



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR RE-READS/RE-ASSESSMENTS

OVERVIEW

Understanding the types of appeals as outlined in Senate's *Student Appeal Procedures*

The Senate document on *Student Appeal Procedures* refers to three types of student appeals as outlined below; namely, Re-read/Re-assessment, Academic Process, and Non-academic. This policy and procedural document for the Faculty of Humanities addresses the Re-read/Re-assessment Appeal only. Further information regarding the Academic and Non-academic Appeals can be found in Senate's [Student Appeal Procedures](#) available from the Office of the University Secretariat.

TYPES OF APPEALS

Re-Read/Re-assessment: A student questions his/her grade or the assessment of his/her performance (on an examination paper, project, course assignment, essay, etc.) and alleges error in the *academic assessment* of his/her work on the part of an instructor or a committee. In order to qualify for a re-read, the piece of work must be **worth 10% or more** of the final course grade. This process may result in the grade on the piece of work being increased, being decreased, or remaining unchanged. The results of a formal re-read are final and cannot be appealed.

Academic Process: A student questions his/her grade or the assessment of his/her performance on a piece of work in a course, or his/her academic standing or status in a program, and alleges *error or injustice* on grounds *other than the academic assessment* of his/her work, such as:

- a) the method of evaluation was not fair and reasonable in the circumstances;
- b) the instructor was biased against the student;
- c) the instructor deviated substantially from the course outline in contravention of applicable University policies;
- d) the application of University regulations governing program or degree requirements was not fair, just, or reasonable; or
- e) a finding of academic dishonesty, or the penalty assigned, was not fair, just or reasonable.

Non-Academic: A student questions as unfair, unjust or unreasonable, a decision or action of a University authority or official, which has negative material consequences for his/her University life, and which is unrelated to courses, or to program or degree requirements.

PROCEDURE FOR A RE-READ/RE-ASSESSMENT:

Preliminary Inquiry

1. Students who wish to raise questions or register complaints about matters of academic assessment are encouraged and strongly advised to communicate *informally* with their instructors before seeking a review under formal procedures. Experience shows that the great majority of questions or complaints of this kind can be resolved satisfactorily through informal communication by going directly to the appropriate instructor. Students shall seek remedies for their concerns as promptly

as possible. An undue delay in the reporting of a complaint, especially for assignments based on oral reports or musical performances, may make it impossible for the complaint to be dealt with. The application for a formal re-reading must be submitted **by July 31** immediately following the Fall/Winter Session or **by November 15** immediately following the Spring/Summer Session in which the assessment occurred.

2. **Within two weeks** of receiving the student's complaint, the instructor shall consider the inquiry, make a determination of its merits and respond to the student. With the consent of the student, the Chair may attempt to mediate the dispute in a final effort to resolve it *before* the student resorts to a formal re-read. In their efforts to resolve the dispute, **under no circumstances should the instructor or student recommend an informal re-reading or re-assessment procedure involving another instructor as a third party.**
3. If the instructor and student reach an impasse and cannot resolve the dispute, it is the responsibility of the student to decide whether to take the complaint further by reporting it to the Chair of the Department for possible resolution.
4. If the student brings a complaint to a Chair of a Department and the Chair is unable to resolve the matter, the Chair should advise the student of the Senate's Student Appeal Procedures and this Faculty Policy and Procedures document.

Formal Re-Reading

5. A student may apply for a formal re-reading of his/her essay, examinations, etc. provided the piece of work is worth 10% or more of the final course grade. In this event, Form A (available at the Office of the University Secretariat) shall be submitted to the Associate/Assistant Dean of the Faculty **offering the course**. The Form A application for a formal re-reading must be accompanied by the receipt for the re-read fee (Board of Governors' approved fee per item to be re-read) which will be refunded if the re-read results in an increase in the student's grade on the piece of work.
6. Once the Senate's Student Appeal Procedures have been invoked, **within one week** of receiving Form A, the Associate/Assistant Dean will write to the Chair* directing him/her within that same week to select a qualified re-reader--someone other than the instructor--and to arrange for the re-reading, taking steps to ensure the anonymity of the student and the impartiality of the reader. To this end, the Associate/Assistant Dean will provide the Chair with a clean copy of the work in dispute--a copy from which the grade and instructor's comments are, as far as possible. The Chair shall secure the results of the re-read and report those results to the Associate/Assistant Dean **within three weeks of submission to the re-reader**.
7. At the same time, the Associate/Assistant Dean will write to the instructor, informing him/her that the Senate's Student Appeal Procedures have been invoked to resolve the dispute between him/her and the appellant, and requiring him/her to provide the Faculty of Humanities with a written assessment of the work in dispute, through the Office of the Dean.
8. A decision will be made, by the Associate/Assistant Dean, on the basis of the compiled documentation and according to the following guidelines.
 - a. If the re-reader's grade does not differ by more than one sub-letter grade (e.g., C to C+) from that of the original instructor, the Associate/Assistant Dean would normally endorse the original grade on the grounds that this difference does not indicate "an error in *academic assessment*" of the original instructor. If, however, even a small difference in grade would have an impact on the

student's final grade for the course, the Associate/Assistant Dean will consider applying one of the options noted in b.

- b. If the re-reader's grade is different by more than one sub-letter grade from that of the original instructor or the difference would have an impact on the student's final grade for the course, the Associate/Assistant Dean will choose to do one of the following:
 - i. Apply one of the recommended grades according to its judgement of the original instructor's and re-reader's respective rationales.
 - ii. Average the two grades.
 - iii. Request a second re-reading on the grounds that one or other of the two evaluations may constitute "an error in *academic assessment*." If the second re-reader's grade matches the grade awarded by the original instructor or the first re-reader, the student will be given that grade. If the three grades are different, the Associate/Assistant Dean will make a decision, based on options i or ii.
- c. In each case the Associate/Assistant Dean must decide whether the grade on the piece of work should be changed irrespective of its effect on the final grade for the course in order to determine whether the student should be issued a refund of his/her fee.

9. Normally, **within three weeks** of receiving the re-reader's report from the Chair and the instructor's report, the Associate/Assistant Dean will write to the student informing him/her of the decision and outlining its reasons for revising or upholding the disputed grade. The re-read fee will be refunded if the student's grade on the piece of work is raised. The letter will be copied to the instructor and the Chair for information.

* In cases where the instructor and Chair are one and the same, the Associate/Assistant Dean should work with the designated student counsellor in the Department.

Approved by Faculty May 21, 1985

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