



NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDENT APPEALS AND GRIEVANCES

UNIT POLICY—ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Students may appeal certain decisions made by the academic programs or by the Graduate College.

1. **Grade appeals:** The Graduate Appeals Committee (GAC) of the Graduate Council considers grade appeals from graduate students that have not been resolved by the instructor and department chair and presented to the Dean of the Graduate College. There are two grounds for appealing a grade: (1) evidence of miscalculation, and (2) material deviation from information published in the course syllabus without adequate notice of the change.

Before filing an appeal, a graduate student is expected to attempt to resolve the grading issue with the course instructor and the department chairperson of the academic unit in which the grade was assigned. A graduate student who is unable to resolve issues with the course professor and department chairperson has thirty (30) calendar days from the date on which grades are due (as specified on the Registrar's academic calendar) for the relevant semester or summer session, or thirty (30) calendar days after the adverse decision at the department level to file an appeal with the dean of the Graduate College. If this date falls on a weekend or a university holiday, then the deadline will be the next workday. Students are responsible for submitting a written appeal with the required documentation to the dean of the Graduate College so that they are postmarked or hand-delivered by the deadline date. If a request for appeal is not postmarked or hand delivered by this deadline, it will not be considered. The decisions of the Graduate Appeals Committee are final.

2. **Dismissal from the program:** A written appeal must be submitted to the Graduate College within thirty (30) calendar days following the adverse recommendation or decision. The written appeal should include three important aspects: (i) the action(s) being challenged, (ii) the person(s) against whom the complaint is being made the “respondent,” and (iii) the redress being sought. A decision shall be deemed final on the expiration of the period for filing an appeal, or if an appeal is filed, upon issuance of a decision in such an appeal, whichever is later.

One representative of the Graduate College, together with one representative from Student Affairs, shall examine the appeal and jointly determine whether the cited actions were disciplinary or academic. If the challenged action is deemed to be disciplinary, the dean of the Graduate College shall refer the complaint to the appropriate university officers responsible for disciplinary matters within five (5) business days. If the challenged action is deemed to be an academic matter, the dean of the Graduate College shall forward the appeal to a review panel. The final decision will be resolved no later than the end of the following semester.

The academic review panel will consist of two faculty members and a graduate student. One faculty member, from a college other than the one in which the student's academic department resides, will be appointed by the dean of the Graduate College. The other faculty member, from the college in which the student's program resides, will be appointed by the dean of the academic college. However, this representative will not be from the student appellant's department. In the event that either of the two aforementioned deans is a respondent against whom one or more allegations are pending in the appeal, the Provost will appoint the faculty member(s) for the affected dean. The Graduate Student Council will appoint a graduate student for the review panel who is not a student in the appellant's college.

The review panel will review all written records of the case. As appropriate, it may afford the student appellant an opportunity to appear in person before it, and consider any written materials the student may wish to bring to its attention. The review panel may also hear from the academic officer(s) whose action is being appealed and may confer with other involved parties. It shall evaluate any other information it deems important to its deliberations. The panel's report will be submitted to the dean of the Graduate College and the dean(s) of the appellant and the respondent(s). The dean of the Graduate College and the dean of the appellant's college shall jointly review the case, giving due consideration to the review panel's report and recommendation. The decision of the two deans will be final.

In the event that one or both deans are respondents in the case, the Provost will appoint other dean(s) to officiate with respect to the appeal.

3. **Termination of an assistantship:** Before filing an appeal, a graduate student is expected to attempt to resolve the termination issue with the hiring faculty member and/or department chairperson and dean of the academic unit in which the assistantship is assigned. A graduate student who is unable to resolve issues with the hiring faculty member and/or department chairperson has thirty (30) calendar days from the date of termination, or thirty (30) calendar days after the adverse decision at the department or college level to file an appeal with the dean of the Graduate College. Graduate students

are responsible for submitting a written appeal with the required documentation to the dean of the Graduate College so that they are postmarked or hand-delivered by the deadline date. If a request for appeal is not postmarked or hand-delivered by this deadline, it will not be considered. The Graduate Student Appeals Committee of the Graduate Council considers appeals of termination of Graduate Assistantships. The decisions of the Graduate Student Appeals Committee are final and do not set precedent; each case is considered on its own facts and merits.

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Approved by the Chancellor