

# Columbia College Calgary Student Appeals Policy and Procedure

<p><b>NOTE:</b>  <b>Must; Shall; Will:</b>  <b>Should:</b>  <b>May or Could; Can:</b></p>	<p><b>Clarification of Terms</b>          These words or phrases indicate actions or activities that are <i>essential or mandatory</i>.          This word implies that it is highly desirable to perform certain actions or activities, but not essential or mandatory.          These words imply freedom or liberty to follow an alternative to the action or activity being presented in a document.</p>
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## What is an appeal?

Please note, when students have a concern over a decision made at the College, the first step would be to initiate an informal discussion with the appropriate individual (i.e. facilitator in the case of a grade appeal). The next step in the informal process would be to discuss the decision with the appropriate Program Chair. In the case of a student services decision (e.g. admissions), the student would see the Student Services Manager.

If, after an informal process has been pursued the student still feels that the decision should be reviewed, they can proceed with a formal appeal. An appeal is a formal request by a student to review a decision that has been made by a college staff or faculty member. An appeal can be submitted for the following types of decisions:

- Course Final Grade;
- Non-Academic Offense;
- Academic Misconduct;
- Attendance;
- Admissions;
- Withdrawals.

Please note, individual grades for quizzes, assignments, and tests do not fall under a formal appeal process. These concerns should be discussed with the individual facilitator. The appeal process should only be applied to concerns over final grades.

This policy does not apply to Pre-Career student schedule appeals. Please refer to the 'Pre-Career Schedule Appeal Form' (REG-F0031) for further detail.

An appeal may be made from a disagreement on the following grounds:

### Example

The nature of the decision	Student wants to appeal a grade due to an incorrect calculation of an assignment
A disagreement on the outcome of the decision	Student does not refute they plagiarized on an assignment, but wants to appeal the severity of the disciplinary outcome

## When is an appeal appropriate?

An appeal must be based on evidence that the decision was unfair and/or specific information was not considered, that there was a miscalculation of a grade, or that the disciplinary outcome was too severe. An appeal is not simply that the student feels regretful, or feels that they need

another chance. Students may wish to discuss the appropriateness of their appeal with the Office of the Registrar prior to beginning the appeal process. The Office of the Registrar can be contacted at 403-235-9300 or [registrar@columbia.ca](mailto:registrar@columbia.ca)

The Office of the Registrar has the authority to determine that an appeal received is not appropriate, and as such would not forward to an appeal hearing. This decision would be provided to the student in writing by the Office of the Registrar.

An appeal that would not be forwarded to an appeal hearing:	A student is not satisfied with a mark, but there is no supporting documentation provided to show that the mark was miscalculated or unfairly awarded.
An appropriate appeal that would go to an appeal hearing:	Student did not pass a practicum, and feels that the evaluation does not accurately assess their performance in the course. This is supported by further documentation that demonstrates that expected performance outcomes had been met.

### How does a student submit an appeal request?

A formal appeal requires the student to submit a written request to the Office of the Registrar. The written request must include the following:

1. Student Name
2. Student ID
3. Decision student wishes to appeal
4. Brief description (and any supporting documentation if applicable) as to why you feel the decision should be changed
5. Name of individual who would be attending an appeal hearing with student and relationship to student (please see section 'Can a student bring someone with them to the appeal hearing')

The written appeal must be received by the Office of the Registrar within 5 operating business days of student receiving the decision that is being appealed. Appeals submitted after 5 operating business days will be denied.

If the student is not available to be contacted about the decision, and is not reachable through the contact information on file, the 5 operating business days will be based off of the date the decision was mailed to the student's address on file.

Please note: applicants who have been sent a letter denying admission into one of Columbia College programs will have 10 operating business days from the date the letter was mailed to appeal their denied admission.

### What happens next?

In cases where the student is not reachable by phone or email, a letter will be sent to the current address on file. Questions about time and place of the hearing and committee members are to be directed to the Office of the Registrar.

Notification to student will include:

- the date and time of the appeal hearing;
- the names of the committee members;
- the types of documentation permitted for the appeal hearing;

- the appeal hearing agenda and format; and
- the rules around bringing a guest to the appeal hearing.

### **Who will be on the Columbia College Appeal Committee?**

There are four members on the Appeal Committee, three voting members and the Committee Chair who holds a non-voting position.

#### **Committee Members**

1. Non-Voting Committee Chair – Registrar or their designate
2. Voting Member – Student Services Manager or their designate
3. Voting Member – Program Chair or designate from another department
4. Voting Member – Department Manager or designate from another department

The Committee members will be selected no later than one day prior to the appeal hearing. Committee members will be changed only if bias against the student appealing can be proven. A request for a change in committee members must be received by the Office of the Registrar no later than one day prior to the hearing.

Voting committee members must not have been involved in the original decision for the appeal or had previously facilitated a course with the student who submitted the appeal. In this case, the committee chair will select a replacement member by selecting a Department Manager or designate.

In the event that one of the voting members is unavailable to attend the appeal hearing, the Committee Chair will become an active voting member.

### **What happens at an appeal hearing?**

The representative from the program area who made the decision being appealed and the student will have an opportunity to present information to the committee at the appeal hearing. This may be in person, or by the submission of a statement and/or supporting documentation. The Department Chair or designate for the student's program will be invited to attend the appeal hearing and present information as outlined below. Faculty members may also be asked to attend to provide information.

If attendance or lack of progress is the concern, then the following types of information will be presented by the Program Chair or designate:

- grades and marks;
- number of days absent or late;
- warnings that have been issued;
- at-risk correspondence and/or additional evidence of support given to student by department or by student services;
- a rationale for or against the recommendation as to whether it will be possible for the student to complete the program successfully.

If the concern is about student conduct:

- description of the event that lead to the concern;
- who observed the behavior;
- reports of prior disruptive incidents;
- incident reports (if applicable).

The above information will be provided to the Appeal Committee a minimum of one day prior to the appeal meeting for review.

### **Student Guests Attending an Appeal Hearing**

A student may bring one person to their appeal hearing.

If the student intends to bring someone to the appeal hearing they must inform the Office of the Registrar in writing who the guest will be and the relationship to the student no later than **1 day prior** to the appeal hearing. While this guest may attend the appeal hearing, they will not be allowed to present or speak in place of the student. If the Office of the Registrar is not informed about the guest prior to the meeting as stated above, the guest will not be included in the meeting.

### **Outcomes of Hearing**

Decisions made by the Appeal Committee are final and will be limited the following outcomes:

- Original decision stands
- Original decision modified
- Original decision reversed

The student will receive the Appeal Committee's decision in writing from the Office of the Registrar.

### **Quality Management**

All appeal requests that are submitted to the Office of the Registrar – both deemed appropriate and forwarded to an appeal hearing, and those deemed not appropriate – will be recorded and presented by the ISO Coordinator for review at an Academic Council meeting for quality management purposes.