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## Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline all processes relating to student appeals at Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ/College). Included in this procedure are sections on: definitions and explanations, academic appeals and non-academic appeals.

### A. Definitions

1. Student Appeal – A student appeal is a formal request by an enrolled or former student for reconsideration of a College rule or regulation, including the assignment of a final grade. The student initiates all formal appeals through the Office of the Ombudsperson. The Ombudsperson may assign a designee to facilitate the review process.
2. Appeals Deadline – The deadline for all appeal forms and documentation is the last day of the following term. Incomplete appeals will not be accepted.

#### Types of Appeals

##### a. Academic Appeals

- i. Withdrawal Past Deadline
- ii. NA (Non-Attendance Issue)
- iii. Grade Change
- iv. Fourth Attempt

##### b. Non-Academic Appeals

###### i. Finance Related Appeals

- 1.1 Waiver to Repeat
- 1.2 Refund and Disenrollment

###### ii. General Appeals

- 1.1 Residency
- 1.2 Admissions/Selective Admissions
- 1.3 Graduation
- 1.4 Articulation
- 1.5 Other

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## B. Academic Appeals

### 1. Informal Procedure

#### Step 1: Student Discussion with Instructor

- a. For grade change requests, the student is directed to speak first to the course instructor. If the instructor of record approves the grade change, the request is sent to the appropriate academic administrator for final approval. Once approved by the instructor and the academic administrator, the grade change documentation is forwarded to the Office of Student Records to be recorded in the student system.
- b. If the course instructor is no longer employed by the College or is unable to be reached after the Dean's attempts to contact the instructor without success, the student should follow the Formal Procedures.
- c. If the student's informal request is not approved, the student can initiate a formal academic appeal request through the Office of the Ombudsperson. In all cases, the student has the responsibility of demonstrating that the grade being challenged was administered in a manner inconsistent with criteria set forth on the instructor's course syllabus, and that the evaluation process uniquely discredited the student's grade.

### 2. Formal Procedures

#### Step 1: Student's Submission of the Request

- a. An appeal must be submitted no later than the last day of the following term.
- b. Students should make every effort to discuss and possibly resolve issues with their instructors before submitting a formal appeal. If unable to complete a class, students should immediately inform their instructors.
- c. The student will meet with an impartial hearing officer to include, but not be limited to, the Office of the Ombudsperson, or designee.
- d. If receiving financial aid or VA benefits, it is the student's responsibility to see a Student Success Navigator or VA Representative to discuss possible financial implications.
- e. Prior to submission of the student's appeal request, the student must obtain a signature from the Student Success Navigator and/or VA Representative as confirmation of that discussion.

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- f. An appeal must be completed for each class that is to be considered, and a complete set of documentation must be attached to each appeal.
- g. It is the student's responsibility to make copies of all documentation to be submitted with the appeal. Documents will remain with the appeal when it is submitted and will not be returned to the student.
- h. The following items **MUST BE** included with each academic appeal:
  - i. A copy of the course syllabus for each appeal
  - ii. Relevant Documentation - For Withdrawal Past the Deadline Requests, include all relevant documents to support the student's claim, which may be one or more of the following:
    - 1) Hospitalization: Copy of the student's hospital documentation that includes the date admitted and discharged from the hospital only. Hospital bills and other documentation are not considered to be acceptable.
    - 2) Death of immediate family member: One of the following (the documentation must include relationship to the deceased):
      - a) Copy of death certificate
      - b) Copy of newspaper announcement
      - c) Copy of the funeral program
    - 3) Extensive Illness: A copy of a doctor's note to excuse the student from school or work for an extended amount of time (must include dates of illness). The note must explain why the student was not able to attend school.
    - 4) Involuntary Military Duty: A copy of military orders providing the student's name and the dates of deployment. (100% refund is awarded)
    - 5) College Error: Copies of emails or messages with faculty/staff, screenshots of the student's account, error messages or other supporting documents.
  - iii. For Grade Appeal Requests, include relevant course information, which could include correspondence with the instructor, graded assignments, copies of grades from Canvas, etc.
  - iv. The student should provide a detailed narrative regarding the reason for the appeal.

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### Step 2: Academic Administrator Review

- a. The Office of the Ombudsperson forwards the academic appeal to the appropriate academic administrator, who has the initial responsibility for reviewing and forwarding the student appeal to the instructor of record for a response (approval/denial).
- b. If the instructor of record is no longer employed by the College or is unable to be reached after the academic department attempts to contact the instructor without success, the academic administrator makes the decision and notifies the student in writing.
- c. If approved by the instructor of record and the academic administrator, the academic appeal is submitted to the Office of Student Records for processing. The academic administrator notifies the student of the decision in writing.
- d. If disapproved, the academic administrator provides the student written notification of the decision. The student has fifteen (15) College business days from the date of the notification to submit a written request to the appropriate Associate Provost to review, and if appropriate, convene the Student Appeals Committee to review the disapproval. The Committee may request additional evidential documentation from the student or the academic department, as needed, to complete its review.
- e. If no request is made, or if the request for a Student Appeals Committee is denied, the disapproved appeal and supporting documentation is forwarded to the Registrar's Office and imaged to the student's academic record. The Associate Provost, or designee, will notify the student in writing if the request for a Student Appeals Committee is denied due to insufficient additional documentation.

### Step 3: Student Appeals Committee Review

Student Appeals Committee (For Denied Appeals) - a reviewing body, consisting of at least one (1) of each of the following committee members appointed by the appropriate Associate Provost: an administrator, a full-time faculty member, and a student representative. The administrator and faculty member should be from an academic area different from the student's appeal request. The appropriate Associate Provost will identify up to five (5) faculty members annually who agree to serve on a Student Appeals Committee for that year. This list is subject to approval from the President of the Faculty Senate and will constitute the group from which the required faculty member(s) may be chosen for an appeal.

- a. If the student is granted a hearing, the appropriate Associate Provost, or designee, will convene the Student Appeals Committee and appoint a Chair.
- b. The instructor of record must be invited to present to the committee. If the instructor of record is not available, the instructor may elect to send a representative. The instructor of record may also decline to participate.

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- c. If the instructor of record cannot be reached, the committee review may proceed in the absence of the instructor of record. The Chair of the Student Appeals Committee may, (but is not required to), invite the student to present to the committee to clarify any statements or documentation that was submitted.
- d. The Student Appeals Committee considers the case and forwards its recommendation to the Associate Provost. The committee will meet within one (1) month of receiving the request to convene from the Associate Provost, except in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

**Step 4: Associate Provost Review**

- a. The Associate Provost shall review the recommendation of the Student Appeals Committee. The Associate Provost may accept, repeal or amend the recommendation.
- b. If the Associate Provost anticipates the need to repeal or amend the recommendation of the Student Appeals Committee, the Associate Provost will meet with the Chair of the Student Appeals Committee to discuss any and all concerns with the Committee's recommendation.
- c. Except in the event of unforeseen circumstances, the actions of the Associate Provost shall occur within ten (10) business days of receipt of the recommendation of the Student Appeals Committee. The decision of the Associate Provost is final and cannot be appealed.
- d. A copy of the final decision is transmitted to the Office of Student Records to be imaged to the student's academic record, and the student will be notified.
- e. In the event the Associate Provost's decision changes the original grade of the faculty member, the Associate Provost will notify the faculty member and provide written justification for the change.

**C. Non-Academic Appeals**

**Step 1: Student's Submission of the Request**

- a. An appeal must be submitted no later than the last day of the following term.
- b. Non-Academic Appeals require additional documentation outlining the extenuating circumstances that necessitate the appeal. For a Finance-related appeal, there must be documented extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student.
- c. Students requesting a refund must also submit an appeal for a late withdrawal if a "W" grade has not yet been assigned.



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- d. If receiving financial aid or VA benefits, it is the student's responsibility to see a Student Success Navigator or VA Representative to discuss possible financial implications.
- e. Prior to submission of the student's appeal request, the student must obtain a signature from the Student Success Navigator and/or VA Representative as confirmation of that discussion.
- f. Each class that is to be considered, up to four (4) classes, may be entered on a single appeal. If there are more than four (4) classes to be considered, list the remaining classes on a second course listing page.
- g. All relevant documentation must be attached to the appeal.
- h. The following items **MUST BE** included with the student's request:
  - i. Relevant Documentation: It is the student's responsibility to make copies of all documentation to be submitted with the appeal. Documents will remain with the appeal when it is submitted and will not be returned to the student.
  - ii. Note: For Finance-related appeals, include all relevant documents to support the student's claim, which may be one of the following:
    - 1) Extensive Hospitalization: Copy of the student's hospital documentation that includes the date admitted and discharged from the hospital only. Hospital bills and other documentation are not considered to be acceptable.
    - 2) Death in the family: One of the following (the documentation must include relationship to the deceased):
      - a) Copy of death certificate
      - b) Copy of newspaper announcement
      - c) Copy of the funeral program
    - 3) Extensive Illness: A copy of a doctor's note to excuse the student from school or work for an extended amount of time (must include dates of illness). The note must explain why the student was not able to attend school.
    - 4) Involuntary Military Duty: A copy of military orders providing the student's name and dates of deployment (100% refund is awarded).
    - 5) The student should provide a detailed narrative regarding the reason for the appeal.

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Step 2: Department Administrator Review

- a. The Office of the Ombudsperson forwards the Non-Academic Appeal to the appropriate department administrator for review.
- b. The appropriate department administrator will review the information submitted by the student and indicate approval or disapproval.
- c. Finance Related Appeals are forwarded to the appropriate Associate Provost.
- d. Limited and Selective Access Program Admissions Appeals are forwarded to the appropriate Academic Dean.
- e. Graduation, Residency and College Admissions Appeals are forwarded to the Registrar's Office.
- f. Articulation Appeals are forwarded to the Executive Director of Articulation.
- g. For Non-Academic Appeals, decisions made by department administrators and Associate Provost are final and may not be appealed.
- h. The appropriate department administrator will provide the student with written notification of the decision and forward relevant information for documentation.
- i. It will be the College's general practice to resolve Non-Academic Appeals within fifteen (15) College business days; however, certain appeals may take longer to resolve.

REFERENCES: F.S. 1001.64, 1001.65

Adopted Date: September 19, 1990

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