

# GRADUATE APPEALS

## Student Appeals Processes for Academic Issues

The general process for all graduate appeals follows a hierarchical pathway with levels up through the academic dean included in the process. The appeals pathway generally follows from instructor, graduate program director/department chair, academic dean, to the Graduate Studies Committee; with the Graduate Studies Committee's decisions being final in any appeal case.

Students are to abide by the academic decision process. Appeals must be submitted in writing and include all documented evidence.

Students appealing a dismissal, earned grade, graduation deficiency, or a time limit extension to complete their program requirements will submit their appeal via the Office of Graduate Studies. Students appeals concerning late registration, withdrawals, or course repeats will submit their appeal to the Registrar's Office via [asc@towson.edu](mailto:asc@towson.edu).

Determinations regarding the student's appeal are to be provided in writing to the student. Rationales for appeals may include:

- evidence of new information or insufficient consideration of all aspects of the situation
- evidence of bias in the decision making
- violation of policy in the decision-making process
- a flaw in the student's right of due process

### Admissions Appeals

**Exceptions to Admissions Policies** – Students who seek admission to an academic program that do not meet the minimal qualifications for conditional admission must petition the Dean of Graduate Studies for admission. A written rationale and documented evidence must be included in the petition. The decision of the Dean of Graduate Studies is final.

### Academic Standing Appeals

**Academic Dismissal for GPA Below the Minimum Requirement** – Students on academic warning whose cumulative GPA remains below 3.00 after nine additional graded, graduate units, will be academically dismissed and notified by the Registrar's Office. A student may petition for an exception to academic dismissal because of a low cumulative GPA that resulted from documented health problems or verified circumstances beyond the student's control. Students are to contact the Registrar's Office to request an exception to academic dismissal by the end of the following term. The Registrar makes a determination regarding an exception to academic dismissal based upon the documented evidence and in consultation with the student's graduate program director/department chair and academic dean's office. When students have a dispute with the determination made by the Registrar, they may appeal to the dean of the academic college, then to the Graduate Studies Committee.

**Academic Dismissal After Not Retaining Good Standing** - A student who was previously placed on academic warning but restores their cumulative GPA to 3.00 is returned to good academic standing. Once good standing is restored, the student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 for the remainder of their program. If the cumulative GPA falls below 3.00 again, the student will be academically dismissed from TU and not be eligible to

reapply to the same program. A student may petition for an exception to academic dismissal and should contact the Registrar's Office to request an exception to academic dismissal by the end of the following term. The Registrar makes a determination regarding an exception to academic dismissal based upon the documented evidence and in consultation with the student's graduate program director/department chair and academic dean's office. When students have a dispute with the determination made by the Registrar, they may appeal to the dean of the academic college, then the Graduate Studies Committee.

**Dismissal for Not Meeting Program Requirements, including Violations of Professional Standards**– Students are to abide by their academic department and program policies and procedures for professionalism and progress towards completion of their degree. The program director or academic department notifies the Registrar when students are dismissed from the academic program for not meeting program requirements (including professional standards). When students have a dispute with the determination made by the academic program, their appeal process starts with the dean of the academic college, followed by the Graduate Studies Committee. Students who initiate the appeal process are to do so within 30 days of initial notification of dismissal or less based on program standards.

### Grade Appeals

Appeals for a single assignment or final course grade follow a similar pathway. When the assignment appeal would change the final course grade a combined appeal review is recommended. Students who feel an earned grade is unjust must address their disagreement first with the course instructor who is primarily responsible for assigning grades. When the student has a dispute with the determination made by the course instructor, the student may appeal to the program director and/or the department chair as outlined in the department's policies and procedures and then the dean of the academic college. Grade appeals that are procedural may be appealed to the Graduate Studies Committee. Students who wish to initiate the appeal process must do so by the end of the following fall or spring term.

### Graduation & Time Limit Appeals

**Graduation Deficiency** – Students are to abide by their academic department and program policies and procedures for completion of requirements necessary for graduation. The program director or academic department notifies the Graduation Office when students have not completed the requirements necessary for graduation. When students have a dispute with the determination made by the academic program, they may appeal to the dean of the academic college, then the Graduate Studies Committee.

**Time Limit for Completion of Degree and Certificate Requirements** – Students are to abide by TU policy for completion of degree and certificate requirements. Students are to contact the Registrar's Office and provide documented evidence related to health problems or extenuating circumstances to petition for a time extension. Petitions for time extensions beyond one year require documentation of substantive health problems or extenuating circumstances. The Registrar makes the determination regarding the extension based upon documented evidence and in consultation with the student's academic department and program director. When students have a dispute with the determination made by the Registrar, they may appeal to the dean of the academic college, then the Graduate Studies Committee.

**Late Registration** – Students are expected to register for courses in accordance with the date established in the academic calendar.

The student is to contact the Registrar's Office for approval of late registration. The Registrar makes the final determination regarding the late registration request based on the evidence and in consultation with the student's academic department and program director.

**Late Withdrawal During the Academic Term** – A student may petition for late withdrawal from courses because of documented medical or mental health problems or verified circumstances beyond the student's control. Students must contact the Office of Student Outreach and Support (SOS) to petition for a late medical withdrawal. If approved, a grade of "W" will be recorded.

**Retroactive Withdrawal After the Academic Term** – Students may petition for retroactive withdrawal after the academic term because of documented medical or mental problems or verified circumstances beyond their control. The Registrar makes a determination regarding the retroactive withdrawal request based upon the documented evidence and in consultation with the student's course instructor, academic department and program director. If approved, a grade of "W" will be recorded. When the student has a dispute with the determination made by the Registrar, the student may appeal to the Graduate Studies Committee. The decision of the Graduate Studies Committee is final.

**Repeating a Course** – Students are to abide by program, department and TU policies regarding repetition of courses. When students have a dispute with the determination made by the academic program or the Registrar, the student may appeal to the dean of the academic college, then the Graduate Studies Committee.