

RECOMMENDATION OF THE GRADUATE FACULTY COMMITTEE FOR CHANGES TO THE  
ADMISSION, CONTINUATION, AND DISMISSAL POLICIES OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

**I. POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISMISSAL**

The graduate program may recommend that a graduate student be academically dismissed for reasons of poor academic performance, lack of progress toward degree, or failure to meet Graduate School or program requirements. For dismissals initiated by a graduate program, the process starts with a letter of recommendation from the program to the Dean of the Graduate School, describing the reasons for such recommendation along with any supporting documentation. The Graduate School, in consultation with the graduate program, may also initiate a dismissal for these reasons. In all cases, the Dean of the Graduate School makes the final decision regarding academic dismissal.

- Recommendation for dismissal may be initiated for, but is not limited to, the following: A cumulative graduate grade point average below 3.0.
- Failing the doctoral preliminary examination.
- Failing the dissertation defense.
- Failing to have the doctoral dissertation within the time period specified for deferral status (reverts to failed dissertation defense).
- Failing to successfully defend the doctoral dissertation upon a second attempt within the specified time period.
- Exceeding the time limit for degree completion.
- Accumulating U grades in thesis or dissertation courses.

**Appeal Process for Academic Dismissals.**

A student who disagrees with a recommendation for dismissal may initiate an appeal. The three step process resembles the standard academic appeals process, beginning with the student's program at step one, continuing to the Graduate Scholastic Appeals Committee at step two, and culminating in a final appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School at step three. Appeals of an academic dismissal are separate from any underlying academic appeals such as a grade appeal and do not extend the deadline for such underlying appeals. An appeal of an academic dismissal must follow this sequence:

### **Step One**

Within 30 working days of the dismissal recommendation, the student appeals to the program. This appeal must be made in writing and should contain substantiating reasons for reversing the recommendation. If the decision is negative, the program must provide the student with a written statement of the reason for the adverse decision.

### **Step Two**

If the Step One decision is not in the student's favor, the student may, within 10 working days of receiving the decision, appeal to the Graduate Scholastic Appeals Committee. The appeal must be made in writing and should contain substantiating reasons for the appeal, a request for a specific remedy, and a rationale for the remedy sought. If a Step Two committee member was involved in making the dismissal recommendation or reviewing the Step One appeal, he or she must not participate in Step Two. The student will receive written notification of the outcome of the Step Two appeal.

### **Step Three**

If the Step Two decision is negative, the student may, within 10 working days of receiving the decision, appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School. The appeal must be made in writing and should contain the reason for the appeal, substantial evidence in support of the appeal, and the solution sought. This may be done using the [appeal request form](#). The appeal should be directed to the Dean's office in Mitchell Hall Room 251.

The Dean of the Graduate School is responsible for reviewing the academic appeal for procedural fairness and maintaining and protecting the rights of BOTH the graduate faculty AND graduate students.

The Step Two decision will be subject to reversal if the Dean of the Graduate School finds any of the following:

- The program or department did not follow proper procedures.
- The student did not have a fair hearing.
- There is evidence of unprofessional conduct on the part of the faculty that materially affected the academic decision.

The Dean's decision in the Step Three appeal will be conveyed in writing to the student, program, and school/college.

### Duties

The Dean (or designee) contacts the appropriate department or program and requests all pertinent documentation regarding the appeal. For this reason, departments and programs and the Graduate Scholastic Appeals Committee are urged to:

1. Notify students in writing about department or program appeal procedures and the scheduled meeting of the appeal body.
2. Maintain complete minutes of the committee meetings. Inform the student in writing of the outcome of the appeal.

To ensure that students receive correspondence regarding appeals, and to avoid claims of non- receipt, it is recommended that all materials be sent to the student by first class mail and email.