their records for submission at any subsequent appeal.
- 2.2.2.2.2. Incomplete or late appeals will normally not be accepted.
- 2.2.2.2.3. Appeals must be filed in person unless prior arrangements are made to submit it *via* fax, mail or email. If the appeal is incomplete, it is not accepted. If fax, mail or email submissions are accepted, original documents must be submitted in person by the student by a date to be determined based upon the circumstances.
- 2.2.2.2.4. INC grades must be appealed within ten (10) working days of the posting of the new grade. Students are responsible for periodically checking for the posting of their grades.
- 2.2.2.2.5. If a student appeals only an academic standing, it will be assumed that the grade(s) upon which the academic standing was based have been accepted.
- 2.2.2.2.6. The program Department/School is not required to consider an appeal of an academic standing if the grade appeal was denied and it was the sole basis of the standing appeal or if the grade appeal was granted and the standing is automatically changed as a result.

#### **2.2.2.3. Advocates and Legal Counsel**

- 2.2.2.3.1. Students may consult with an advocate at any time during the appeals process. An advocate may represent a student at any hearing that may occur at the Department/School, Faculty or Senate level. Advocates may speak on behalf of the student.
- 2.2.2.3.2. Legal Counsel is permitted to represent students or the University Respondent only at the Senate level of appeal.

**2.2.2.4. Ombudsperson:** Students may consult with the Ombudsperson regarding issues of fairness at any time during the appeals process.

### **2.3. Decision Maker Responsibility**

#### **2.3.1. Responding to Appeals**

- 2.3.1.1. **Department/School:** Each Department/School must determine who shall respond to student appeals. The Chair/Director (or designate or committee) may consider appeals at the Department/School level. For continuing education courses the CE Program Director shall act

as Chair/Director in appeals which concern procedural issues, and shall refer all other appeals to the appropriate academic coordinator.

- 2.3.1.2. **Faculty:** Each Faculty must determine who shall respond to student appeals. The Dean (or designate or committee) may consider appeals at the Faculty level.
  - 2.3.1.3. **Continuing Education:** In cases involving continuing education courses that are not housed in a specific Faculty, the Dean of The Chang School of Continuing Education (or designate or committee) shall consider the appeal.
  - 2.3.1.4. **Senate:** The Senate Appeals Committee shall form panels to hear appeals at the Senate level.
- 2.3.2. **General Regulations**
- 2.3.2.1. No academic appeal may result in the granting of a numerical grade.
  - 2.3.2.2. If a student initiates more than one academic appeal, the decision maker at any level may determine if the appeals should be heard concurrently or sequentially. Grade appeals are considered before standing appeals.
  - 2.3.2.3. If an appeal of a charge of academic misconduct is related to a concurrent grade or academic standing appeal, the misconduct appeal will be heard first, and the decision, if relevant, forwarded to the appropriate department/school. As per the Academic Integrity Policy, a grade of “DEF” may be assigned while a misconduct charge is under investigation.
  - 2.3.2.4. The Registrar must approve any recommendation by the Chair/Director or Dean to either allow a student to take a course that has been failed more than three times (or fewer as per a Department/School standing variation) or to grant a student a retroactive course withdrawal without academic penalty and any associated financial arrangements.
  - 2.3.2.5. All correspondence with students (setting of hearing dates, decision letters, etc.) will be done *via* Ryerson email. The only exception will be the distribution of the appeals package for Senate appeals. Students shall receive their packages either in person or *via* courier, normally within five (5) working days of the hearing.
  - 2.3.2.6. Appeals decisions are normally sent to students within five (5) working days of the receipt (or the hearing) of the appeal, unless the student is notified of extenuating circumstances which require an extension of that deadline.
  - 2.3.2.7. Current information on who is responsible for responding to appeals in each Department, School and Faculty must be provided to

students in a Department/School handbook and to the Secretary of Senate. Members of any appeals committee shall have terms from July 1 to June 30 of the following year.

- 2.3.2.8.** All individuals who have responsibility for deciding appeals, including Chairs/Directors, Deans, or designates, and all Appeals Officers shall be required to attend training session(s) conducted by the Office of the Secretary of Senate prior to making any appeals decision.
- 2.3.2.9.** Anyone who chairs an appeals committee at any level may not serve on an appeals committee at any other level.
- 2.3.3. Dismissal of Appeals:**

  - 2.3.3.1. Department/School:** The Department/School may dismiss (not accept) an appeal only when the appeal is submitted past the deadline or is incomplete.
  - 2.3.3.2. Faculty:** In some circumstances where the Dean or designate believes that the grounds have not been met, or that the student has not indicated where the error was in the previous decisions, the Dean or designate will give the student notice of intent to dismiss (not accept) the appeal. The student is given the opportunity to respond in writing to the intent to dismiss within five (5) working days of receipt of the notice. A panel of the Senate Appeals Committee will be convened to determine if the appeal should be heard or if the recommendation to dismiss the appeal should be upheld.
  - 2.3.3.3. Senate:** In some circumstances where the Secretary of Senate believes that the grounds have not been met, or that the student has not indicated where the error was in the previous decisions, the Secretary will give the student notice of intent to dismiss (not accept) the appeal. The student is given the opportunity to respond in writing to the intent to dismiss within five (5) working days of receipt of the notice. A panel of the Senate Appeals Committee will be convened to determine if the appeal should be heard or if the recommendation to dismiss the appeal should be upheld.
- 2.3.4. Conflict of Interest:** No member of an Appeals Panel should have had any prior involvement with the case. A member of a Hearing Panel, a student or an instructor (appellant and respondent) must disclose any conflict of interest, if known, as soon as possible before the Hearing. If either party raises a conflict of interest regarding any Panel member(s) once the Hearing has begun, the Hearing Panel will judge the validity of the conflict and will decide on whether the Panel member may sit on the appeal. If the Panel member with the conflict is excused and there is no quorum, the Hearing may continue if agreed upon by all parties or will be adjourned and a new hearing scheduled with a new Panel member.

**2.3.5. Standard of Proof:** In an academic appeal it is the student's responsibility to show that the original decision was incorrect. The standard of proof in all decisions shall be "a balance of probabilities". This means that, in order for students to be granted their appeals, they must show the Panel that it is more likely than not that the original decision was incorrect.

## **2.4. Senate Appeal Hearings**

**2.4.1. Senate Appeals Committee and Panels:** The Senate Appeals Committee is established by the Senate. The Secretary of Senate shall establish hearing panels consisting of at least three members of the Senate Appeals Committee, including at least one student.

**2.4.2. Notice of Hearing:** Both parties must be given ten (10) working days' notice of an appeal hearing date and time. An appeal may be scheduled with less than ten (10) days' notice with the written agreement of both parties. Documentation will be distributed to all parties, normally within five (5) working days of the hearing.

### **2.4.3. Hearing Regulations**

#### **2.4.3.1. Representation/Support**

2.4.3.1.1. Students may be represented by an advocate or legal counsel who may speak for the student and confer with the student as necessary.

2.4.3.1.2. Students may have a support person in the hearing, but this person may not participate in any way. Students may also bring witnesses, but these must be declared in advance on the appeal form.

2.4.3.1.3. The University may retain legal counsel who may speak for the respondent and confer with the respondent as necessary.

#### **2.4.3.2. Procedural Decisions by the Panel**

2.4.3.2.1. The Panel Chair may adjourn the Hearing when it is required for a fair process.

2.4.3.2.2. If either the appellant or the respondent fails to attend the Hearing, and there are no extenuating circumstances, the Hearing may proceed in his or her absence. Hearings will not be postponed if a witness, advocate or counsel fails to appear.

2.4.3.2.3. A Hearing is open to the public except when the appellant, respondent or a Panel member requests that the hearing be closed. Members of the public may not participate in, or in any way disrupt, the hearing. Any member of the public, or the support person, may be removed from the hearing by the Panel.

- 2.4.3.2.4. All witnesses called by either side should be present at the start of the Hearing to be introduced, and then, unless the Panel decides otherwise, only while giving testimony. If the hearing remains open, witnesses may return after all witnesses have presented their testimony.
  - 2.4.3.2.5. If either party brings witnesses not listed in the appeal form or the Notice of Hearing, the Panel must decide if those witnesses are to be heard.
  - 2.4.3.2.6. If new documentation is presented the panel must determine if that documentation is to be considered. If there is no objection from the other party, the documentation should be accepted. The hearing may be adjourned to allow the other party time to review the new documents. The Panel may determine that the documentation is not relevant and is not to be accepted.
  - 2.4.3.2.7. The Hearing may not be audio or video recorded by anyone, and no minutes of the proceedings are taken. The decision letter is considered the official record of the proceedings.
  - 2.4.3.2.8. The Secretary of Senate or designate may be present at the Hearing for the purpose of providing advice on procedural issues.
  - 2.4.3.2.9. All Senate hearings will be conducted in a manner consistent with the *Statutory Powers Procedure Act (SPPA)*. A copy of the *SPPA* is available for review in the Senate Office.
- 2.4.4. Decisions:** Decisions of the Senate Appeals Committee are final and may not be appealed.
- 2.4.5. Record keeping**
- 2.4.5.1. Statistics on the type, grounds and outcome of appeals must be reported to the Secretary of Senate at the end of each term.
  - 2.4.5.2. The complete original copy of the appeal documents shall be retained and held in confidence by the Senate Office and the Registrar shall confidentially retain a copy of the decision letter. All other copies of the appeals documents are to be shredded.

## ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION AND APPEALS PROCEDURES

### 3. ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION

#### 3.1. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 3.1.1. Students should normally notify and consult with their instructor when they require academic consideration for circumstances that arise during the semester that impact their ability to meet academic obligations. If the circumstance affects all of their course work, or if they believe that they cannot discuss the matter with their instructor, they should consult their Chair/Director or designate<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.1.2. Students, instructors, Chairs/Directors should make every effort to resolve issues related to student requests for academic consideration informally whenever possible.
- 3.1.3. Requests for academic consideration should be made *via* email where possible, but can be made in person or over the phone if necessary, and confirmed by email.
- 3.1.4. Instructors will respond to requests for academic consideration *via* email where possible, and in person or *via* phone if necessary and confirmed by email.
- 3.1.5. If an instructor has not responded to a specific request for academic consideration within 5 working days a student should email the Chair/Director to discuss the situation.

#### 3.2. ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENTS

##### 3.2.1. For a Conflict between a Religious, Aboriginal or Spiritual Observance and an Examination, Test, or Assignment Due Date

- 3.2.1.1. To request an alternate arrangement for work that must be missed because of a conflict with a religious, aboriginal or spiritual observance, students must consult Senate Policy 150: Accommodation of Student Religious, Aboriginal and Spiritual Observance found at [www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol150.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol150.pdf) and use the form found at [www.ryerson.ca/senate/forms/reobservforminstr.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/forms/reobservforminstr.pdf)
- 3.2.1.2. Normally no later than 2 weeks prior to the conflict in question; or for final exams, within 2 weeks of the posting of the final exam schedule.

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<sup>3</sup> Someone in a Department/School of Faculty may be designated to work with students in appeals and to be the decision maker for that unit. The terms Chair/Director and Dean will include such a designate throughout these procedures.

- 3.2.1.3. Students and instructors must negotiate and agree upon appropriate accommodations for such observances.
  - 3.2.1.4. If students and instructors cannot agree on an appropriate accommodation, then it is the responsibility of the student to contact the Chair/Director to discuss the matter.
- 3.2.2. For Accommodation of a Disability**
- 3.2.2.1. To receive an accommodation for a disability, students must first register with Ryerson University's Academic Accommodation Support (formerly the Access Centre).
  - 3.2.2.2. Accommodation letters will be sent to each of a student's instructors through the online academic accommodation support system used by AAS as early as possible, prior to a graded assignment, test or exam. The letters outline the approved accommodations the student requires for each course.
  - 3.2.2.3. Refer to the Academic Accommodation Support website for the procedures and timelines for booking a test or exam (<http://www.ryerson.ca/studentlearningsupport/academic-accommodation-support/index.html>).
  - 3.2.2.4. Detailed instructions on appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities and the related procedures are found in Policy 159: Academic Accommodations of Students with Disabilities at [www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol159.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol159.pdf).
- 3.2.3. For Missed Assignment, Test and/or Examination for Health and Compassionate Reasons (See Policy 166: Course Management Policy)**
- 3.2.3.1. Student Responsibility**
- 3.2.3.1.1. Students must contact their instructor *via* email in advance when they will be missing an examination and/or assignment or test for health or compassionate reasons.
  - 3.2.3.1.2. When circumstances do not permit advance notice, students must contact the instructor *via* email as soon as reasonably possible.
  - 3.2.3.1.3. Students are advised, whenever possible, to document all consultations and/or attempts at consultation with the instructor, including email correspondence, phone conversations, office hour visits and other appointments. Written correspondence is preferable.
  - 3.2.3.1.4. Students must submit appropriate documentation, based upon instructor requirements, within three (3) working days of the missed assignment, test or exam. In extraordinary circumstances, exceptions to the 3-day requirement to provide documentation can be granted if the health issues, including

documented mental health issues, prevents a student from consulting a health professional or documenting his/her illness in a timely fashion.

- 3.2.3.1.4.1. **Health documentation:** Students must submit a fully completed **Ryerson Health Certificate**, or a letter on letterhead containing all of the information required by the health certificate and signed by an appropriate regulated health professional for the applicable period of time. The portion of the Ryerson Health Certificate containing the student signature must be attached. The documentation should explain the duration of the health condition and the impact of the health condition on the student's ability to perform during that period. Where circumstances do not permit this, the student must inform the instructor as soon as reasonably possible. The University may seek further verification of health claims.
- 3.2.3.1.4.2. **Compassionate documentation:** While it is recognized that compassionate grounds may sometimes be hard to document, items such as relevant travel documents, death certificates or notices from a funeral home, letters from counsellors, therapists, or religious or community leaders would be appropriate documentation. It is advisable that students provide relevant and appropriate documentation when possible.
- 3.2.3.1.4.3. **Documentation containing personal information of others:** Any documentation which contains the personal information (e.g. health documents) of someone other than the student must be accompanied by a letter from that individual allowing the information to be used. If not, the documents will not be distributed with the appeal.
- 3.2.3.1.5. If students do not receive a response from the instructor within 5 working days concerning alternate arrangements for the missed work, the student is responsible for consulting with the Chair/Director *via* e-mail.
- 3.2.3.1.6. Students who are not offered or do not accept alternate arrangements offered by the instructor may consult with the Chair/Director.
- 3.2.3.1.7. If consultation with the Chair/Director does not result in an acceptable alternate arrangement, students must document their concerns *via* email, stating why they do not accept the alternate arrangements. Students will be asked to abide by alternate arrangements to the extent possible once the Chair/Director has intervened, but can appeal the final course grade if the test or assignment for which the alternate

arrangement was given becomes a point of contention for the final course grade. Once the documentation has been approved, if an arrangement cannot be made for a make-up for a missed final exam, the student can request an incomplete (INC) grade. A form must be filed by the instructor indicating the date by which the work must be completed, which must be within three months.

- 3.2.3.1.8. It is the students' responsibility to follow up with the instructor to ensure completion of an INC within the required three month time frame. If the INC is not completed, it will become a grade of "F".
- 3.2.3.1.9. If students encounter problems making arrangements for completing an INC they must contact the Chair/Director.

### **3.2.3.2. Instructor Responsibility**

- 3.2.3.2.1. After receiving a request for an alternate arrangement, instructors will assess the merit of the request based on health and compassionate grounds and respond to the student within five (5) working days.
- 3.2.3.2.2. Instructors must retain all correspondence and document meetings with students, with respect to requested and agreed upon considerations and arrangements.
- 3.2.3.2.3. If instructors require health or compassionate documentation, it must be presented within three (3) working days of the missed work. In extraordinary circumstances, exceptions to the 3 day requirement to provide documentation can be granted if the illness, including documented mental health issues, prevents a student from consulting a health professional or documenting their illness in a timely fashion. If the instructor wishes to validate the document they must have the Chair/Director call the appropriate office. It may only be confirmed that the documentation is valid. A health professional cannot be asked about the nature of the student's health condition.
- 3.2.3.2.4. Acceptable alternate arrangements may include setting a make-up test, transferring the weight of the missed work to the final examination (as per Policy 166: Course Management at [www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol166.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol166.pdf)) or extending a deadline. All considerations must be documented *via* email.
- 3.2.3.2.5. If a student requests an INC, once documentation has been validated for outstanding work, the instructor must fill out the appropriate form, retain a copy, submit a copy to the Registrar and provide a copy to the student.

- 3.2.3.2.6. It is the responsibility of the instructor to provide a make-up final exam for INC grades within three months of giving the INC.

### **3.2.3.3. Chair/Director Responsibility**

- 3.2.3.3.1. A Chair/Director may need to respond or intervene in cases where the instructor has not responded to the student's request, the student does not feel comfortable with approaching the instructor, or the student disagrees with the alternate arrangement and would like further consultation.
- 3.2.3.3.2. Once a consultation has been completed the Chair/Director may recommend alternate arrangements to the instructor.
- 3.2.3.3.3. The Chair/Director may be contacted by students who are unable, for verifiable reasons, to complete an incomplete (INC) grades in the three-month period. In these cases, it is the responsibility of the Chair/Director to facilitate an appropriate resolution.

## **3.2.4. For Inability to Complete Term Work in More Than One Course**

### **3.2.4.1. Student Responsibility**

- 3.2.4.1.1. It is students' responsibility to contact the Chair/Director of their program, preferably *via* email, when circumstances arise during the semester that prevent them from completing their work in more than one course.
- 3.2.4.1.2. Students are advised to document, *via* email, all arrangements agreed to with the instructor.
- 3.2.4.1.3. Once the student has consulted with the Chair/Director, the Chair/Director will contact each faculty member *via* email outlining the proposed alternate arrangements. It is then the responsibility of the student to get the approval of the alternate arrangements from each instructor, unless the Chair/Director determines that the circumstances do not allow this. In this case, the Chair/Director will assume the responsibility for coordinating with instructors.
- 3.2.4.1.4. If an instructor does not agree with the proposed alternate arrangements, it is the responsibility of the student to consult with the instructor and the Chair/Director to discuss alternatives.

### **3.2.4.2. Instructor Responsibility**

- 3.2.4.2.1. Instructors who receive suggested alternate arrangements from the Chair/Director regarding a student should contact the Chair/Director if they require further information on the matter or wish to discuss the recommended alternate arrangements.

### **3.2.4.3. Chair/Director Responsibility**

- 3.2.4.3.1. It is the responsibility of the Chair/Directors to request supporting documentation outlining the student's request for alternate arrangements in more than one term course.
- 3.2.4.3.2. The Chair/Director should advise students as to what to do on a course-by-course basis as soon as possible, and document the recommendations in writing *via* email.
- 3.2.4.3.3. Potential alternate arrangements may include offering the student the option of completing the work in some courses, dropping some courses, requesting extensions of deadlines or assigning grades of INC. A Chair/Director may also facilitate leaves of absence from the program if the circumstances prevent the student from continuing in the program.
- 3.2.4.3.4. It is the responsibility of the Chair/Director to send an email to each instructor outlining the proposed alternate arrangements for the student.
- 3.2.4.3.5. Courses may be dropped by the Chair/Director, but the Chair/Director should inform the student that it is advisable to speak to the instructor before dropping any course.
- 3.2.4.3.6. The Chair/Director may recommend to the Registrar that a student be permitted to drop one or more courses after the drop deadline depending on the circumstances. It is the responsibility of the Chair/Director to contact the Registrar and provide appropriate documentation as to why this recommendation is being made. The Registrar will determine if a retroactive drop will be granted.
- 3.2.4.3.7. The Chair/Director must ensure that copies of suggested alternate arrangements be kept on record in the Department/School.

### **3.2.4.4. Registrar Responsibility**

The Registrar will review documentation and contact the Chair/Director should any clarification be required as to why a student should be granted a INC or course drop after the deadline. The Registrar has final approval of both retroactive course withdrawal without academic penalty and any possible financial arrangements that may result.

- 3.2.5. Advance Request for Consideration of Academic Standing:** It is the students' responsibility to contact the Chair/Director when circumstances arise that may later affect their academic standing on health or compassionate grounds.

### **3.3. GRADE REASSESSMENT**

**This portion of the procedures has been retired, and consolidated with its graduate studies counterpart in a new policy. Please see the Procedures of the Grade Reassessment and Grade Recalculation Policy.**

### **3.4. COURSE MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 3.4.1.** It is students' responsibility to bring all Course Management issues to the attention of the instructor, or the Chair/Director if they feel the issue cannot be discussed with the instructor, as soon as the issue arises. Appeals based on Course Management may be filed at any time during the semester.
- 3.4.2.** It is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure that Policy 166: Course Management ([www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol166.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol166.pdf)) is followed.

## **4. ACADEMIC APPEALS – Where possible, informal resolution should be attempted before a formal appeal is filed.**

- 4.1. Grounds for appeal:** The grounds for a grade or standing appeal are health, compassionate, course management, prejudice or procedural error as defined in the Policy section IIC. Before filing an appeal, a student must determine if one or more of the grounds apply. Grade reassessment or recalculation are not grounds for an appeal.

### **4.2. Department/School Level Appeals**

#### **4.2.1. Student Responsibility**

- 4.2.1.1.** All appeals at the Department/School level must be filed by the deadline stated in the Ryerson Calendars using the forms (and instructions), available on the Senate ([www.ryerson.ca/senate](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate)) and Enrolment Services and Student Records websites, or from Departments/Schools. Unless other arrangements have been made in advance, appeals must be submitted in person. If fax, mail or email submissions are accepted, original documents must be submitted in person by the student by a date to be determined based upon the circumstances. If the submission is incomplete, it will not be processed. All documents to be presented as evidence must be attached to the appeal.

**4.2.1.2.** If students are appealing their final course grades, they must appeal to the Department/School in which the course was taught. If they are appealing their academic standing, they must appeal to their program Department/School. If they are appealing a grade in a continuing education class, they must submit their appeal to The Chang School information desk, which will forward the appeal

to the appropriate Program Director.

- 4.2.1.3. Students who have attempted to have work reassessed or grades recalculated and have not had the matter resolved prior to the appeal deadline, or who have not yet received a response from an instructor or a Chair/Director, may submit a formal appeal by the deadline on the grounds of procedural error. This appeal may be withdrawn at a later date if the issue is resolved.
  - 4.2.1.4. Students who wish to appeal a final course grade must first consult with the instructor and/or Chair/Director. Students appealing an academic standing must first consult the Chair/Director. This consultation must occur as soon as possible after their grades and/or notice of academic standing are posted, allowing enough time to meet the deadline for the last date to appeal.
  - 4.2.1.5. Students who do not receive either a decision, or a letter explaining why the decision is delayed, within five (5) working days of submission of an appeal should consult with the Dean. In exceptional circumstances, decision delays, usually because an instructor is not available for immediate consultation, should normally be no more than five (5) working days.
  - 4.2.1.6. Students may consult with a student advocate, e.g from RSU or CESAR, for advice on their appeal.
  - 4.2.1.7. Students may consult with the Ombudsperson regarding issues of fairness at any time during the appeals process.
  - 4.2.1.8. If there is both a grade appeal and a standing appeal, students must inform their program Department/School of the grade appeal at the time the standing appeal is filed. The standing appeal will not be considered until a decision on the grade appeal is received.
  - 4.2.1.9. Appeals of final grades submitted as a result of completing an INC grade must be filed within ten (10) working days of the posting of the new grade. Students are responsible for periodically checking for the posting of the grade. Appeals deadlines may be extended for grades not posted in a timely manner.
  - 4.2.1.10. Students must retain a copy of all appeals documents as it is not the responsibility of the Department/School to provide these documents should the student wish to file a further appeal.
- 4.2.2. Chair/Director Responsibility**
- 4.2.2.1. Where possible, Chairs/Directors should attempt to resolve matters informally before a formal appeal is filed.
  - 4.2.2.2. Appeals must be submitted in person. However, if there are extenuating circumstances, the Chair/Director may agree to accept the appeal *via* fax, mail or email. If fax, mail or email submissions are accepted, original documents must be submitted in person by the

student by a date to be determined based upon the circumstances. The Chair/Director may also agree to accept an appeal after the deadline if there are extenuating circumstances, but is not required to process late appeals. The Chair/Director will ensure that the appeal is complete before it is processed.

- 4.2.2.3. If a student has initiated more than one appeal, the Chair/Director shall determine whether the various appeals should be considered concurrently or sequentially.
- 4.2.2.4. If there is a grade appeal for a course not within the student's Department/School, the program Department/School must receive the decision on the grade appeal before a standing appeal can be considered. If both appeals are to the same Department/School, the appeals may be considered at the same time.
- 4.2.2.5. If a grade appeal is delayed because there is an unresolved reassessment or recalculation, the related standing appeal may also be delayed.
- 4.2.2.6. If an appeal of a charge of academic misconduct is related to a concurrent grade or academic standing appeal, the misconduct appeal will be heard first, and the decision, if relevant, forwarded to the appropriate Department/School. As per Policy 60: Academic Integrity, a grade of "DEF" may be assigned while a misconduct charge is under investigation.
- 4.2.2.7. The program Chair/Director is not required to consider an appeal of an academic standing if the grade appeal was denied and it was the sole basis of the standing appeal or if the grade appeal was granted and the standing is automatically changed as a result.
- 4.2.2.8. The Department/School must respond to the student in writing within five (5) working days of the receipt of the appeal whether the appeal was granted or denied (see Procedures 2.1.3.).
- 4.2.2.9. If the Chair/Director is unable to respond to a student within the five (5) working days because s/he is unable to get necessary information, the student must be notified of when they are to expect a decision. In exceptional circumstances, decision delays, usually because an instructor is not available for immediate consultation, should normally be no more than five (5) working days. The student may consult with the Dean if there is no communication regarding a delay, or if the delay is more than five (5) working days.
- 4.2.2.10. **Decisions:**
  - 4.2.2.10.1. The Chair/Director may not award a numerical grade, or require any action contrary to a university policy or collective agreement.

4.2.2.10.2. The Chair/Director may:

**4.2.2.10.2.1.** deny the appeal

**4.2.2.10.2.2.** grant the appeal

**4.2.2.10.2.3.** grant or deny the appeal in part subject to conditions. If the student does not accept the conditions attached, the appeal will be considered denied.

4.2.2.10.3. The Registrar must approve any recommendation by the Chair/Director to either allow a student to take a course that has been failed more than three times (or fewer as per a Department/School standing variation), or to grant a student a retroactive course withdrawal.

4.2.2.10.4. The Chair/Director must send the decision letter, following the format provided by the Senate Office, to the student *via* Ryerson email. A copy must be sent to the student's program department (if different), the Associate Registrar, Enrolment Services, and Senate. The decision will be deemed received on the date sent.

4.2.2.10.5. Students are responsible for contacting the Department/School if they have not received a response in the specified period of time.

### **4.3. Faculty Level Appeals**

#### **4.3.1. Student Responsibility**

**4.3.1.1.** Appeals must be filed within ten (10) working days of receipt of the decision at the Department/School level and must be complete. Incomplete and/or late appeals will not be processed. Forms and instructions found on the Senate and Registration and Records websites, or from the Dean's office, must be utilized.

**4.3.1.2.** Students may consult with and be represented by an advocate such as a student advocate from RSU or CESAR.

**4.3.1.3.** Students may consult with the Ombudsperson regarding issues of fairness.

**4.3.1.4.** Except for Procedural Error and extraordinary circumstances involving health issues, including documented mental health issues, no new grounds may be introduced.

**4.3.1.5.** Grade Appeals are filed with the Faculty in which the course is taught and Standing Appeals are filed with the student's program Faculty. Grade appeals for continuing education courses must be filed with the Dean of the Faculty which has responsibility for that course. If the course is not tied to a specific Faculty, it is to be filed with the Dean of The Chang School.

- 4.3.1.6. Unless other arrangements have been made in advance, appeals must be submitted in person. If fax, mail or email submissions are accepted, original documents must be submitted in person by the student by a date to be determined based upon the circumstances.
  - 4.3.1.7. All documents to be presented as evidence must be attached to the appeal. This includes **all** documentation from the previous level of appeal. Failure to provide all documentation previously submitted, or the alteration of documentation previously submitted may result in a charge of academic misconduct. It must also include a letter stating where the decision of the Chair/Director is disputed. If it does not, the Dean may dismiss the appeal (see procedures on Dismissal).
  - 4.3.1.8. Students who do not receive either a decision, or a letter explaining why the decision is delayed, within five (5) working days of submission of an appeal should consult with the Secretary of Senate. In exceptional circumstances, decision delays, usually because an instructor is not available for immediate consultation, should normally be no more than five (5) working days. The student may consult with the Secretary of Senate if there is no communication regarding a delay, or if the delay is more than five (5) working days.
  - 4.3.1.9. If a student does not proceed within the timeline stipulated, the appeal will be considered terminated. Required to Withdraw/Permanently Withdrawn students will be removed from their courses once the time for the appeal has expired without an appeal being launched.
  - 4.3.1.10. Students must retain a copy of all appeals documents as it is not the responsibility of the Dean to provide these documents should the student wish to file a further appeal.
- 4.3.2. Dean Responsibility**
- 4.3.2.1. Appeals not submitted within ten (10) working days of the date of the decision letter from the Chair/Director will normally not be processed. The Dean, designate, or appeals committee will not process incomplete appeals. Documentation must include all documents submitted to the Department/School and the decision letter. It must also include a letter from the student indicating where the decision of the Chair/Director is in error. If it does not, the Dean may dismiss the appeal (see procedures on Dismissal).
  - 4.3.2.2. Unless other arrangements have been made in advance, appeals must be submitted in person. However, if there are extenuating circumstances, the Dean may agree to accept the appeal *via* fax, mail or email. If fax, mail or email submissions are accepted, original documents must be submitted in person by the student by a date to be determined based upon the circumstances. If the appeal is not

complete it will not be processed. The Dean may also agree to accept an appeal after the deadline if there are extenuating circumstances.

**4.3.2.3.** In some situations appeals may be dismissed (not accepted) at this level (see Dismissal Procedures).

**4.3.2.4.** The Dean must respond to the student in writing within five (5) working days of the receipt of the appeal. If the Dean is unable to respond to a student within the five (5) working days because s/he is unable to get necessary information, the student must be notified of when they are to expect a decision. In exceptional circumstances, decision delays, usually because an instructor is not available for immediate consultation, should normally be no more than five (5) working days. The student may consult with the Dean if there is no communication regarding a delay, or if the delay is more than five (5) working days.

**4.3.2.5. Decisions:**

4.3.2.5.1. The Dean may not award a numerical grade, or require any action contrary to a university policy or collective agreement.

4.3.2.5.2. The Dean may:

**4.3.2.5.2.1.** deny the appeal

**4.3.2.5.2.2.** grant the appeal

**4.3.2.5.2.3.** grant or deny the appeal in part subject to conditions. If the student does not accept the conditions attached, the appeal will be considered denied.

4.3.2.5.3. The Registrar must approve any recommendation by the Dean to either allow a student to take a course that has been failed more than three times (or fewer as per a Department/School standing variation), or to grant a student a retroactive course withdrawal.

4.3.2.5.4. The Dean must send the student a copy of the decision letter, following the format provided by the Senate Office, to the student *via* Ryerson email. A copy must be sent to the student's program department/school and teaching Department/School (if different), the Assistant Registrar, Enrolment Services, and Senate. The decision will be deemed received on the date sent.

4.3.2.5.5. Students are responsible for contacting the Dean's office if they have not received a response in the specified time period.

**4.4. Appeals to the Senate Appeals Committee**

**4.4.1. Student Responsibility**

**4.4.1.1.** Students must submit an appeal to the Secretary of Senate within

ten (10) working days of receipt of the Faculty Level response. Forms and instructions for the filing of Appeals can be found at the Registration and Records or Senate websites, or are available from the office of the Secretary of Senate. Unless other arrangements have been made in advance, appeals must be submitted in person. However, if there are extenuating circumstances, the Secretary of Senate may agree to accept the appeal *via* fax, mail or email. If fax, mail or email submissions are accepted, original documents must be submitted in person by the student by a date to be determined based upon the circumstances. If the appeal is not complete, it will not be processed. The Secretary of Senate may accept an appeal after the deadline if there are extenuating circumstances.

- 4.4.1.2.** The student's appeal must include all of the documents submitted at all previous levels, all decision letters, all evidence, and a letter to the Senate Appeals Committee that clearly outlines where the decision made by the Dean and Chair/Director are in dispute. Failure to provide this letter may result in the appeal being dismissed (see Section 3 in Procedures). Failure to provide all documentation previously submitted, or the alteration of documentation previously submitted may result in a charge of academic misconduct.
  - 4.4.1.3.** The student may consult with an advocate, e.g. from RSU or CESAR, who may represent them in the hearing. The student may also consult with a lawyer, who may represent them at the Senate level. Any advocate or legal counsel must be indicated on the appeal form, and there can only be one advocate or legal counsel.
  - 4.4.1.4.** Students must indicate on the form if they are bringing any witnesses.
  - 4.4.1.5.** Students must retain a copy of all appeals documents.
  - 4.4.1.6.** Students must reply to all email inquiries as to their availability for a hearing, which will be scheduled as soon as possible. Students are normally given (10) working days' notice of the hearing date, but the appeal may be heard sooner if both parties agree in writing.
  - 4.4.1.7.** It is in students' best interest to attend the hearing. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, the hearing will proceed if the student does not attend.
- 4.4.2. Chair/Director Responsibility**
- 4.4.2.1.** The Chair/Director serves as the respondent in the Hearing. In grade appeals, the instructor for the course is also encouraged to attend, and where not possible, the Chair/Director must be provided all of the relevant materials. Often only the instructor is able to answer the Hearing Panel's questions. The instructor may be present throughout the hearing and may answer questions at any time during the hearing.

- 4.4.2.2. The Chair/Director (or other respondent) shall reply to the appeal in writing to the Secretary of Senate within five (5) working days of receipt, including any documents to be submitted as evidence. A copy of the relevant course outline(s) must be submitted for all grade appeals and where possible, student's grades in each component of the course. The Registrar must also receive a copy of the appeal.
- 4.4.2.3. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, the hearing may proceed if the respondent or instructor does not attend.

#### **4.4.3. Secretary of Senate Responsibility**

- 4.4.3.1. The Secretary will review the appeal to determine if it is complete and is within the deadline.
- 4.4.3.2. In some situations, the Secretary will give the student notice of dismissal (non- acceptance) of the appeal (see section 3).
- 4.4.3.3. The Secretary will immediately forward the appeal to the Chair/Director and determine in consultation with the Chair/Director, who shall be the respondent and, based on the nature of the issue, if others should be called as witnesses or co-respondents.
- 4.4.3.4. The Secretary will establish a Hearing Panel of the Senate Appeals Committee, consisting of at least two (2) faculty and one (1) student, and appoint a Hearing Panel Chair
- 4.4.3.5. The Secretary will determine if the student's academic record is pertinent to the appeal, and if so, provide it in the complete appeals package.
- 4.4.3.6. The Secretary will schedule a hearing based upon the availability of the student and the instructor or Chair/Director. Both parties must receive at least ten (10) working day's notice of the date, time and place of the hearing. An appeal may be scheduled with less than ten (10) working day's notice with the written agreement of both parties.
- 4.4.3.7. The Secretary will forward all of the appeal submissions, including a Notice of Hearing, to: all members of the Hearing Panel; the Chair/Director and any instructors who will be attending the hearing; the Registrar; the student; and the student's advocate, if any. Students must receive appeals information related to their Hearing from the Secretary of Senate either in person by prior arrangement or by courier, normally five (5) working days in advance of the Hearing. It will be deemed that the information has been received on the date it was picked up or couriered.

#### **4.4.4. Appeal Panel Decisions**

- 4.4.4.1. The Hearing Panel may not award a numerical grade, or require any action contrary to another university policy or collective agreement.

- 4.4.4.2.** The Hearing Panel may
  - 4.4.4.2.1. deny the appeal.
  - 4.4.4.2.2. grant the appeal
  - 4.4.4.2.3. grant or deny the appeal in part subject to conditions. If the student does not accept the conditions attached, the appeal will be considered as denied.
- 4.4.4.3.** Students who are appealing their academic standing may be registered in courses during their appeal and are normally dropped from their courses if their appeal is denied. However, if the student has either completed or nearly completed these courses at the time of the decision, and if the reason for the timeframe for the Senate decision is a procedural matter under control of the university, the Hearing Panel may determine that the grades for that semester should not be removed.
- 4.4.4.4.** The letter to the student, outlining the decision of the Hearing Panel clearly stating the basis on which the decision was reached, must be sent by the Panel Chair to the Secretary of Senate, who will send a copy to the student *via* Ryerson email within five (5) working days. The Secretary of Senate must send a copy of the decision to the Chair, the Dean and the Registrar.
- 4.4.4.5.** Decisions of the Appeals Committee of Senate are final and binding.
- 4.4.4.6.** Based upon matters arising at the Hearing, the Hearing Panel may make recommendations on procedural or policy matters to the Appeals Committee of Senate, the Secretary of Senate, a Department/School or Faculty Appeals Committee or Appeals Officer, a Dean or the Registrar's Office. These recommendations should be in a separate memo addressed to the Secretary, who shall distribute appropriately.

## **5. Dismissal of Appeals**

### **5.1. Circumstances for dismissal**

- 5.1.1.** Normally, submission past the deadline and incomplete submissions will not be processed. These are not considered dismissed appeals, and there is no further action. In extraordinary circumstances, including documented mental health issues, deadline extensions can be granted.
- 5.1.2.** An appeal may be Dismissed because of the following:
  - 5.1.2.1.** Failure to provide a sufficient rationale outlining the reasons why the decision made at the Department/School level or Faculty was incorrect.

- 5.1.2.2.** Missing an exam and/or assignment for religious observance (see Policy section 1.2.1.). If a student did not file appropriate forms at the beginning of the semester or as soon as the final exam schedule is posted, cannot appeal at a later date based on religious observance (See Policy 150: Accommodation of Student Religious, Aboriginal or Spiritual Observance [www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol150.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol150.pdf))
- 5.1.2.3.** Grade reassessments are not grounds for an academic appeal. Students are required to review grade concerns with the instructor within ten (10) working days of when the graded work is returned to the class or by the appeal deadline if it is a final exam or paper. If the instructor does not agree to review the work or does not respond within five (5) working days, a student should consult the Chair/Director. The only appeal permitted regarding quality of work is if the reassessment of the work was not done or has not been done in keeping with the policy. The ground for this type of appeal is Procedural Error (Section IIA.5). There is no appeal of the new grade received – it may go up or down or remain the same.
- 5.1.3. Health (See Policy section 1.2.3.)** – Documentation must be submitted within three days of a missed test or exam, or graded assignment deadline, or as soon as reasonably possible. It is expected that students will consult with an appropriate regulated health professional at the time of their illness. Appeals can be dismissed if the health certificate is not submitted in a timely way, if it does not cover the period of time in question, or if there is no health documentation submitted with an appeal based on health grounds.
- 5.1.4. Prejudice (See Policy section 2.1.4.)** – If the Human Rights Services has found that there has been no prejudice on a prohibited ground, continuation on the ground of Prejudice will be dismissed.
- 5.2. Dismissal at the Faculty Level**

  - 5.2.1.** If an appeal is dismissed at the Faculty level, the Dean must give the student written notice of the intent to dismiss the appeal and the reasons for the dismissal.
  - 5.2.2.** Students have five (5) working days to provide a written response as to why the appeal should not be dismissed, addressing the reasons stated in the notice of intent to dismiss.
  - 5.2.3.** The Dean must forward all documents to Senate, including the student response, if any, to be reviewed by a panel of the Senate Appeals Committee, which will decide if the appeal will be dismissed or proceed.
  - 5.2.4.** The Secretary of Senate will inform the Dean and the student of the decision in writing within five (5) working days.
  - 5.2.5.** There is no further appeal unless it is based on Procedural Error.

### **5.3. Dismissal at the Senate Level**

- 5.3.1.** If an appeal is dismissed at the Senate level, a student must be given a written notice of intent to dismiss the appeal and the reasons for the dismissal.
- 5.3.2.** Students have five (5) working days to provide a written response as to why the appeal should not be dismissed, addressing the reasons stated in the notice of intent to dismiss.
- 5.3.3.** The documentation will be reviewed by a panel of the Senate Appeals Committee, which will decide if the appeal will be dismissed or proceed.
- 5.3.4.** The student will be informed in writing of the decision within five (5) working days.
- 5.3.5.** If the Panel upholds the dismissal, there is no further appeal.