

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR RE-READS/RE-ASSESSMENTS

### OVERVIEW

#### Understanding the types of appeals as outlined in Senate's *Student Appeal Procedures*

The Senate document on *Student Appeal Procedures* refers to three types of student appeals as outlined below; namely, Re-read/Re-assessment, Academic, and Non-academic. This policy and procedural document for the Faculty of Science addresses the Re-read/Re-assessment Appeal only. Further information regarding the Academic and Non-academic Appeals can be found in Senate's Student Appeal Procedures available from the Office of the University Secretariat.

### TYPES OF APPEALS

**Re-Read/Re-assessment:** A student questions his/her grade or the assessment of his/her performance (on an examination paper, project, course assignment, essay, etc.) and alleges error in the *academic assessment* of his/her work on the part of an instructor or a committee. In order to qualify for a re-read, the piece of work must be **worth 10% or more** of the final course grade. This process may result in the grade on the piece of work being increased, being decreased, or remaining unchanged. The results of a formal re-read are final and cannot be appealed.

**Academic Process:** A student questions his/her grade or the assessment of his/her performance on a piece of work in a course, or his/her academic standing or status in a program, and alleges *error or injustice* on grounds *other than the academic assessment* of his/her work, such as:

- a) the method of evaluation was not fair and reasonable in the circumstances;
- b) the instructor was biased against the student;
- c) the instructor deviated substantially from the course outline in contravention of applicable University policies;
- d) the application of University regulations governing program or degree requirements was not fair, just, or reasonable; or
- e) a finding of academic dishonesty, or the penalty assigned, was not fair, just or reasonable.

**Non-Academic:** A student questions as unfair, unjust or unreasonable, a decision or action of a University authority or official, which has negative material consequences for his/her University life, and which is unrelated to courses, or to program or degree requirements.

## PROCEDURE FOR A RE-READ/RE-ASSESSMENT:

### Preliminary Inquiry

1. Students who wish to raise questions or register complaints about matters of academic assessment are encouraged and strongly advised to communicate *informally* with their instructors before seeking a review under formal procedures. Experience shows that the great majority of questions or complaints of this kind can be resolved satisfactorily through informal communication by going directly to the appropriate instructor. Students shall seek remedies for their concerns as promptly as possible. An undue delay in the reporting of a complaint, especially for assignments based on oral reports or musical performances, may make it impossible for the complaint to be dealt with. The application for a formal rereading must be submitted **by July 31** immediately following the Fall/Winter Session or **by November 15** immediately following the Spring/Summer Session in which the assessment occurred.
2. **Within two weeks** of receiving the student's complaint, the instructor shall consider the inquiry, make a determination of its merits and respond to the student. With the consent of the student, the Chair may attempt to mediate the dispute in a final effort to resolve it *before* the student resorts to a formal re-read. In their efforts to resolve the dispute, **under no circumstances should the instructor or student recommend an informal re-reading or re-assessment procedure involving another instructor as a third party.** Faculty, for their part, should not accede to student requests that they re-read informally and re-assess assignments graded by another instructor (excluding T.A.s working under their direct supervision).
3. If the instructor and student reach an impasse and cannot resolve the dispute, it is the responsibility of the student to decide whether to take the complaint further by reporting it to the Chair of the Department for possible resolution.
4. If the student brings a complaint to a Chair of a Department and the Chair is unable to resolve the matter, the Chair should advise the student of the Senate's Student Appeal Procedures and this Faculty Policy and Procedures document.

### Formal Re-Reading

5. A student may apply for a formal re-reading of his/her essay, examinations, etc. provided the piece of work is worth 10% or more of the final course grade. In this event, Form A (available at the Office of the University Secretariat) shall be submitted to the Associate/Assistant Dean of the Faculty **offering the course.** The Form A application for a formal re-reading must be accompanied

by the receipt for the re-read fee (\$50.00 per item to be re-read) which will be refunded if the reread results in an increase of at least one point (on the 12-point scale) in the student's final grade in the course.

6. Once the Senate's Student Appeal Procedures have been invoked, **within one week** of receiving Form A, the Associate/Assistant Dean will write to the Chair\* directing him/her within that same week to select a qualified re-reader--someone other than the instructor--and to arrange for the rereading, taking steps to ensure the anonymity of the student and the impartiality of the reader. To this end, the Associate/Assistant Dean will provide the Chair with a clean copy of the work in dispute--a copy from which the grade and instructor's comments are, as far as possible, removed—a copy of the assignment, a copy of the course outline, the instructor's marking scheme (if available), a copy of the instructor's grade distribution for the piece of work, and a set of instructions for the re-reader directing him/her to submit to the Chair a report containing a detailed assessment of the work in dispute and a recommended grade. The Chair shall secure the results of the re-read and report those results to the Associate/Assistant Dean **within three weeks of submission to the re-reader**.
7. Upon receiving the report from the Chair, the Associate/Assistant Dean will decide upon a grade for the work in dispute on the basis of the compiled documentation. Normally, the re-reader's grade is taken to be the correct grade for the piece of work. If the original grade and the rereader's grade differ by a large amount, the Associate/Assistant Dean may ask for a second reread of the work. When all three assessments have been received, the Associate/Assistant Dean will make a reasonable determination of the new grade based on the three independent assessments.
8. Normally, **within three weeks** of receiving the re-reader's report from the Chair, the Associate/Assistant Dean will write to the student informing him/her of the outcome of the reread. The re-read fee will be refunded if the student's final grade in the course is raised by at least one point on the 12-point scale as a result of the re-read.

\*In cases where the instructor and Chair are one and the same, the Associate/Assistant Dean should work with the designated Undergraduate Chair in the Department.\*