

CANADORE COLLEGE
OPERATIONAL POLICY MANUAL

TITLE: **Academic Appeal Policy**

EFFECTIVE DATE: **October 25, 2024**

1. SCOPE

1.1 Authority

This policy is issued under the authority of the President.

1.2 Application

This policy applies to all students enrolled in all programs offered by The Canadore College of Applied Arts and Technology (hereafter referred to as “Canadore” or “the College”).

2. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

2.1 Purpose

To provide students with a fair and timely process to appeal academic decisions pertaining to a course evaluation when the grounds for an appeal, on the basis of either merit of work, illness and/or disability, compassionate grounds, course management, or policy violation, are met.

2.2 Principles

2.2.1 The College is committed to ensuring that students are treated equitably and consistently regarding all matters that relate to their academic performance and progress. In keeping with this commitment, students shall be provided with a timely process to appeal academic decisions.

2.2.2 In the case of grade appeals, students are reminded that all failing grades are reviewed as a matter of course. The grade appeal process does not question the professional judgment of the faculty. The focus is on the fair and consistent application of the evaluation process.

2.2.3 The College is accountable for setting and maintaining standards of academic performance. The faculty and Deans have the right and responsibility to exercise professional and academic judgment in making decisions that impact students’ academic standing and/or progression.

2.2.4 The College prohibits reprisals, or threats of reprisal, against students who have raised matters of concern under this policy. Individuals who violate this provision shall be subject to disciplinary action.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Academic Appeal

The process by which a student may challenge an academic decision they received.

3.2 Appellant

A student who has exhausted Stage One and Two of the academic appeal procedure and files an Application for Academic Appeal, as per Stage Three of the academic appeal Procedure.

3.3 Respondent

The faculty and/or Dean responding to an academic appeal.

3.4 Academic Appeal Hearing

A confidential meeting in which the appellant and respondent take turns explaining their case and providing evidence to the Academic Appeal Committee.

3.5 Academic Decision

A determination made by the College acting in accordance with academic policies and procedures.

3.6 Business Day

Monday to Friday, with the exception of statutory holidays or any other day in which the College has publicly announced that it is not open for business.

3.7 Dean

For the purpose of this policy, Dean refers to the academic administrator with program responsibilities.

3.8 Final Grade

A final grade is awarded upon completion of the course.

3.9 Grounds for Academic Appeal

The reason(s) for the appellant's challenge of an academic decision.

3.10 Restorative Practice

Based on the values of equity, inclusion, accountability, and compassion, as well as the understanding that everyone is an equal member of society and has a contribution to make to the greater good, this approach enables those who have been harmed to convey the impact of the harm to those responsible, and for those responsible to acknowledge this impact and take steps toward resolution.

4. POLICY

Academic Issues That May Be Appealed

- 4.1 A student may initiate an Academic Appeal for academic decisions related to:
- Program Progression (A-7 Program Progression Policy); or
 - A final Grade in a Course (A-24 Grading Policy).
- 4.2 Each student appeal case will normally be heard and treated individually. The College may hear a group appeal dealing with the same circumstance as a special case for expediency or efficiency purposes so long as consent is obtained from all parties prior to the date of the hearing.
- 4.3 If, at any point during the appeal process, the student alleges that the basis for the appeal is harassment or discrimination, the student will be advised that the matter should be pursued under the College's Respectful College Community Policy instead.

Grounds For Academic Appeal

- 4.4 Academic appeals must be based on one or more of the following grounds:
- Merit of Work
 - Illness and/or Disability
 - Compassionate Reasons
 - Course Management
 - Policy Violation
- (For additional details, refer to Appendix 1).

Timelines For Academic Appeal

- 4.5 All students, faculty, and Deans are expected to adhere to the timelines outlined in this policy. (Refer to PA-1 Academic Appeal Procedure for details).
- 4.6 If a student does not initiate an appeal within the deadlines set by this policy, the College will consider the matter closed.
- 4.7 All college staff are to cooperate with reasonable requests to provide evidence and to appear at the appeal hearing as witnesses unless there are extenuating circumstances precluding their participation.

Stages of Academic Appeal

- 4.8 The College maintains a three-stage academic appeal procedure. (For details refer to PA-1 Academic Appeal Procedure).
- 4.9 The student must exhaust Stage One and Stage Two of the Academic Appeal Procedure before they can initiate a Stage Three Academic Appeal. If a Dean has already made a decision related to the case, the student must proceed directly to Stage Two.

4.10 A restorative practice should be adopted where a student has ongoing conversations with their faculty and program coordinator or Dean to discuss academic expectations and concerns.

4.11 The decision of the Academic Appeal Committee is final and cannot be appealed.

Onus and Standard of Proof

4.12 For academic decisions being appealed, the responsibility is on the student to show that the original decision was incorrect.

4.13 The standard of proof in all decisions shall be a balance of probabilities. This means that the Academic Appeal Committee must be shown that it is more likely than not that the original decision was incorrect.

Rights and Responsibilities

4.14 A student with no outstanding debts or obligations to the College has the right to appeal an academic decision if it meets the criteria outlined in the Grounds for Appeal. (Refer to Appendix 1 for more details).

4.15 At any stage in the academic appeal process, the student or faculty may bring a support person to meetings.

Note: The role of the support person is to provide support and/or advice to the student or faculty during the hearing. The support person is not to advocate on behalf of the student or faculty or present arguments at the hearing. (This includes lawyers hired by the student or faculty).

Any costs associated with the attendance of a support person at the appeal are the sole responsibility of the student or faculty.

4.16 Pending the outcome of the appeal, a student may register in the next level of their program unless there is an issue of liability, safety, and/or behaviour that interferes with the teaching and learning process. The Dean may impose compulsory conditions to be met by the student if they continue in the program while awaiting the outcome of the appeal.

4.17 If a student enrolls in the next semester of their program while awaiting a hearing and the appeal is subsequently denied, the student will be required to withdraw from the course or program if they are no longer qualified to attend. A tuition refund will be made on the following basis:

- If the student is required to withdraw from the program, a refund of the tuition for the semester will be made; or
- If the student is required to withdraw from a course or courses, a refund for only the affected courses will be made.

In both cases, the student's academic record will be modified accordingly.

4.18 Only one academic decision will be discussed at a scheduled Academic Appeal Hearing. Where appropriate, the College may hear a case where an individual student is appealing more than one academic decision.

4.19 All aspects of the academic appeal process will be kept confidential.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 President

The President is responsible for the overall management and operation of the College. The President ensures that the policy is implemented and that compliance is monitored.

5.2 Vice President Academic

The Vice President Academic is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy and resolves any disputes arising over policy interpretation.

6. EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every five years or earlier if required.

7. RELATED MATERIALS

Student Concerns Process

A-7 Progression Policy

A-23 Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning Policy

A-24 Grading Policy

Grounds for Academic Appeal

The College will consider the following grounds for an appeal only:

Grounds	Explanation	Required Documents
1. Merit of Work	An academic decision that does not accurately reflect a student's demonstrated abilities, actions, and/or achievements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific and detailed reasons, in writing, describing why the academic decision does not reflect the student's demonstrated abilities, actions, and/or achievements. • Any documentary evidence from course notes, textbooks, assignment rubrics, placement supervision records, emails, evaluations, or other relevant course materials.
2. Illness and/or Disability	An illness or disability that significantly affected the student's academic performance. Disability may include medical, mental health, physical, or other as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Form or equivalent documentation completed by a registered health professional (see Medical Form, Appendix 3 of the Academic Appeal Procedure). Documentation will be viewed in confidence only by the Academic Appeal Committee Chair.
3. Compassionate Reasons	Unforeseen events or circumstances that may have seriously impacted the student's academic performance (including ability to complete course requirements and meet deadlines). This may include the death of a family member, a legal issue, or other life circumstances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some documents might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Death certificate ○ Funeral notice ○ Legal notice
4. Course Management	A significant departure from the course outline provided at the outset of the semester, which has negatively affected the student's academic performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course outline and section-specific document. • Specific and detailed reasons, in writing, describing where the deviation occurred and how the deviation affected academic performance.
5. Policy Violation	An academic grade or decision that the student believes is invalid because a decision-maker failed to follow a college policy, procedure, or established practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to the policy, procedure, or established practice and the alleged error. Explain how this has affected academic performance.

***Note:** The supporting documentation suggested is not a comprehensive list and other documentation may be considered or required.*