



Senate Committee on Appeals on Academic Standing
c/o
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To: Vancouver Senate

From: Committee on Appeals on Academic Standing

Re: Annual Report 2009-2010

Senate has delegated to the *Senate Committee on Appeals on Academic Standing* the authority to hear and dispose of student appeals from decisions of Faculties in matters of academic standing. The Committee shall allow an appeal where it is decided that the decision of the Faculty was arrived at through improper or unfair procedures, and that as a result, a wrong decision on the merits has or may have been arrived at. However, the Committee has no jurisdiction where the sole question raised in an appeal turns on the exercise of academic judgment by a Faculty. The decision of the Committee on an appeal is a final disposition of that appeal. The Vancouver Senate has conferred on the Committee the power of making final decisions pursuant to section 37(1)(b) of the *University Act* (reference: *UBC Calendar, Academic Regulations, Senate Appeals on Academic Standing, section 2*).

Students may also appeal to the Committee the refusal of the Registrar to extend the time line for accepting an appeal, namely within 10 days of being informed in writing of the Faculty's final decision.

As per section 39(a) of the Rules and Procedures of the Vancouver Senate, the Committee is required to make an annual report to Senate, including the number of appeals heard, their disposition and the general nature of the appeals.

Since last reporting to Senate in May 2009, 8 appeals proceeded to Committee hearings, of which 3 were allowed and 5 were dismissed.

In addition to the 8 appeals concluded, which are summarized below, the Committee has been advised that in the past year an additional 13 appeals were presented to the Registrar, of which 1 was resolved prior to a Committee Hearing; 5 were dismissed by the Registrar due to lack of timely prosecution; and 7 are in progress and are expected to be heard by the Committee in the upcoming months.

Appeals Allowed

- The student appealed a decision of the Faculty requiring the student's withdrawal due to the student's failure to meet program requirements. The Committee held that the decision had been arrived at through improper or unfair procedures and that, as a result, a wrong decision on the merits had or may have been arrived at.
- The student appealed a decision of the Faculty requiring the student's withdrawal due to the student's failure to meet program requirements. The Committee held that the Faculty failed to consider the student's extenuating circumstances and

that the decision had been arrived at through improper or unfair procedures. As a result, a wrong decision on the merits had or may have been arrived at.

- The student appealed a decision of the Faculty to deny a change of grade in response to a request for Review of Assigned Standing. The Committee held that the Faculty failed to undertake the review in a timely manner and consider all relevant information and granted the student academic standing as it saw fit in the circumstances.

Appeals Dismissed:

- The student appealed a decision of the Registrar to deny a request to extend the 10-day time limit to submit a written notice of appeal against a decision of the Faculty requiring the student to withdraw. The Committee dismissed the appeal on the basis that the Registrar appropriately considered the student's extenuating circumstances and arrived at a decision in accordance to the Committee's rules and procedures.
- The student appealed a decision of the Faculty requiring the student's withdrawal for failed standing. The Committee held that the Faculty duly considered all information that ought to have been considered and found no unfairness or impropriety on the part of the Faculty as a result of the Faculty following its academic regulations.
- The student appealed a decision of the Faculty to deny a request for deferral for reinstatement to a program. The Committee concluded that the Faculty followed its policies and procedures in considering and rejecting the student's request for further deferrals and reached its decision through proper and fair procedures.
- The student appealed a decision of the Faculty requiring the student's withdrawal for failed standing. The Committee found that the Faculty duly considered the student's extenuating circumstances and arrived at its decision through fair and proper procedures.
- The student appealed a decision of the Faculty requiring the student's withdrawal for failed standing. The Committee found that the Faculty duly considered the student's extenuating circumstances and arrived at its decision in accordance with its published academic regulations.

General Observations

The Committee continues to draw to the attention of faculty and departments the importance of following due process in all matters relating to student assessment, promotion and appeal; of maintaining scrupulous records of course requirements, grade schemes, and student performance; as well as drawing such regulations and requirements to the attention of students.

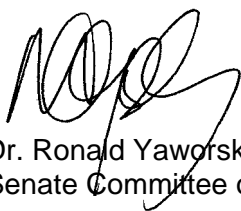
Additionally, the Committee would like to emphasize to faculties and departments the importance of dealing with these issues and student appeal inquiries in a timely manner

and of particular note, in notifying students of the right to appeal to the Senate Committee when issuing final decisions on matters of academic standing.

Based upon a review of the Committee's past files, the Committee observed that four Faculties consistently advise students when notifying them of the Faculty decision that they have the right to appeal to this Committee; four Faculties do not; in one Faculty practices vary, and the Committee could not determine the practices of three Faculties.

The Committee recommends that Faculties ensure their Advising Offices are fully informed as to the appeals process, and that students be consistently informed as to their right to appeal to the Senate Committee when provided with a final decision letter from the Faculty.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Ronald Yaworsky, Chair
Senate Committee on Appeals on Academic Standing

Members of the Committee, 2009-2010:

- Dr. Ronald Yaworsky (Chair)
- Dr. Brian Cairns
- Prof. Bonnie Craig
- Dr. William Dunford
- Mr. Sean Heisler
- Dr. Bikkar S. Lalli
- Prof. Benjamin Perrin
- Dr. Lance Rucker
- Mr. Michael Sami
- Mr. Joshua Sealy-Harrington
- Dr. Trevor Young