

Guidelines

for the University Committee
on Academic Responsibility

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Office of Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures

Appeals

6.1 All sanctions determined by the College Committee shall remain in place during the appeals process. An “appeal” of an Informal Administrative Hearing will be considered a request for a College Committee hearing. All exceptions to this policy shall be at the discretion of the Dean.

1. Grounds for Appeal. The charged student may appeal the decision to the University Committee on Academic Responsibility on any or all of the following grounds:
 - a. that deviations from procedural rules had *significantly prejudiced* the findings of the College Committee;
 - b. that there is new evidence, which was not available at the time of the hearing and which would *significantly impact* the finding of the original hearing.
2. Notice of Appeal. A student appealing the finding of the College Committee must notify the Office of Academic Integrity in writing no later than ten (10) business days after the receipt of the letter indicating the findings of the College Committee. The student should set forth the specific ground (s) of the appeal. The Office of Academic Integrity will notify all relevant parties, including the Chair of the University Committee, regarding the appeal within ten (10) business days and will compose a response memorandum.
3. Consideration of Appeal. The University Committee on Academic Responsibility shall meet to consider the matter of appeal within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the appeal. The University Committee on Academic Responsibility shall issue a written decision that either:
 - a. the decision of the College Committee has been affirmed in its entirety; or
 - b. the case is remanded to the College Committee with a clear statement of specific reasons for further proceedings and with directives to attend to procedural errors or new evidence.

The Chair of the University Committee on Academic Responsibility shall send copies of the written decision to the appealing student and the Office of Academic Integrity within ten (10) business days (barring exigent circumstances) of the Committee meeting. The Office of Academic Integrity will forward copies to the appropriate parties within ten (10) business days (barring exigent circumstances).

Committee Chair Checklist

- Director of Academic Integrity will notify committee chair by email of upcoming appeal
- Upon receipt of appeal:
 - Contact Committee Members
 - To find out who the committee members are use this link <http://www.sc.edu/provost/committees/facom0809.pdf>. If that link does not work, follow these steps :
 - Go to www.sc.edu/provost
 - Click "Resources for Faculty" (left-hand navigation)
 - Under Programs and Initiatives, click "Committees"
 - Click on "2008-09 Faculty Committees (PDF)"
 - If it is an undergraduate student whom is appealing, the committee will consist of the five (5) faculty members and the two (2) undergraduate students listed.
 - If it is a graduate student whom is appealing, the committee will consist of the five (5) faculty members and the two (2) graduate students listed.
 - If you need assistance contacting the student members, please call 7-2654 and ask for the Coordinator for Student Government or the Student Government Graduate Assistant.
 - Coordinate the date, time, and location to review the appeal.
 - Review must be scheduled for no later than 15 University business days after the official receipt of the appeal.
 - Must have a quorum of the committee (4 members) to hold the review.
- In preparation for the appeal review:
 - Be sure the date, time, and location of the review are clear with the committee members.
 - Make enough copies of appropriate materials for everyone on the committee
 - Letter of Appeal from student with supporting documents (if included)
 - Response memo from the Director of Academic Integrity with supporting documents (if included)
- When deciding on an appeal:
 - The decision is determined by majority vote
 - See Group Process Decision-Making (pg. 5) and Questions for the Committee to Consider (pg. 6) for more guidelines.
- After Committee makes its decision:
 - The Chair writes the Appeal Decision Letter (see Sample Appeal Letter, pg. 7)
 - Student must receive this letter within 10 University business days of the appeal decision

Group Process Decision-Making: Reaching Consensus in Hearings

Consensus is a group decision process for making full use of available resources and for resolving disagreements creatively. Remember that consensus is typically not easy to reach, so not every decision of the Committee will meet with everyone's approval. Hopefully, each individual will be able to accept the group's decision on the basis of logic and feasibility. When all group members can accept the decision in such a manner, you have reached a consensus and the final decision may be rendered.

Tips to use in achieving consensus:

1. Avoid continually arguing your own position. Present it clearly and logically as possible, but listen to the other members' reactions and consider them carefully before you press your point.
2. Do not assume that someone must win and someone must lose when a stalemate is reached. Instead, look for the next most acceptable alternative for all Committee members.
3. Do not change your position simply to avoid conflict and to reach agreement and harmony. Exercise caution when agreement seems to come too easily and quickly. Explore the reasons and be sure that everyone accepts the solution for basically similar or complementary reasons. Yield only to positions that have objective and logically sound foundations.
4. Differences of opinion are natural and should be expected. Seek them out and try to involve all Committee members in the decision process. With a wide range of opinions and information, there is a greater chance that the Committee will reach the most adequate solution.
5. The best results flow from a fusion of information, logic, and emotion. Committee members should feel free to express their opinions about information.

Questions for the Committee to Consider

Remember, this process does not require the appeal committee to re-hear the case before them. The Committee is deciding if there are grounds for an appeal (a. that deviations from procedural rules had *significantly prejudiced* the findings of the College Committee; b. that there is new evidence, which was not available at the time of the hearing and which would *significantly impact* the finding of the original hearing). The following questions will help guide the Committee to review the relevant information regarding the appeal.

1. Was the College Committee decision contrary to the evidence?
2. Is there reason to believe there was any prejudice or bias?
3. Were the Honor Code policies and procedures followed?
4. Were the student's rights of due process honored as defined in those procedures?
5. If the assertion of new evidence is made, was it not available at the time of the hearing?

AND – would it make a significant difference/impact in the finding of the original hearing?

Sample Appeal Decision Letter

To:
From:
Date:
Re:

The University Committee on Academic Responsibility met on (date) regarding the appeal of (student's name). (Student's name) was found Responsible in an Honor Code Hearing for violating the following provisions of the Honor Code in (class and assignment, date):

1. (charge)
2. (charge)

The basis for (student's name)'s appeal is (state reason[s] for appeal). The University Committee on Academic Responsibility is charged with determining whether (reason[s] for appeal) warrants a new hearing.

After carefully considering the case, we agreed as a committee that there are (grounds or no grounds) for an appeal. Our decision is based upon these facts:

1. (fact)
2. (fact)

(If appeal granted...) Therefore, this committee has determined that a new hearing is warranted to reconsider this matter. (enter any specific details about the hearing that should be attended to based on this appeal outcome, including if the same hearing panel is to be used, a new panel should be used, etc). The student should contact the Office of Academic Integrity at 803-777-4333 to schedule this hearing.

(If appeal not granted...) Therefore, the decision of the College Committee is affirmed in its entirety.

Sincerely,
(Chair's Name)
Chair, University Committee on Academic Responsibility