

**Great Basin College
Faculty Senate
Academic Standards Committee**

Written Committee Report – 18 February 2014

Over the previous month via e-mail conferencing, the Academic Standards Committee have discussed and approved minor modifications of the current Grade Appeal Procedure as presented in 2013-2014 GBC General Catalog.

The initial concern was the referral of a grade appeal from Step Two (Department Chair hearing) to Step Three (Academic Standards Committee). While the current policy has an option for the referral to the Academic Standards Committee to be forwarded by the Department Chair, current practice has assumed that this would be the normal procedure. That is, unlike the previous steps and later steps where the initiative lies with the aggrieved party (student or instructor) to refer the process to a higher level, the Department Chairs became the primary person referring cases from Step Two to Step Three.

The Academic Standards Committee voted 6-0 (with one abstention) to delete the line (noted in the text below with the strike-through text) about Department Chairs, keeping the initiative for appeals with the aggrieved party throughout the process.

When the policy was reviewed in the Faculty Senate Executive Committee on Friday, 14 February 2014, questions were raised as to whether students had adequate knowledge of the process to successfully pursue a grade appeal. The consensus was that somebody/body to act in the role of an advisor or advocate was needed for the process. It was felt that the Office of the Vice-President for Student Services would be the logical place for such aid.

After consultation with the Vice-President of Student Services, whose office currently provides written guidance for grade appeal processes, it was agreed to formally identify the Office of the Vice-President for Student Services as the location for students to seek assistance with the process (noted in the attached document with the highlighted passage).

The amended Grade Appeal Procedure will be inserted in place of the current policy in the 2014-2015 GBC General Catalog.

ACTION ITEM: AMENDED GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURE

To be added in place of the current Grade Appeal Procedure in the 2014-2015 GBC General Catalog.

Grade Appeals or Questions of Professional Conduct

Great Basin College respects an instructor's qualifications and upholds the right of an instructor to determine academic standards. With faculty approval, an instructor establishes the scope,

objectives, and methodology of the course being taught, and is responsible for informing students of the requirements for completion of the course of study in the class. The instructor evaluates student performance according to written grading criteria made available to students at the beginning of the class.

Should students have questions about a grade or an instructor's professional conduct, the following published procedures shall be followed. Students may consult with the Office of the Vice-President for Student Services in Berg Hall for assistance with the procedures and policies for appeals.

Comment [GBC1]: Addition

Failure to initiate these procedures within 30 calendar days of the end of the semester will result in the forfeiture of the right to challenge a grade or lodge a complaint against an instructor.

These are the steps that must be taken:

Step One: The student must first communicate with the instructor to discuss the complaint and attempt satisfactory resolution. If successful, no further action need be taken.

Step Two: If unsuccessful in Step One, the student will write a letter to the Chair of the instructor's department (this information is available at the Admissions and Records Office in Elko or from your center) requesting a meeting between the student, the instructor, and the Department Chair. The Department Chair will respond within 15 days of receipt of the written request and establish a mutually agreeable date and time for the resolution meeting. After hearing both sides, the Department Chair will recommend a solution. Acceptance of this solution by both the student and the instructor ends the complaint procedure and no further action will be taken. (Note: In the event that the instructor is also the Department Chair, the student will write the request for a resolution meeting to the Chair of the Faculty Senate. The Senate Chair or a designee of the Senate Chair will fulfill the responsibilities of a Department Chair as outlined above.)

Step Three: Failure of remedy in Step Two requires a written complaint to be submitted to the Academic Standards Committee of the Faculty Senate. This complaint may be submitted by either the student or the instructor if either is not satisfied by the recommended solution of Step Two. (If requested, this will be done by the Department Chair or the Senate Chair or designee. This action must be accomplished within five days of the failure of Step Two.) Within 15 days of receipt of the written complaint, the Academic Standards Committee will arrange for the student and the instructor to be heard before a full or quorum meeting of the Academic Standards Committee; the Chair involved in Step Two will be in attendance if deemed necessary by the student or the instructor. Within 15 days of this meeting the Chair of the Academic Standards Committee will provide a written recommendation to resolve the issue. Copies will be given to the student, the instructor and the Department Chair or Senate Chair designee (as appropriate).

Comment [GBC2]: Delete

Step Four: If the issue is still unresolved to the satisfaction of either party, a written request of review must be lodged in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs within three calendar days of issuance of the Academic Standards Committee's recommendations. The Vice

President for Academic Affairs will, after reviewing the documentation of the previous three steps, issue a written decision which will be the final solution.

Note: During summer months, faculty may not be available to complete the appeal process. The student still must initiate the appeal within 30 calendar days of the end of the semester, but it is possible that an appeal relating to spring semester may not be resolved until fall semester.