



Policy Type (choose one):      New      or      **Existing**

Recommended By:

Effective Date:

Last Review Date:

Policy Contact: Provost/VP for Academic Affairs

Contact Phone: (315) 386-7202

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## Academic Grievance Policy

### I. SCOPE

SUNY Canton Faculty and Students

### II. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to provide a prompt, equitable, and efficient method for resolution of a student grievance related to a final course grade. Both faculty and students have joint responsibilities in maintaining academic integrity.

#### Individual Grade Resolution

This policy is **not** to be used in cases of disagreement about individual assignments or exams. It is expected that all parties involved regarding issues related to individual course assignments or course concerns can resolve such issues respectfully at the student-faculty level or student-faculty-Director/Department Chairperson level. If the student is not satisfied with the individual grade resolution, they may reach out to their Academic Dean for further consideration.

### III. POLICY

An academic grievance is a complaint by a student stating:

1. That there has been a violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of the academic regulations of the College, faculty, School, or Department as written in the *Policies & Procedures Manual*, *Personnel Handbook for Faculty and Professional Staff*, *Academic Catalog*, *Student Handbook*, the By-laws of the School and/or Department, or the respective faculty member's class handouts; or
2. That the student has been treated unfairly or inequitably by reason of any act or condition which is contrary to the College's established academic policy or practice governing or affecting students.

**Under no circumstances may a grade be grieved if the student simply disagrees with an instructor about the quality of the student's work. A final course grade may be grieved only when the student alleges that the instructor was acting in a manner unrelated to the quality of the work in question.**

#### Responsibility

To substantiate the existence of an academic grievance:

1. The student must demonstrate the presence of an academic inequity or injustice;
2. The student must establish that the specified alleged incident(s) caused the academic inequity or injustice; and
3. The student must be able to recommend a resolution of the grievance.

**NOTE:** In any grievance alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, disability, age, gender expression, sexual orientation, familial status, pregnancy, predisposing genetic characteristics, military status, domestic violence victim status, or criminal conviction, the student should pursue the **SUNY Canton Discrimination Complaint Procedure (including Title IX)** [https://www.canton.edu/student-handbook/section-30-student-life/discrim\\_harassment.html](https://www.canton.edu/student-handbook/section-30-student-life/discrim_harassment.html)

**IV. DEFINITIONS**

None

**V. OTHER RELATED INFORMATION**

None

**VI. PROCEDURES**

All academic grievances should be initiated as soon as possible, but no later than ten class days after the subsequent semester begins. All grievances will proceed in accordance with the time limitations indicated in each step, except as follows:

An extension or delay at any step will be permitted provided there is mutual written agreement between the principal parties at the procedural step involved, e.g., at Step Two between the student, the Department Chairperson, and the faculty member.

**Step One**

The student initiating a complaint must contact the faculty member involved and attempt to resolve the grievance. (This contact serves as the complaint initiation.) If the grievance is satisfactorily resolved within five class days from the day the student initiated the complaint, the faculty member will notify the student. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved within five class days from the day the student initiated the complaint, the student must inform the faculty member IN WRITING from their SUNY Canton email account that they will proceed to Step Two.

**Step Two**

The student shall present the grievance in writing within five class days after the exhaustion of Step One to the Director/Department Chairperson of the Department in which the faculty member involved is located. The written complaint must clearly and concisely state the facts that initiated the complaint and must also recommend a solution of the grievance. The Director/Department Chairperson, in consultation with the faculty member and student involved, shall attempt to achieve a mutually acceptable resolution of the grievance, and must prepare a written summary of the meeting for all parties concerned within five class days. If the grievance is not resolved within five class days following this step, the student shall have the right to proceed to Step Three.

**Step Three**

The student shall present the grievance in writing within five class days after the exhaustion of the Step Two review to the Academic Dean of the School in which the faculty member involved is located. The Dean, in consultation with the Director/Department Chairperson, faculty member, and student involved, shall attempt to achieve a mutually acceptable resolution of the grievance. The Academic Dean must prepare a written summary of the meeting and the resolution/outcome and make a final decision within five class days, which will be communicated to all parties involved. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, the student may appeal that decision.

**Appeal Process**

The student has the right to appeal the decision of the Academic Dean and may make this request by emailing the Provost's Office at [provostoffice@canton.edu](mailto:provostoffice@canton.edu). The Academic Dean will be asked to provide their written summary and all supporting materials from Step Three to the Provost's Office. The Provost's Office will prepare all the documents and pull together a committee for a hearing.

The hearing shall be conducted by an Ad Hoc Academic Grievance Committee composed of:

1. One faculty member of the Academic Standards Committee. The faculty member may not be a member of the School in which the grieved faculty member resides. This faculty member will be appointed by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and will serve as committee chairperson.
2. One student member of the Student Government Association, appointed by the Director of Student Activities, Involvement, and Leadership.
3. One member of the Student Affairs Staff, appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students.

The student is afforded the opportunity to select a support person to accompany them to the hearing. The support person can be anyone who is not currently involved with an academic grievance. The supporter may: (a) attend the formal hearing with the student; and (b) advise the student during the formal hearing in writing or quiet conversation. The supporter cannot: (a) present the student's case, or (b) ask questions or respond to the Academic Grievance Committee during the hearing. Any supporter who violates these rules may be asked to leave the formal hearing.

The Committee will convene within five class days following receipt of the appeal. The Provost's Office will send procedural information regarding the hearing to the Committee, the faculty member, and the student involved. All materials related to the case will be made available to this body prior to the hearing. The student and/or the faculty member involved may request or be requested by the Committee to provide further testimony in the conduct of its review. Each party shall have the opportunity to respond to new testimony.

In the event the student grieving the grade or the faculty member accused in the grievance fails to appear at the hearing, the Committee will proceed and reach a determination based on the information provided.

After review of all materials and final deliberation, the Committee will render a decision to the Provost's Office; the decision is final. The Provost's Office will make the grade change and notify the student.

**VII. FORMS**

None

**VIII. AUTHORITY**

None

**IX. HISTORY**

None

**X. APPENDICES**

None

**XI. FREQUENCY OF REVIEW AND UPDATE**

Policies will have a normal review period of every five (5) years unless required otherwise.

**XII. SIGNATURE, TITLE, AND DATE OF APPROVAL**

Zvi Szafran

Policy Approver – Printed Name

President

Title

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Policy Approver – Signature

6/5/25

Date of Approval