

Procedure: Process for Petitions to Appeal Graduate Academic Dismissals

Category: Academic Policies

Office Responsible for Review: Office of the Provost

Related University Policies: Academic Rules and Regulations for Graduate Students

I. SCOPE

This process applies to appeals for exceptions to the university's graduate regulations for academic dismissals (Graduate Rules and Academic Regulations 3.13).

II. STATEMENT

- a) Appeals of academic dismissal decisions must be in writing and initiated by the student. The Graduate Appeals of Dismissal Council (GADC) will review each appeal and the relevant documentation and render a decision based on the totality of the circumstances. Students are eligible to appeal their dismissal under one or more the following circumstances:
 - (1) existence of a procedural error that resulted in an improper dismissal;
 - (2) a cumulative GPA of no lower than 2.90;
 - (3) confirmation from the Dean of Students (DOS) that the appropriate documentation was received.
- b) The student's written appeal should address the following factors:
 - (1) reason for appeal as stated in IIa above;
 - (2) current transcript from program of study
 - (3) likelihood of achieving the GPA necessary for successful completion of the student's degree program within a reasonable time frame;
 - (4) the student's plan for future academic success, including a plan to utilize appropriate academic advising and academic support services.
- c) Students must submit written appeals 10 business days (defined as days that American University is open and operating) before the beginning of the semester/term. A student who does not submit an appeal 10 business days before the beginning of the semester/term will not be permitted to enroll for that semester even if their appeal is successful. While the GADC will review and rule on appeals as quickly as possible, appeals submitted 10 days prior to the start of the new semester/term does not guarantee enrollment in that semester/term.

- d) Students must appeal an academic dismissal decision within one academic year from the date of written notification of dismissal from OUR.

III. APPEALS OF DISMISSAL PROCESS

- a) A student seeking to appeal an academic dismissal must submit the appeal in PDF form to the student's academic advisor (or program director), and should include relevant documentation, excluding medical documentation.
- b) The student must send any medical documentation directly to the Office of the Dean of Students (dos@american.edu). The student should not send medical documentation to the advisor or the GADC.
- c) Upon receipt of the student's written appeal, the academic advisor will gather all relevant documentation, excluding specific documentation from DOS. If relevant to the case, the advisor will request a statement from the Office of the Dean of Students regarding the documentation as it relates to the appeal.
- d) The academic advisor will review the student's appeal, documentation, and the statement from the Office of the Dean of Students (if applicable). The advisor will provide a written recommendation to the associate dean in the school of the student's graduate program.
- e) The associate dean will provide a written statement of support or non-support for the student's appeal. The associate dean will then forward the student's appeal, the supporting documentation, the advisor's recommendation, and the associate dean's statement to the Dean of Graduate Studies (or his/her designee), within the Office of Graduate Studies, Attn. Graduate Appeals for Dismissal Council (GADC).
- f) Dean of Graduate Studies (or his/her designee) will distribute the appeal and relevant documentation to the GADC.
- g) The GADC will review the appeal and may confer with the Office of the University Registrar, the Academic Support and Access Center, the Office of the Dean of Students, and other relevant units.
- h) Each voting member of the GADC, excluding the associate dean who received the appeal, will vote on the appeal; a successful appeal must receive a majority vote from the five (5) voting members.
- i) The GADC decision is final.
- j) The Dean of Graduate Studies (on behalf of GADC) will communicate the written final decision to the student, with a copy to the student's academic advisor, associate dean, and Office of the University Registrar.

- k) Students who receive a favorable appeal decision will be granted 9 credits or as recommended by the Associate Dean, to raise their GPA to 3.0 regardless of the number of credits taken.
- l) This procedure does not apply to the Washington College of Law.
- m) This procedure does not apply to students' dismissals from undergraduate programs.
- n) Academic Dismissals do not include disciplinary action adjudicated under the Student Conduct or Academic Integrity code.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- a) The Graduate Appeals for Dismissal Council's voting membership includes one Graduate assistant/associate dean from each of the graduate schools and colleges (CAS, SOE, SPA, SIS, KOGOD, SPEXS, and SOC).

V. GUIDELINES

- a) Graduate advisors will receive a copy of the procedures.
- b) The procedure will be posted on the University Policies webpage.