

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
Department of Educational Studies

**Academic Appeal Process within EDST**  
(Approved at the November 18, 2004 Department Meeting)

**Background and Purpose**

Occasionally students have concerns about an academic judgement made by a member of the department's instructional staff. For some academic matters, the University *Calendar* specifies procedures to be followed, but these most often address processes outside of departments and Faculties. This is especially the case for matters related to academic misconduct, including plagiarism, which are covered under separate policies described in the University *Calendar* (see <http://students.ubc.ca/calendar/> and follow the links to "Academic Regulations"). Students and faculty should also be aware of the university's policy on Scholarly Integrity, known as Policy 85, which can be found at <http://www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/policy85.html>, which deals in part with fairness in the evaluation of student work.

The purpose of this document is to summarize the process to be followed within EDST when a student wishes to appeal an academic judgement. Most often these judgements involve a grade on an assignment or in a course. The process described below will normally be followed for an appeal of a grade but also provides a general structure for appeals of other academic judgements (like results of comprehensive examinations, for example).

Appeals of academic judgements, especially those concerning grades on assignments and in courses, should normally be based on the belief that an unfair or improper assessment procedure was used. In other words, it is normally not enough for a student to feel that they should have received a higher mark unless that feeling is based on the belief that the assessment process was somehow flawed resulting in an unfair or unreasonable decision. Such flaws might include the following:

- an instructor not following the assessment process spelled out in the course syllabus,
- an instructor failing to provide timely feedback on assignments prior to issuing a final course grade,
- an instructor using irrelevant or incorrect information in reaching a judgement, or not considering relevant information that was available when the judgement was made.

**Academic Appeal Process**

In all cases of disagreements between instructional staff and students, the preferred course of action is for the student to raise the concern directly with the instructor who is obligated to listen to the concern and provide a timely, respectful response consistent with our Statement on Academic Climate. If this response is not acceptable to the student, then the process described below should be followed. Before starting this process, however, the student may wish to discuss their concern with the Peer Academic Advisor, their Pro Tern Advisor, or the department's Graduate Advisor to get a "third party" opinion on the matter and advice on how to proceed.

1. The student should summarize in writing the nature of the academic judgement of concern, the basis for an appeal of that judgement, and the process followed and outcome of any effort

made to resolve the matter with the instructor. If the matter concerns a grade on an assignment or in a course, the course outline should be provided along with the assignment(s) of concern including any feedback provided by the instructor. This summary and related materials should be submitted to the Head of the department within two weeks of the effort to resolve the matter with the instructor.

2. The Head will review the information provided and consult with the instructor and others as necessary. The Head may also ask other faculty members to review the student's work and offer an assessment of its strengths and weaknesses.
3. The Head will make an initial determination of the merits of the appeal and then meet with the student to discuss it within two weeks of the appeal being submitted. This discussion may include options available to resolve the concern if the appeal is judged to have merit. If requested by the student, the Head will prepare a written summary of this meeting which will be provided to the student, with a copy to the instructor, within a week of the meeting.

If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction by the Head and the student wishes to pursue the appeal further, they should contact the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and Research, Faculty of Education, who can provide advice on how to pursue the appeal at the Faculty level.