

## **STUDENT GRADE APPEALS**

Student Grade Appeals set forth in this document apply to all students enrolled in classes or programs in the Byrdine F. Lewis College of Nursing and Health Professions at Georgia State University. The appeals process provides for an impartial review of a grading decision that is alleged to be capricious, arbitrary or discriminatory. The appeals process may be used to appeal a final class grade but is not intended for individual quiz or exam grades. Students who have concerns about a quiz or exam grade should discuss their concerns with the instructor. This document does not apply to petitions for a waiver of established policy or procedure from curricular and/or programmatic requirements. Information on such petitions is available in the Lewis College Office of Academic Assistance. All students may obtain assistance in interpretation of appeals policies and procedures in the Lewis College Office of Academic Assistance.

### **Step 1: Informal Instructor Review:**

The appeal procedure must be initiated by the student, but only after the student has made every effort to resolve the complaint informally with the instructor who is party to the complaint. The student should begin the informal effort at resolution with the instructor as soon as the complaint arises, but no later than 10 business days after the first day of classes in the term immediately following the term in which the disputed grade was awarded. If the course in question has a course administrator/coordinator who is someone other than the instructor who is party to the complaint, the course administrator/coordinator should be involved in this initial step in the process.

### **Step 2: Informal Division Head/Assistant Dean Review**

If the informal discussion with the instructor and, if applicable, the course administrator/coordinator, fail to reach a resolution satisfactory to the student, the student may seek resolution with the Department Chair/Associate Dean for Nursing of the instructor's department no later than 10 business days after the conference with the instructor. The Department Chair/Associate Dean for Nursing will meet with all parties involved and will render a decision. If the decision is to uphold the grade, and such grade causes the student to be suspended from the program, the Department Chair/Associate Dean for Nursing will make a decision in accordance with Department/School/College policies regarding the student's continuation in the program.

### **Step 3: Formal College Review by Associate Dean**

If the student continues to feel that he/she has been awarded a grade in an arbitrary, capricious or discriminatory manner, the student may appeal in writing to the Associate Dean for Academics of the Lewis College. The appeal must reach the Associate Dean for Academics within 10 business days after the conclusion of the informal efforts at resolution. The written appeal must include the following documentation:

- A. A statement of the complaint, including specific details regarding the action(s) or event(s) leading to the appeal. The statement must also include evidence to support the student's allegations of discrimination and/or arbitrary or capricious action on the part of the instructor.

- B. A statement of the redress being sought;
- C. Steps already taken;
- D. Reason for dissatisfaction with the decision from the informal process;
- E. The student's name, current mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address.

The Associate Dean will review the student's written appeal as well as request documentation from the instructor and Department Chair/Associate Dean for Nursing. After review, the Associate Dean will meet with all parties involved at their discretion, and will rule on whether or not there is sufficient basis for the appeal to be heard further in accordance with the following assumptions without ruling on the merits of the case:

Nursing;

- A. No student appeal of a grade by an instructor shall be heard by the Student Appeals Committee until the student has sought satisfaction of the complaint by conference with the instructor and the Department Chair/Associate Dean for Nursing;
- B. An instructor shall not be required to answer to any authority concerning the basis of their professional or clinical judgment about the didactic, laboratory or clinical performance of a student, unless the petitioner is able to document clear evidence of arbitrariness, capriciousness, or discrimination.
- C. Any appeal on performance standards, grades, and grading system shall follow the procedures specified in this document, which is published as the official policy and procedures of the Lewis College at Georgia State University.

If the Associate Dean, in consultation with the Dean, determines there is no basis for the appeal to be heard further, all parties involved will be notified in writing.

#### **Step 4: Formal College Review – Hearing Panel**

If the Associate Dean determines there is basis for the appeal to heard further, the appeal will be forwarded to the Chair of the Student Appeals Committee within 10 business days from receipt of the student's written appeal. The student and the instructor each have a right to strike one member of the Student Appeals Committee and the remaining committee members will comprise the Hearing Panel.

During periods of time when some members of the Student Appeals Committee are not under contract or not on campus (such as during summer semester), the Associate Dean will ask the student and faculty member to each submit the names of at least two students who are currently enrolled for classes and at least two faculty members in the College who are not members of the faculty in the department/school in which the complaint was initially filed. Additionally, the Associate Dean shall designate one faculty member who is from the department/school in which the complaint was initially filed. Both parties shall have the privilege of striking one name from the proposed lists. From the lists of names submitted by the student and faculty member, and after names have been stricken, the Associate Dean shall appoint a Hearing Panel of at least one student currently enrolled in classes and at least two faculty members. The Associate Dean shall appoint the Chair of the Hearing Panel from the membership of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The Student Appeals Committee Chair will arrange for a date and time for a formal hearing that is to be held within 10 business days of receipt of the appeal from the Associate Dean. All parties will be notified in writing as to the date, time and location of the hearing. The notification will include the Guidelines Governing the Conduct of a Hearing. The Chair of the Student Appeals Committee will also distribute all documentation to members of the Hearing Panel for the Panel to review at least three (3) business days prior to the hearing date.

The student Appeals Committee will consider all evidence and the Committee Chair shall report findings and make recommendations, in writing, to the Dean of the Lewis College within five (5) business days of the conclusion of the hearing.

#### **Step 5: Formal College Review – Dean**

The Dean will notify all parties of their decision within five (5) business days after receiving the Committee's recommendations. The Dean's decision is final within the College.

#### **Step 6: Formal University Review – Provost and President**

If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the Dean, they have the right to appeal the decision to the Provost in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the Dean's decision. The Provost will issue a decision to the student in writing within 20 business days of receiving the appeal. The student may appeal the Provost's decision to the President in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the Provost's decision. The President will issue a decision to the student in writing within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.

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