

SCHOOL POLICY

Section Title: Academic Matters

Policy Name: Academic Progression Committee Decision Grievance

Responsible Executive: Director of Student Support Services

Responsible Office: Office of Student Affairs

Originally Adopted: 04/28/2021

Revisions:

I. PURPOSE

This policy describes the circumstances surrounding why a student may appeal a decision from the Academic Progression Committee and the procedures for how these appeal petitions shall be handled at the Rutgers School of Public Health.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Office of Student Affairs is responsible for implementing this policy under the general direction of the Director of Student Support Services in consultation with appropriate academic faculty and deans.

III. APPLICABILITY

The Academic Progression Committee reviews the academic standing of every student enrolled in a matriculated degree program at the School of Public Health after each Fall, Spring, and Summer semester. After review, the Committee may provide remediation recommendations, place a student on probation, or dismiss a student should they not maintain a minimum level of academic standing. [Further information regarding the Academic Standing policy available here.](#)

i. **Formal Written Appeal**

A student must submit a formal written appeal to the Director of Student Support Services if they feel a decision made by Academic Progression Committee is unjust. The written appeal shall include detailed information regarding: 1) an explanation of the grounds for the appeal; 2) the attempts they have made to resolve the matter or remediate their academic standing; and 3) the strategies they will employ to remediate their academic standing, if an appeal were granted.

ii. **Reasonable Time of Appeal**

A formal written complaint about a decision must be submitted to the Director of Student Support no later than two (2) weeks from the date of the notification of the Academic Progression Committee decision.

iii. **Review of Appeal Request for Remediation or Probation**

Following the receipt of a formal written appeal, the Director of Student Support Services shall notify the Academic Progression Committee chair, the Department Chair, and the academic advisor of the student that a complaint has been filed. The Director of Student Support Services shall then initiate an investigation of the circumstances which may include, but is not limited to, requesting more information and documentation from the student, discussing the circumstances of the student's academic standing with their academic advisor, and reviewing the grades and outcomes of their courses. All information collected related to the appeal shall be

reviewed in consultation with the Academic Progression Committee chair and the student's academic advisor to decide the outcome of the appeal.

iv. Review of Appeal for Dismissal

Following the receipt of a formal written timely appeal, the Director of Student Support Services shall notify the Academic Progression Committee chair, the Department Chair, and the academic advisor of the student that a complaint has been filed. The Director of Doctoral Programs and the DrPH Program Director shall also be notified if the student is a PhD or DrPH degree student, respectively. The Director of Student Support Services shall then initiate an investigation of the circumstances which may include, but is not limited to, requesting more information and documentation from the student, discussing the circumstances of the student's academic standing with their academic advisor, and reviewing the grades and outcomes of their courses. Following the investigation, a meeting will be scheduled for the student to present their reasons why the dismissal should be reversed to a hearing committee. The committee shall comprise the Director of Student Support Services and two faculty members from the Hearing Body, one from within the student's academic department and another external to the student's academic department.

v. Decision of Appeal Review

A letter noting the outcome of the decision shall be sent via email to the student, faculty member, Department Chair, and academic advisor of the student within four (4) weeks of the receipt of an appeal. The Director of Doctoral Programs and DrPH Program Director shall also be notified if the student is a PhD or DrPH degree student, respectively. A copy of the decision shall also be held in the student's record. Should an appeal be granted, the decision letter shall detail the adjusted recovery plan and timeline to meet the School's academic standards.

vi. Secondary Appeal

A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Director of Student Support Services or outcome of the first appeal process must appeal in writing to the Dean no later than two (2) weeks after notification of the first appeal decision. The secondary appeal should include information about how the initial grade appeal process was not handled fairly and/or additional rationale for why a secondary review of the grade is warranted. The Dean shall consult with the Director of Student Support Services, appropriate Department Chair, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and/or the student, as needed. More information and documentation may also be requested from the student. Written notification of the action taken by the Dean is sent to the student via email within four (4) weeks of the filing of the second appeal.

vii. Discrimination as Basis for Appeal

In accordance with the School of Public Health's "[Zero Tolerance for Harassment and Discrimination](#)," any student with a complaint that the decision of the Academic Progression Committee was, in part or in full, attributable to discrimination, shall be referred to the Office of Employment Equity. Alternately, the student may appeal directly to the [Office of Employment Equity](#).

A student complaint that a decision of the Academic Progression Committee and/or the circumstances that impacted their decision was the result of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation is not reviewed as part of the School's grievance process,

even if asserted at a later stage during a pending appeal. The Office of Employment Equity (OEE) is responsible for enforcing the University's policies prohibiting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation ([including Policies 60.1.12 and 60.1.28](#)), which extend to adverse academic decisions. No decision shall be rendered regarding a student's appeal until the OEE completes its investigation concerning the discrimination allegation. Student complaints related to discriminatory matters should be written directly to the [Office of Employment Equity](#) following their complaint process.