

**RYERSON UNIVERSITY
POLICY OF SENATE**

GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION AND APPEALS

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RYERSON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION AND APPEALS POLICY

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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF POLICY

This Policy provides the process by which graduate students may seek academic consideration. It is expected that requests for academic consideration will be made as soon as circumstances arise. 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 informally resolve course-related issues with their instructor. (For purposes of this document, “instructor” shall mean any person who is teaching a graduate course or supervising a graduate student at the University.) 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 (on the YSGS website and the Senate website) 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.

All issues regarding academic standing should be referred to the Graduate Program Director (GPD), or GPD Designate, of the student’s program. (See section 5.2 on Grounds for Appeal of Academic Standing.) 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. This policy applies to all Ryerson graduate students pursuing academic consideration or academic appeals within a course or as part of milestone attainment at the University.

2. GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

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-scheduling or re-weighting of an exam or assignment because of missed work, the assignment of an INC or the permission to continue on provisional standing. It should be understood that students can only receive grades which reflect their knowledge of the course material.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Course includes graduate milestones, comprehensive examinations, major research papers, major research projects, research or thesis proposals, dissertations as well as the research and associated writing carried out towards any of these at the graduate level.
- 3.2 Chair is the Chair of a Department unless otherwise specified.
- 3.3 Director is the Director of a School.
- 3.4 Graduate Program Director (GPD) includes Associate Chairs of graduate Programs
- 3.5 Dean is the Dean of a Faculty/School (including the Dean of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies).
- 3.6 Dean of Record is a Dean named by the Provost and given decanal authority over an interdisciplinary program.
- 3.7 Associate Deans of a Faculty/School are appointed according to Board policy and have a range of Faculty-wide responsibilities assigned by the Dean.
- 3.8 Faculty/School is an overarching academic unit, headed by a Dean, that may comprise Departments or Schools or be structured according to a specific function (e.g., the Yeates School of Graduate Studies or The Chang School of Continuing Education).
- 3.9 Department/School is an academic unit, headed by a Chair or Director, resident in a Faculty, that has responsibility for the delivery of academic programs.
- 3.10 Faculty Member includes all current tenure stream and limited term faculty members represented by the Ryerson Faculty Association (RFA).
- 3.11 Instructor includes all individuals who are teaching a graduate course or supervising a graduate student at the University.
- 3.12 Student/Graduate Student is an individual currently registered in a graduate program at Ryerson University leading to a graduate degree or professional master's diploma.
- 3.13 Staff are administrative employees of the University.

4. ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION

4.1 GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 4.1.1 It is the student's responsibility to notify and consult with either their instructor or Graduate Program Director (GPD), depending on the situation, as soon as circumstances arise that are likely to affect academic performance.
- 4.1.2 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 GPD. Failure to do so may jeopardize the success of an appeal made at a later date.
- 4.1.3 When issues are not resolved with an instructor, or when a student does not receive a timely response from an instructor, the GPD must be contacted for assistance if the student wishes to pursue the matter further before filing a formal appeal.
- 4.1.4 An appeal may be filed only if the issue cannot be resolved appropriately with the instructor or GPD (see section 5.2 on **Grounds for Course Grade Appeal**).
- 4.1.5 It is the instructor's responsibility to respond when students raise concern for grading or course management issues.
- 4.1.6 If the GPD is the instructor for a course in which an accommodation or alternate arrangement is being requested and the matter cannot be resolved, the student should request that the Faculty Dean appoint an appropriate replacement to act as GPD in the process.

- 4.1.7 It is the GPD's responsibility to be accessible to discuss matters that cannot be resolved between the instructor and the student.
- 4.1.8 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.
- 4.1.9 Students who are appealing their withdrawn standing may continue in their program and shall be registered in courses on the basis of a provisional contract until the standing appeal is resolved. Students must pay all appropriate fees. If the appeal is denied and they remain withdrawn, they will be given a full refund of the fees charged for the program in which they enrolled that semester.
- 4.1.10 Students shall be given supervised access to their graded work or final exam, and be permitted to review that work for a reasonable length of time in order to prepare the required explanation for a re-grading request.
- 4.1.11 If academic concerns are not resolved with the instructor or with the GPD, students should consult the specific directions and forms for details on the filing of appeals. These may be found at the Senate or YSGS websites. (See section 5.4 for **Academic Appeals Regulations**.)
- 4.1.12 Appeals not filed by the published deadlines will normally not be accepted. In extenuating circumstances, students or university administrators may request that an extension be provided by a GPD, Faculty Dean or Designate, or the Secretary of Senate, depending upon the level. (See Section 6).
- 4.1.13 It is the student's responsibility to maintain updated contact information with the University to ensure that all information related to grades, standings and appeals are properly received. Ryerson program students are required to maintain a Ryerson email address (see Policy 157: Establishment of Student Email Accounts for Official University Communication).

4.2 ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENTS

4.2.1 **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.

4.2.2 **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 and/or the earliest stages of the research work as possible, according to Academic Accommodation Support Policies and Procedures (see section 6 and Policy 159: Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities).

4.2.3 **Alternate Arrangements for Missed Examination and/or Assignment: Health or Compassionate**

- 4.2.3.1 Students shall inform 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 as soon as reasonably possible. Alternate arrangements may include the setting of a make-up test, transferring the weight of a missed assignment to the final examination or extending a deadline.
- 4.2.3.2 Alternate arrangements are based upon the severity of the circumstances and the amount of work missed. Generally, employment commitments will not constitute grounds for academic consideration; however, employment-related issues may be considered as one element of a more complex request for an alternate arrangement.
- 4.2.3.3 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 GPD. If, after this consultation, they still do not accept the alternate arrangement offered, they must document their concern in writing to the GPD and abide by the arrangement to the extent possible. If the test or assignment for which an alternate arrangement has been made becomes a point of contention in the final course grade, the student may appeal the final course grade at the end of the term, on the original health or compassionate grounds. (See section 5.3 on **Grounds for Course Grade Appeals**.)
- 4.2.3.4 Instructors will determine if health documentation is required for an alternate arrangement based upon the length of the condition and the amount and type of the work missed and affected. 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 essential for an appeal based on health grounds. The Ryerson Health Certificate and guidelines can be found on the Yeates School of Graduate Studies and the Senate web sites. The University may seek verification of health claims.
- 4.2.3.5 It is recognized that compassionate grounds may be hard to document. Nonetheless, students should present as much documentation as possible. For example, a death certificate or notice from a funeral home would be appropriate documentation in the case of a death.
- 4.2.3.6 All faculty and staff are required to exercise discretion and adhere to the principles of confidentiality regarding any documentation received.
- 4.2.3.7 Normally, a student who missed a final exam will be given an “incomplete” (INC) and given a make-up exam as soon as possible within the completion period specified on the INC form.
- 4.2.3.8 Unless an “incomplete” (INC) grade is applicable, the instructor cannot grant extensions beyond the final date for submission of grades as part of an academic consideration.

4.2.3.9 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.

4.2.4 Arrangements for Inability to Complete Term Work in More Than One Course:

4.2.4.1 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 their GPD as soon as possible. Failure to do so will jeopardize the ability to provide consideration and to launch a future appeal.

4.2.4.2 When seeking alternate arrangements, students must submit supporting documentation to their GPD, who should advise students as to what to do on a course-by-course basis as soon as possible. Suggestions may include completing the work in some courses, dropping some courses, requesting extensions of deadlines or requesting grades of "incomplete" (INC). A copy of the suggested arrangement will be kept on record in the program office.

4.2.4.3 Each of the student's instructors must receive an email from the GPD informing him/her that the student will be requesting an alternate arrangement and, if the student requests, the arrangement that has been suggested. Students must contact each instructor to verify that the suggested arrangement is acceptable to the instructor. Instructors should not require documentation to support the request for an alternate arrangement, as an assessment has already been made.

4.2.4.4 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 GPD. The GPD must inform the involved faculty member that the student has dropped the course. If the drop deadline has passed, approval from the Associate Dean, YSGS will be required to drop a course.

4.2.5 Advance Consideration of Academic Standing

If, during the semester, students experience health or compassionate circumstances, which may later affect their academic standing, it is the students' responsibility to bring the situation to the attention of the GPD at the earliest possible time.

4.3 GRADE REASSESSMENT

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

4.4 COURSE MANAGEMENT ISSUES (Including Milestone Management)

Students who have concerns about how a course is taught or managed should normally first consult with the instructor as soon as the concern arises. Likewise, a student who has concerns with how their milestone progress is being managed should first consult with their supervisor as soon as the concern arises. If they feel that the matter cannot be discussed with the instructor or if the matter cannot be resolved, students should consult with the Graduate Program Director. Failure to do so may jeopardize an appeal.

5. ACADEMIC APPEALS

Academic Appeals are reserved for issues related to grades or academic standings that could not be resolved with an instructor or a GPD. Students will only receive grades which reflect their knowledge of the academic material. With the exception of Procedural Error, no new grounds may be introduced at subsequent levels.

Academic appeals for graduate milestones are handled in the same way as they are for courses.

5.1 APPEALS DURING THE TERM

Appeals may be initiated at any time during the term by following the process below.

5.2 GROUNDS FOR COURSE GRADE APPEALS

There are five grounds that may be considered for a grade appeal: Prejudice; Health; Compassionate; Course (Milestone) Management; and Procedural Error.

5.2.1 Prejudice

- 5.2.1.1 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 may appeal under the ground of Course Management.
- 5.2.1.2 Students must consult with the Human Rights Office (formerly the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Office) if filing an appeal on the grounds of prejudice. The Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy is available on the Ryerson website. The Human Rights Office will do an assessment and make a recommendation to the GPD before the appeal will proceed. This may result in a delay in the appeals process.
- 5.2.1.3 If the Human Rights Office 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, an appeal may then be filed on the ground of Course Management.
- 5.2.1.4 If, during the course of any level of appeal, it is determined that there is a claim of prejudice on a prohibited ground, which was not investigated by the Human Rights Office, it will be referred to that Office and the decision will be delayed until that office has assessed the claim and made a recommendation.

5.2.2 Health

- 5.2.2.1 If a physical and/or mental health condition occurs during the term, 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 4.2 on Alternate Arrangements.) Alternate arrangements are based upon the severity of the circumstances and the amount of work missed.
- 5.2.2.2 Students must submit a fully completed Ryerson Health Certificate, or a letter on letterhead containing all of the information required by the health certificate, signed by an appropriate regulated health professional for the applicable period of time. 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 students must inform the instructor as soon as reasonably possible.

The University may seek further verification of health claims.

- 5.2.2.3 Students must submit applicable health documentation within two (2) working days of when they are able to return to classes and studies. Documents not submitted within this period will only be accepted under exceptional circumstances.

5.2.3 Compassionate

- 5.2.3.1 Appeals may be filed on Compassionate grounds when there are events or circumstances beyond the control of and often unforeseen by the student, that 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 their 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. Generally, employment commitments will not constitute grounds for academic consideration; however, employment-related issues may be considered as one element of a more complex application for consideration.
- 5.2.3.2 While it is recognized that compassionate grounds may be hard to document, items such as relevant travel documents, death certificates or notices from a funeral home, letters from counselors, therapists, or religious or community leaders would be appropriate documentation. It is advisable that students provide as much documentation as possible. Where circumstances do not permit this, the student must inform the instructor as soon as reasonably possible.
- 5.2.3.3 Students must submit applicable documentation within two (2) working days of when they are able to return to classes and studies in order to receive consideration for that work. Where circumstances do not permit this, documentation must be submitted as soon as reasonably possible.

5.2.4 Course Management (including Milestone Management)

- 5.2.4.1 Appeals may be filed on the ground of Course/Milestone Management when students believe that a grade has been adversely affected because an instructor or supervisor has deviated significantly from the course management policies or supervision procedures of the program or YSGS or from the course outline, or has demonstrated personal bias or unfair treatment.
- 5.2.4.2 Students should have brought course/milestone management issues to the attention of the instructor and/or the Associate Chair/GPD when the concern arose. Failure to have done so may jeopardize the appeal.
- 5.2.4.3 Students must provide the course outline or supervision agreements when it is relevant to their appeal, must detail where the deviation occurred and must explain how their academic performance was affected.

5.2.5 Procedural Error

- 5.2.5.1 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. Appeals granted on this ground will rectify the procedural error.

- 5.2.5.2 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.

5.3 APPEAL OF ACADEMIC STANDING

Since Academic Standing is determined by students' academic performance, students must provide substantive reasons why their current standing is not appropriate. Standing appeals are generally based on health or compassionate grounds or procedural error. Requests for changes must have supporting documentation attached. Students should normally have consulted with the Graduate Program Director (GPD) as soon as the situation that affected their academic performance arose.

- 5.3.1 In appeals based on health grounds, students will be required to submit documentation for the applicable period of time. The documentation should explain the duration of the health condition and the impact of the health condition on the students' ability to meet academic obligations during that period.
- 5.3.2 Appeals may be based on compassionate reasons when there are events or circumstances beyond the control of and often unforeseen by the student, that seriously impair a student's ability to meet academic obligations. Instructors or GPDs should have been informed of these circumstances as soon as they affected a student's ability to complete their work so that alternate arrangements could be made. Failure to have done so may jeopardize the appeal. (See section 5.2.3 on employment related concerns.)
- 5.3.3 Appeals may be based on 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.

5.4 ACADEMIC APPEALS REGULATIONS

- 5.4.1 Each GPD or designate shall respond to student appeals.
- 5.4.2 The Dean or Dean's Designate will respond to Appeals at the Faculty level.
- 5.4.3 The Senate Appeals Committee shall hear appeals at the Senate level.
- 5.4.4 In cases involving a graduate student and an Undergraduate or a Continuing Education course in which he or she may be enrolled, Policy 134: Undergraduate Academic Consideration and Appeals will prevail.
- 5.4.5 In some situations, appeals may be dismissed (not accepted) at the Faculty or at the Senate levels (see section 6).
- 5.4.6 Anyone who chairs an Appeals Committee at any level may not serve on an Appeals Committee at any other level.
- 5.4.7 Conflict of Interest: A member of an Appeals Committee or Panel should not 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,

no less than five (5) working days before the hearing. Unless the conflict of interest is resolved, the Committee or Panel member shall be replaced. 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. The Panel member(s) that is challenged may offer a statement but may not take part in the Panel's decision on the conflict. If the Panel member with the conflict is excused and there is no quorum, the Hearing shall be adjourned and a new hearing scheduled with a new Panel member.

- 5.4.8** Burden and Standard of Proof: In an Academic appeal the onus is on the student 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.
- 5.4.9** All individuals who have responsibility for deciding appeals, including GPDs, members of Appeals Committees, 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 decisions.
- 5.4.10** Statistics on the type, grounds and outcome of appeals must be reported to the Secretary of Senate at the end of each term.

5.5 ACADEMIC APPEALS

5.5.1 Program Level Appeals

- 5.5.1.1** All appeals at the Program level must be filed by the deadline stated in the Graduate Calendar using the forms (and instructions), available on the YSGS and Senate websites, or from YSGS or graduate program offices. Deadlines may be extended if grades are not posted in a timely manner. However, students must have inquired by the deadline stated in the graduate calendar if a grade is missing.
- 5.5.1.2** Appeals will normally be submitted in person to the graduate program office. Fax or email submissions will only be accepted where prior arrangements have been made, to ensure that the appropriate person receives the appeal. Original documents must follow by mail. All documents to be presented as evidence must be attached to the appeal.
- 5.5.1.3** 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 GPD, and who wish to appeal, may submit a formal appeal on the ground of Procedural Error by the deadline. This appeal may be withdrawn at a later date if the issue is resolved.
- 5.5.1.4** Students who wish to appeal a final course grade must first consult with the instructor and/or GPD. Students who wish to appeal an academic standing must first consult the GPD. 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.
- 5.5.1.5** If a student appeals only an academic standing, it will be deemed that the

- grade(s) upon which the academic standing was based have been accepted.
- 5.5.1.6 If a student has initiated more than one appeal, the GPD shall determine whether the various appeals should be heard concurrently or sequentially. If the appeals are heard sequentially, then the grade appeal must be heard first.
- 5.5.1.7 If a grade appeal is delayed because there is an unresolved reassessment or recalculation, the related standing appeal may also be delayed.
- 5.5.1.8 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 program. As per Policy 60: Academic Integrity (available on the Senate website), a grade of “DEF” may be assigned while a misconduct charge is under investigation.
- 5.5.1.9 Appeals of final grades submitted as a result of completing an “incomplete” (INC) are often posted during next term (rather than at the end of that term), depending on the requirement for completion stated on the INC form. An appeal of such a final 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.
- 5.5.1.10 The program 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.
- 5.5.1.11 The program must respond to the student in writing within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the appeal, whether the appeal was granted or denied. The letter must clearly state the basis on which the decision was reached. Students should indicate if they wish to pick up the decision in person or have the decision emailed, faxed or sent by mail. If the appeal decision is mailed, it will be deemed to have been received by the fifth working day following the postmark date on the envelope. Fax and email responses will be deemed to have been received on the date sent. Students are responsible for contacting the program if they have not received a response in the specified time period.
- 5.5.1.12 Decisions
- 5.5.1.12.1 The GPD or designate may not award a numerical grade, or require any action contrary to a University policy or collective agreement.
- 5.5.1.12.2 The GPD or designate may:
- 5.5.1.12.2.1 deny the appeals
- 5.5.1.12.2.2 grant the appeal
- 5.5.1.12.2.3 grant or deny the appeal in part, subject to conditions, or attach any conditions to any decision. If the student does not accept the conditions attached, the appeal will be considered to be denied.

5.5.2 Faculty Level Appeals

- 5.5.2.1 Appeals must be filed within ten (10) working days of receipt of the decision at the Program level and must be complete. Forms and Instructions found on the YSGS website must be utilized. Except for Procedural error, the grounds for an appeal should be the same as those claimed at the Program level.
- 5.5.2.2 Grade Appeals are filed with the Faculty in which the course is taught and Standing Appeals are filed with the student's program Faculty. If the course or program is not tied to a specific Faculty, it is to be filed with the Vice Provost & Dean of YSGS.
- 5.5.2.3 Appeals will normally be submitted in person during business hours. Fax or email submissions will only be accepted where prior arrangements have been made, to ensure that the appropriate person receives the appeal. Original documents must follow by mail or in person.
- 5.5.2.4 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 as per Policy 60. It must also include a letter stating where the decision of the GPD is disputed. If it does not, the Dean may dismiss the appeal.
- 5.5.2.5 If students do not proceed within the timeline stipulated, the appeal will be considered terminated. Withdrawn students will be removed from their courses once the time for the appeal has expired without an appeal being launched.
- 5.5.2.6 Dean or Dean's Designate¹ Responsibility:
 - 5.5.2.6.1 Appeals not submitted within ten (10) working days of the date of the decision letter from the GPD will normally not be processed. The Dean or Dean's designate will not process incomplete appeals. Documentation must include all documents submitted to the Graduate Program and the decision letter. It must also include a letter from the student indicating where the decision of the GPD is in error. If it does not, the Dean or Dean's designate may dismiss the appeal.
 - 5.5.2.6.2 While appeals are normally submitted in person, the Dean or Dean's designate may agree to accept the appeal via fax, mail or email. Original documents should be submitted in person at a later date.
 - 5.5.2.6.3 The Dean or Dean's designate must respond to the student in writing within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the appeal. If the Dean or Dean's designate is unable to respond to a student in that time because they are unable to get necessary information, the student must be notified of when they are to expect a decision.

¹ Dean's designate would normally be the Associate Dean with graduate responsibility within the Faculty.

- 5.5.2.6.4 The Dean or Dean's designate may engage in a confidential and fair consultation process if deemed necessary. (5.5.2.7);
- 5.5.2.7 Consultation Process:
 - 5.5.2.7.1 Consultation required must be applied fairly and confidentially.
 - 5.5.2.7.2 The Dean or Dean's designate may consult with both the appellant and the respondent for clarification.
 - 5.5.2.7.3 If further consultation is required the Dean or Dean's designate has the option of engaging both a graduate student from another graduate program and an RFA member that is a YSGS member. These individuals should have no conflict of interest in the appeal.
 - 5.5.2.7.4 Appeal materials must be shared equally with both the faculty member and student consultant.
- 5.5.2.8 If the Dean or Dean designate fails to respond to a student's appeal within the stipulated time period, and there has been no prior agreement between the student and the decision maker to extend the time period, the student is permitted to proceed directly to the Senate Appeals Committee.
- 5.5.2.9 In some situations, appeals may be dismissed (not accepted) at this level (see section 6).
- 5.5.2.10 The Dean or Dean designate must respond to the student in writing within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the appeal. The letter must clearly state the basis on which the decision was reached. Students should indicate if they wish to pick up the decision in person or have the decision emailed, faxed or sent by mail. If the appeal decision is mailed, it will be deemed to have been received by the fifth working day following the postmark date on the envelope. Students are responsible for contacting the office of the Dean if they have not received a response in the specified time period. Copies of the decision must be sent to the instructor, the GPD, the Administrative Co-ordinator, YSGS, the Registrar and the Secretary of Senate.
- 5.5.2.11 Decisions:
 - 5.5.2.11.1 The Dean or Dean designate may not award a numerical grade, or require any action contrary to a University policy or collective agreement.
 - 5.5.2.11.2 The Dean or Dean designate may:
 - 5.5.2.11.2.1 deny the appeal
 - 5.5.2.11.2.2 grant the appeal
 - 5.5.2.11.2.3 grant or deny the appeal in part, subject to conditions, or attach any conditions to any decision. If the student does not accept the conditions attached, the appeal will be considered to be denied

5.5.3 Appeals to the Senate Appeals Committee

- 5.5.3.1 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 YSGS or Senate websites, or are available from the office of the Secretary of Senate. Appeals will normally be submitted in person. Fax or email submissions will only be accepted where prior arrangements have been made, to ensure that the appropriate person receives the appeal. Original documents must follow. All documents to be presented as evidence must be attached to the appeal.

5.5.3.2 The Secretary of Senate shall:

5.5.3.2.1 review the appeal to determine if it is complete and is within the deadline;

5.5.3.2.2 Immediately, forward the appeal to the GPD. The GPD shall, upon receipt, inform the Secretary of Senate who shall be the respondent. The 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;

5.5.3.2.3 establish a Hearing Panel of the Senate Appeals Committee and appoint a Hearing Panel Chair; (See section 5.4.7 for regulations on Conflict of Interest.)

5.5.3.2.4 determine if the student's academic record is pertinent to the appeal;

5.5.3.2.5 determine, in consultation with the Chair of the Hearing Panel if, given the grounds of the appeal, it is necessary to call the instructor and/or the GPD to be present;

5.5.3.2.6 schedule a hearing based upon the availability of the student and the instructor or GPD. Both parties must receive at least ten (10) working days notice of the date, time and place of the hearing. An appeal may be scheduled with less than ten (10) working days notice with the written agreement of both parties; and

5.5.3.2.7 forward all of the submissions for the appeal, including a copy of the student's academic record where relevant, to: all members of the Hearing Panel; the GPD 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 e-mail. It will be deemed that the information has been received on the date it was picked up or e-mailed.

5.5.3.3 All Hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the *Statutory Powers Procedure Act (SPPA)*. A copy of the SPPA is available for review in the office of the Secretary of Senate.

5.5.3.4 Hearing Regulations:

5.5.3.4.1 The respondent in the appeal shall be accompanied, when possible, by relevant faculty who shall attend to respond to any

relevant questions.

- 5.5.3.4.2 Both parties may bring witnesses, who shall normally be present at the hearing only while giving testimony. Students may bring one representative or advocate (including legal counsel) at this level.
- 5.5.3.4.3 Unless the committee is informed of an emergency situation, if either party, a representative, or advocate, or witness fails to attend the Hearing, the Appeals Committee will proceed in their absence.
- 5.5.3.4.4 The Hearing Panel may adjourn the Hearing when it is required for a fair process.
- 5.5.3.4.5 Appeal hearings are not open to the public due to privacy and confidentiality issues.
- 5.5.3.4.6 In order to provide advice on the process and information on a student's academic record, the Secretary of Senate may be present at the Hearing.
- 5.5.3.5 Decisions
 - 5.5.3.5.1 The Hearing Panel may not award a numerical grade, or require any action contrary to another University policy or collective agreement.
 - 5.5.3.5.2 The Hearing Panel may
 - 5.5.3.5.2.1 deny the appeal
 - 5.5.3.5.2.2 grant the appeal
 - 5.5.3.5.2.3 grant the appeal in part subject to conditions. If the student does not accept the conditions attached, the appeal will be considered as denied.
 - 5.5.3.5.3 A decision will be issued by the Senate Appeals Committee Panel to the Secretary of Senate within five (5) business days of the panel hearing, and the student will be notified by the Secretary of Senate within ten (10) business days.
 - 5.5.3.5.4 Decisions of the Senate Appeals Committee are final and binding.
 - 5.5.3.5.5 Based upon matters arising at the Hearing, the Hearing Panel may make recommendations on procedural or policy matters to the Secretary of Senate who may share it with the pertinent offices.

6. DISMISSAL OF APPEALS

6.1 Circumstances for dismissal

- 6.1.1 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.
- 6.1.2 Incomplete submissions, or submission forms improperly completed.
- 6.1.3 Missing an exam and/or assignment for religious observance (Section 4.2.1): 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 and Spiritual Observance).
- 6.1.4 Regrading or recalculation: Grade re-assessments 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 GPD. The only appeal permitted regarding quality of work is if the re-assessment 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 5.2.5). There is no appeal of the new grade received – it may go up or down or remain the same.

6.1.5 Prejudice (Section 5.2.1) – if the Human Rights Office has found that there has been no prejudice on a prohibited ground, continuation on the ground of prejudice will be dismissed.

6.1.6 Health (Section 5.2.2) – Documentation must be submitted within three (3) days of a missed test, 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.

6.2 Dismissal at the Program Level

6.2.1 Only appeals which are not filed by the deadline date found in University calendars, or which are not complete or filed on the appropriate forms may be dismissed (not accepted) at the Program Level.

6.2.2 If there are extenuating circumstances (health/compassionate) that prevent a student from meeting the deadlines, a student may request an extension from the GPD. Supporting documentation may be required.

6.2.3 Students should be notified in writing of the dismissal of the appeal.

6.2.4 There is no further appeal unless it is based on Procedural Error (5.2.5)

6.3 Dismissal at the Faculty Level

6.3.1 If an appeal is dismissed (not accepted) at the Faculty level, the Dean or designate, must give the student written notice of the intent to dismiss the appeal and the reasons for the dismissal.

6.3.2 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.

6.3.3 If the student responds, the Dean or designate should forward all documents to Senate to be reviewed by a panel of the Senate Appeals Committee, which will decide if the appeal will be dismissed or proceed.

6.3.4 The Secretary of Senate will inform the Dean and the student of the decision in writing.

6.3.5 There is no further appeal unless it is based on Procedural Error.

6.4 Dismissal at the Senate Level

6.4.1 If an appeal is dismissed (not accepted) at the Senate level, a student must be given a written notice of intent to dismiss the appeal and the reasons for the dismissal.

6.4.2 Students have five (5) working days to provide a written response as to why the appeal should not be dismissed, addressing the reason stated in the notice of intent to dismiss.

- 6.4.3** If the student responds, the documentation will be reviewed by a panel of the Senate Appeals Committee, which will decide if the appeal will be dismissed or proceed.
- 6.4.4** The student will be informed in writing of the decision.
- 6.4.5** There is no further appeal.