

Procedure for Academic Grievance Policy

a. Academic Expectations

The freedom to learn depends upon opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. The responsibility to secure and respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the academic community. Students are obligated to exercise their freedom with maturity and responsibility.

i) Student Rights

Students have the right to

- ii) be informed of course requirements;
- iii) be evaluated fairly on the basis of their academic performance (their abilities and skills) as required by a professor as part of a course;
- iv) experience free and open discussion, inquiry, and expression, both in the classroom and in conference;
- v) experience competent instruction and advisement.
- vi) take exception to the data or views presented and reserve judgment about matters of opinion;
- vii) expect protection against a professor's improper disclosure of student's views, beliefs, and political association which may surface as a result of instructing, advising, or counseling;
- viii) expect protection, through established procedures, against prejudicial or capricious evaluation (see Academic Appeals and Academic Grievance Procedures section below).

b. Student Responsibilities

Students have the responsibility to:

- i) inquire about course requirements if they do not understand them or are in doubt about them;
- ii) maintain the standards of academic performance established for individual courses and for programs of study;
- iii) initiate an investigation if they believe their academic rights have been violated. (see Academic Appeals and Academic Grievance Procedures section below).
- iv) learn the content of any course of study;
- v) act in accordance with commonly accepted standards of academic conduct (see Student Conduct Code)

c. Student Academic Appeals and Academic Grievance Procedures

- i) These procedures should be used to appeal or resolve disputes concerning an academic grade or other academic decision considered by a student to be arbitrary or contrary to College policy. These procedures should also be used to grieve perceived violations of any of the student academic rights listed above. For the purposes of these procedures, a student is someone holding "active" registration status as the time of the alleged violation.

- ii) Before using these procedures or between any of the appeals steps, students are encouraged to seek advice from the Coordinator for Judicial Affairs and Equal Opportunity, 970-382-6977, 455 Berndt Hall.
- iii) Appeals of charges of academic dishonesty follow a different procedure and there are separate procedures for removal of a grade of Incomplete.
- iv) It is the responsibility of the student to initiate the appeals procedure at each step. If the appeal is pursued through Step 3, it is expected that, unless there are unusual circumstances, the request for a hearing by the Student Academic Review Committee will be submitted within 90 days from the last day of the term in which the alleged violation arose. If the student fails to pursue the matter in the manner provided by this policy, after the conference with the department chair/director, or dean(s), if applicable, the original academic decision will be final. The student should bring to the various conferences and to the Student Academic Review Committee hearing all evidence on which he/she intends to rely.

The following procedures outline the steps of the academic appeal and/or grievance process. It is recommended but not required that the student first arrange a conference to discuss the appeal or grievance with the faculty member(s) whose action is addressed in the student's appeal or grievance. It is expected that all of the parties involved at each step of the appeals/grievance process will make a good faith effort to resolve the issues. (Request for Hearing by Fort Lewis College Student Academic Review Committee Form can be found at the end of this document.)

- (1) Department Chair. In the event that a student feels he/she has not received adequate satisfaction from his discussion with the faculty involved or in the event that a student prefers not to discuss his/her concerns directly with the involved faculty, the student may arrange a conference to discuss the appeal or grievance with the department chair (or equivalent). If the department chair is the involved faculty member, this step may be skipped.
- (2) Dean (or equivalent). In the event there is no department chair in the school or academic unit involved, or in the event the involved faculty member is the department/unit chair, or in the event a student still feels aggrieved after consultation with the appropriate department chair, he/she may ask for a review by the appropriate dean (or equivalent). If the involved faculty member is the dean (or equivalent), this step may be skipped.
- (3) Student Academic Review Committee. In the event the student is not satisfied with the results of the reviews by the department chair and the dean (or equivalent) he/she may ask for a review committee to be formed. This request shall be in writing to the Provost. A copy of the request form appears at the end of this Section. The Provost, or designee, shall act as chair of the review committee. The committee

shall include a faculty member from the department of the involved faculty (other than the chair). Such faculty member shall be chosen by the involved faculty member. The committee shall also include a faculty member (from any department) chosen by the student. The committee shall also include one student member of the ASFLC Student Court. This student is to be selected by the Student Court. The review must be commenced and completed within 45 days from the receipt of the request for the review. If the review is not completed within this time period, an interim report shall be provided to all the involved parties.

The committee shall interview the involved student and faculty member and any other students and faculty they feel are necessary. Based upon their findings, the committee will determine whether or not the appeal or grievance addresses an action which may be considered arbitrary, capricious or contrary to College policy. If the grievance is dismissed, the student shall be informed in writing of the reasons for dismissal. If desired, the student may request an in-person meeting with the Provost to better understand the Committee's decision; however it must be understood that the decision of the Committee is final. If the grievance is sustained, the Provost will so advise the student and negotiate a resolution of the matter with the involved faculty, department chair and dean. The review by the above committee constitutes the final process in this appeal/grievance procedure. It is hoped that any concern about academic decisions shall be satisfactorily resolved at a lower level. Approved: May 4, 2005.

Grades of Incomplete "I"

A grade of Incomplete "I" is a student-initiated grade that must have the Instructor's approval.

a. Appropriate Circumstances

A Grade if Incomplete is appropriate under the following circumstances:

- i) The major part of the course requirements has been met;
- ii) The student is unable to complete the requirements in the term in which the course is taken for compelling and unforeseen reasons;
- iii) In the opinion of the Instructor, the student can complete the requirements without repeating the course.

b. Completion of Course Requirements

If the course requirements are not completed within one (1) year after the end of the appropriate term, the Incomplete "I" shall revert to an "F" (see Subsection d., "Grade Point Average," for the single exception to this change). The dean (or equivalent) of the school (or other academic unit) in which the course is offered may waive, for good reason, the one (1)

year deadline upon petition by the student. If, within the time allotted, the student completes the course requirements, the Instructor shall initiate the grade change by filing a Special Grade Report Form.

c. Failing to Complete Course Requirements

An “I” cannot be removed by registering to repeat the course. When the student cannot complete the course material without repeating the course, he/she should not receive an “I”, rather, “W” or “F” would be appropriate.

d. Grade Point Average

A course for which a student has a grade of “I” at the time of graduation cannot be used to satisfy any graduation or major requirement, and is not counted in units attempted or Grade Point Average. In the event that a student graduates prior to removing the “I,” that grade shall remain permanently on his transcript.

REQUEST FOR HEARING BY FORT LEWIS COLLEGE

STUDENT ACADEMIC REVIEW COMMITTEE

Return completed form to Provost's Office, 240 Berndt Hall

Date: _____

Student: _____

Major: _____

Phone: _____

Year in School: _____

FLC Email: _____

Home Address: _____

Faculty Advisor: _____

Involved Faculty: _____

Department/Unit: _____

Nature of the Complaint: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Request received by: _____ / _____ / _____
Name Signature Date

Members appointed to Review Committee:

Faculty chosen by student: _____

Faculty chosen by involved faculty: _____