

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this academic policy statement is to provide students with procedures for resolving academic grievances in a prompt and equitable manner.

2. GENERAL

2.01 Under the provisions of this policy, academic grievances include disputes over:

- a. Course grades, except cases of academic dishonesty (see Academic Policy Statement 810213 for procedures in cases of academic dishonesty);
- b. Unauthorized class absences or tardiness;
- c. An instructor's alleged unprofessional conduct related to academic matters.; and/or
- d. Withdrawal or suspension of privileges related to degree-required clinical rotation, internships, or other clinical service delivery in professional degree programs.

2.02 Allegations, questions, or appeals involving academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and/or abuse of resource materials) will be processed in accordance with the procedures set forth in Chapter VI of the Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The Texas State University System and addressed under Academic Policy Statement 810213 "Procedures in Cases of Academic Dishonesty."

2.03 The aggrieved student is entitled to have, as appropriate and in turn upon timely notice of appeal at each stage, the instructor, then department/school chair/director, then college Academic Review Panel, then academic dean (or their designee), and finally Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs (or their designee) review the grievance and render a decision. If the department/school chair, college Academic Review Panel, academic dean, or Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs finds that a disputed action conflicts with federal or state law; Texas State University System, Sam Houston State University, college, or departmental policy; or with an instructor's class policy, a decision should be rendered in favor of the aggrieved student. After consultation with the instructor, the University may, to the extent required, adjust the record in accordance with the ultimate grievance decision rendered at the completion of the last stage of the grievance process.

2.04 Degree programs in professional fields, including those associated with clinical settings, licensing, certification, and/or accreditation, may propose internal academic grievance procedures for matters including, but not limited to those listed in 2.01.d above. Once approved and signed by the Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs, the program grievance procedures shall govern 2.01.d matters in that department and be the final authority over academic grievances in that program.

3. COLLEGE ACADEMIC REVIEW PANEL

3.01 There shall be in each college a standing college Academic Review Panel. The members of the panel shall be chosen by procedures established by the college dean. The panel will consist of three (3) faculty members and two (2) student members. The chair of the panel will be selected from the panel members by the appointees to the panel. A department/school chair/director or any party to the appeal being heard may not serve on the panel. At least two (2) faculty members and at least one (1) student member must be present for action to be taken.

3.02 The Academic Review Panel will proceed to hear an appeal of the decision on an alleged grievance only after the procedures outlined in paragraphs 4.01 through 4.04 below have been exhausted.

3.03 The Academic Review Panel will hear only appeals involving disputes over those matters set forth in paragraph 2.01.a through 2.01.d of this policy. Appeals regarding University/college degree requirements or student misconduct will not be addressed by the panel.

4. PROCEDURES

The steps below are to be followed in pursuing an academic grievance (Sec 2.01, a-d):

4.01 The student must first grieve to their instructor for a resolution of the matter and must do so in writing within ten (10) working days (working days are defined as Monday through Friday when the University is open) following the posting of the grade, the absence or tardiness, or the alleged conduct. The *Academic Grievance Procedures for Students – Grievance Form* may be found at this [link](#).

- 4.02 The instructor must reply in writing to the aggrieved student within ten (10) working days following receipt of the appeal.
- 4.03 If an academic grievance is not satisfactorily resolved with the instructor, or the student does not receive a response from the instructor within ten (10) working days, the student may appeal to the chair/director of the academic department/school in which the complaint or dispute is centered. The student appealing must provide to the chair/director a written summary of the pertinent issues of the grievance within ten (10) working days of the date of the response of the instructor or when the response from the instructor was due. The chair/director of the academic department/school shall request relevant information from the instructor, including but not limited to, course syllabus, attendance records, assignment descriptions and scoring rubrics. In addition, the student and instructor may include statements from other faculty or staff members or any other informed individual who might act as advocates in support of their position in the appeal.
- 4.04 The chair/director of the academic department/school in which the complaint or dispute is centered reviews the documents provided by all parties involved in the grievance. The chair/director must respond to the student and the instructor with a written decision within ten (10) working days of receipt of a timely appeal.
- 4.05 If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the chair/director of the department/school or the student does not receive a response from the chair/director within ten (10) working days, the student may, within ten (10) working days of receipt of the chair's/director's decision or when the response from the chair/director was due, forward a written appeal including any documentation provided to the chair/director to the college dean in whose college the dispute arose, with a request to have the case heard by the college Academic Review Panel, which serves in an advisory capacity only to the college dean. Within ten (10) working days of receiving the appeal, the Academic Review Panel shall investigate the alleged grievance and present such findings and recommendations as it finds appropriate to the student, dean, and other relevant parties, including the department/school chair/director and the faculty member(s) against whom the grievance is directed. During the panel hearing(s), all parties involved in the original grievance shall be invited to appear before the Academic Review Panel. The student and instructor may request either oral or written statements from advocates. The inclusion of these statements at the hearing(s) shall be at the discretion of the Academic Review Panel. Under no circumstances shall advocates be permitted to directly question or cross-examine any person who is involved in the grievance. Legal counsel, if included by the grievant and/or the instructor, may act only in an advisory capacity and may not actively participate in the proceedings.

- 4.06 If a student wishes to appeal the Academic Review Panel recommendation, they must, within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the Academic Review Panel’s written recommendation to the college dean, request in writing that the grievance be forwarded to the college dean in whose college the dispute arose for review and decision. The Academic Review Panel shall forward all documents pertaining to the dispute to the college dean, who shall inform the student, the instructor, and the administrators participating in the appeals process of the decision and the disposition of the matter within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal.
- 4.07 If a student wishes to appeal the college dean’s decision, they must, within ten (10) working days, request in writing to the college dean that the grievance be forwarded to the Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs. The college dean shall provide to the Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs for review all documents pertaining to the dispute from the Academic Review Panel and the college dean. The Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs, or their designee, shall inform the student, the instructor, and the administrators participating in the appeals process of the decision and the disposition of the matter within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs on the matter is final.
- 4.08 At any time during the appeal process, the person(s) reviewing the grievance may request, in writing, additional information from the student. The student then has ten (10) working days to respond to the request for additional information. Once the requested information has been received or when the student response was due, whichever is later, the reviewer(s) must issue a written decision within ten (10) working days.
- 4.09 Whenever possible, in good faith, all parties involved in the grievance shall work to resolve the grievance prior to the first day of the subsequent semester/session.

APPROVED: _____ <signed>
Alisa White, Ph.D., President

DATE: _____ 01/03/2023

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

This academic policy statement (APS) has been approved by the reviewer listed below and represents SHSU’s Division of Academic Affairs’ policy from the date of this document until superseded.

Original:	August 23, 1990	Review Cycle:	Five years*
Reviewer:	Academic Affairs Council	Review Date:	Spring 2027

Approved: _____ <signed> _____ Date: _____ 12/19/2022 _____
Michael T. Stephenson, Ph.D.
Provost and Sr. Vice President
for Academic Affairs

*Effective January 2018, Academic Policy Statements will be reviewed on a rotating 5-year schedule. To transition to a distributed review load, some policies may be reviewed prior to the 5-year timeframe, with subsequent reviews transitioning to the 5-year schedule.