



**SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY**

**DOISY COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

## **ACADEMIC DECISION APPEAL POLICY**

### **Background**

The Doisy College of Health Sciences (DCHS) appeal process seeks to ensure that all program policies and procedures are followed related to an academic decision. At a minimum, DCHS academic departments are responsible for:

1. Notifying students of department policies and procedures.
2. Following department policies and procedures.
3. Informing students of the policies and procedures related to a specific academic decision.
4. Notifying students of their right to appeal academic decisions made at the department level.
5. Following college and university policies.

There are times when a student receives an academic decision with which they do not agree. Students must first complete all program and department appeal processes before submitting an appeal at the college level. This policy describes the policies and procedures associated with the college level appeal.

### **Policy Terminology**

The table below is a list of the terminology used in this document along with corresponding descriptions.

<b>TERM/ ABBREVIATION</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
Academic Decision	A decision that directly affects a student's academic standing, such as a final grade, program dismissal, warning, or probation.
Academic Department	A department within the DCHS. Note that departments may house multiple programs, each of which may have program-specific policies or procedures.
ADSAA	Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs
AAC	Academic Appeal Committee

TERM/ ABBREVIATION	DESCRIPTION
Clinical Rotations	A general term that refers to students completing the “on-the-job” portion of their education, the specific title of which varies by discipline; also known as clinicals, fieldwork, internships, clinical experiences, clinical practicum/practica.
DCHS	Doisy College of Health Sciences
Academic Decision Appeal	<p>An academic decision appeal is submitted by a student to the college to review and determine whether a student-related academic decision adhered to established policies and procedures.</p> <p>The academic appeal process at the college level is not used to determine whether an academic decision is fair or just. It is used only to ensure that policies and procedures have been followed.</p>

## ACADEMIC APPEAL COMMITTEE (AAC)

The DCHS Academic Appeal Committee (AAC) facilitates the consideration of matters relating to academic decision appeals that are submitted at the college level.

### Committee Membership

#### Faculty

The AAC is composed of faculty members from DCHS. Each Academic Department selects one faculty representative to serve on the AAC for three years. If the Academic Department has not assigned a representative, the Dean’s office will identify a faculty representative to serve on the committee. Committee member terms should be staggered so that there are no more than two new members per year. The AAC Committee Chair is selected by the committee. It is recommended that the Chair be a faculty member who has served on the committee for at least one year.

All faculty members of the AAC review student appeals *except* the faculty member from the DCHS Academic Department associated with a student appeal. If the AAC Chair is from the DCHS Academic Department associated with a student appeal, a temporary chair will be selected from the members to oversee the student appeal.

#### DCHS Administration

The DCHS Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs (ADSAA) serves as an *ex-officio* member of the AAC. The ADSAA does not participate in hearings associated with a student appeal. In the absence of an ADSAA, the dean may appoint a designee to provide support to the student and/or committee during the academic appeal process.

## **Students**

In the event of an academic decision appeal, two students from departments not affiliated with the student appeal will be selected to participate in the hearing component of a full committee review, should a hearing occur. The student representatives should be at the same level as or higher than the student (e.g., undergraduate/graduate).

## **Meetings**

The AAC meets once per month or as needed to conduct its business. The AAC may schedule meetings and hearings as appropriate to facilitate the consideration of matters and recommendations related to an academic decision appeal.

## **Scope of Academic Decision Appeal Review**

The student appeal must demonstrate that procedural irregularity occurred. The AAC will consider *only* those appeals of which the student reports: (a) the department did not follow their policies or procedures; (b) the student was not informed of the specific department policies and procedures related to an academic decision; (c) the student was not allowed to appeal at the Academic Department level; and/or (d) there were other significant deviations from the policies or procedures set forth in the department/program policy that would have impacted the outcome of the matter or would have resulted in a different academic decision.

The AAC will *not* review appeals in which the student: (a) did not appeal the academic decision at the department level; (b) is reporting a grievance related to matters that are not managed by the college and are managed by other university offices (e.g., academic integrity, student conduct, bias, harassment); and/or (c) is seeking an appeal for reasons unrelated to policies or procedures (e.g., that the department policy was not fair). These appeals will be returned to the student as not falling within the scope of review of the AAC.

## **AAC Confidentiality Statement**

The AAC shall always maintain confidentiality of Academic Decision Appeals. Only those individuals explicitly involved in the appeal as detailed in this policy shall view documents, correspondence, and/or notes via university email or university-sponsored shared drives. These materials may not be shared with individuals who are not directly involved in the appeal. Discussion of an appeal outside of formal committee communications (i.e., meetings or email correspondence) is not allowed. Any person who knowingly and intentionally makes an unauthorized disclosure of confidential information contained in an appeal is subject to corrective action.

## **Student Appeal Protocols & Financial Implications**

- *A student may not file a college level academic decision appeal until an appeal is filed within the academic program and/or department and those channels have been fully exhausted.*

- During the college-level appeal process and until the final decision is made, the student may attend didactic classes to avoid interruptions to academic progression in the event that the appeal is successful. During this stage of the appeal the student may attend clinical and practice laboratory sessions, provided the appeal is not for an academic dismissal based on violations related to student conduct and/or professional standards. The program will make this determination at the time of the academic decision and inform the student of their options (1) to remain enrolled and attend classes/clinical sessions or (2) to withdraw from classes to avoid additional financial implications during the appeal process. Continuing in coursework and/or clinicals during an appeal at the college level in no way implies that a favorable outcome will be reached and may have financial implications.
- The process of appealing program dismissal may overlap with the start of a new semester and therefore result in additional financial obligations for the student. The AAC will make every reasonable effort to resolve appeals as quickly as possible. However, any financial expenses incurred during the appeal process are the student's sole responsibility. If the appeal process is exhausted at the college level and a student decides to continue to appeal the decision at the university level, they should follow the university process for appeal of an academic decision. The student may consider a leave of absence for a semester, when practical and feasible in a given situation, to avoid incurring additional financial obligations during the college or university level appeal process.

## **Academic Decision Appeal Process**

### **Academic Decision Appeal Initiation Steps**

1. A student initiates the process by submitting a request to the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs (via email: [dchs.adsaa@health.slu.edu](mailto:dchs.adsaa@health.slu.edu)) for an overview of the process, copy of the policy, and instructions on completion of the DCHS Academic Decision Appeal Form (**Appendix A**).
2. The DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs provides an overview of the process and copy of the policy and DCHS Academic Decision Appeal Form to the student.
3. Upon request by the student, the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs, ADSAA or designee are available for consultation and to support the student during the appeal process. During the consultation, the scope of academic decision appeal is reviewed with the student (see section titled “Scope of Academic Decision Appeal Review”) and the student’s situation is compared with the scope of review and the student is advised whether their appeal is within the scope of the AAC committee. It is the student’s decision whether to file an appeal.
4. If the student decides to move forward with the appeal, the student details the appeal in writing by completing the DCHS Academic Decision Appeal Form (**Appendix A**) and submitting the form to the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs ([dchs.adsaa@health.slu.edu](mailto:dchs.adsaa@health.slu.edu)) along with any supporting documentation.

5. While the student is preparing their appeal, the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs contacts the AAC Chair, the DCHS Dean, and the Academic Department Chair of the pending student appeal.
6. Once the student appeal is submitted, the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs forwards the completed form and any supporting documentation to the Academic Department chair and AAC Chair and requests that the department complete the DCHS Academic Department Response to Student Academic Decision Appeal form (**Appendix B**) to document the program's response. The department responses are returned to the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs and AAC Chair.

### **Academic Decision Appeal Initial Review**

1. The DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs, ADSAA or designee's role is to support the student through the remainder of the process and may provide support to the committee but does not participate in the committee review, meetings, or decisions related to the student appeal.
2. The AAC Chair shares the student appeal and department response with the AAC. An initial AAC meeting is convened to determine if the appeal is within the scope of the AAC to review.
  - a. If the appeal is *not* within the review scope, the AAC chair will inform the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs, ADSAA or designee and the dean. The student will be notified by the Dean's Office regarding the reason their appeal did not fall within the scope of review, and the process ends.
  - b. If the appeal *is* within the AAC committee's scope, the AAC chair will inform the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs, ADSAA or designee and the dean. The DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs will contact the student, informing them that their appeal will be reviewed. An outline of the process and timeline will be provided to the student. The appeal will then be moved forward to a full committee review.

### **Academic Decision Appeal Full Committee Review**

1. The AAC will review all relevant documents. Additional information may be requested of the student and the academic department. The AAC Chair will be the contact person for this communication.
2. The AAC may request a hearing if additional information, perspective, or context is needed to render a recommendation. If the document review is sufficient, a hearing will not be requested. The procedures for this optional hearing are outlined in **Appendix C**.
3. After a review of all documents and the hearing (should the appeal require a hearing), the AAC Chair convenes a closed AAC meeting to deliberate and finalize a recommendation, which is forwarded to the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs, ADSAA or designee, and the dean, who may

consult with the AAC Chair and/or ADSAA to arrive at a final decision. The committee's recommendations are based on anonymously recorded majority vote and may include:

- a. Recommendation to uphold the original academic program/department decision.
- b. Recommendation to support the student appeal.
- c. Any additional information that should be considered.

**NOTE: The appeal procedures are not legal proceedings**

4. The AAC Chair authors a report summarizing the committee's findings and a recommendation. This report is submitted to the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs, ADSAA, and the Dean but is not shared with the student nor the Academic Department. The AAC Chair shares all materials submitted by the student and department to the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs, ADSAA, and the Dean along with the AAC recommendation.

**Final Outcome of the Academic Appeal**

1. The Dean communicates the final outcome of the academic appeal to the student via e-mail, copying the DCHS Office of Student and Academic Affairs, ADSAA or designee, the AAC Chair, and the Academic Department Chair.

**Student Appeal Process Timeline**

***Important Notes***

1. "Days" refers to business days when the University is in session. Weekends and official university holidays are not included.
2. **This recommended timeline is *not* guaranteed.** Changes may be needed depending on the appeal's complexity and timing in relation to university holidays and faculty contracts. Any timeline changes will be communicated to the student.

Procedural Step	Timeline
The student must initiate the process.	Within 10 days of receiving the academic decision from the program or department.
The student must submit the academic decision appeal form (Appendix A) and any supporting documentation.	Within 15 days of receiving the academic decision from the program or department.
The department submits its response (Appendix B) and any supporting documentation.	Within 5 days of receiving the submitted appeal and supporting documentation.

Procedural Step	Timeline
The student is notified whether the appeal is a) not within the scope of review or b) within the scope of review and will proceed to full committee review.	Within 15 days of submitting the academic decision appeal.
<b>If Full Committee Review is Warranted and Conducted</b>	
AAC completes full committee review and provides a written report and recommendation.	Within 30 days of the student submitting the academic decision appeal
The student is notified of the final outcome of the academic student appeal.	Within 45 days of the student submitting the academic decision appeal

**APPENDIX A**  
**DCHS Academic Decision Appeal Form**  
**[To be completed by the student]**

Click or tap here to enter **Student Name**

Click or tap here to enter **Student Email**

Click or tap here to enter **Student 9-digit Banner Number**

Click or tap here to enter **Academic Department**

What academic decision is the reason for your appeal? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Course Grade
- ☐ Program Dismissal
- ☐ Academic Warning or Probation
- ☐ Other (please describe) Click or tap here to enter text.

An academic decision appeal must provide documentation that program policies were not followed. What is the reason for your appeal of the academic decision? Select all that apply.

- ☐ The department did not follow their policies and procedures.
- ☐ I was not informed of the department policies and procedures related to an academic decision.
- ☐ I was not allowed to appeal a decision at the department level.
- ☐ There were other significant deviations from the policies or procedures set forth in the department/program policy that would have impacted the outcome of the academic decision.

Please explain below the specific program policies and/or procedures that were not followed.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please provide any additional information to support your appeal of the academic decision.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Do you wish to include any supporting documents with this academic decision appeal? If so, please list and describe the attached documents.

Click or tap here to enter text.



By typing your name in the box below, you are digitally signing this document.

Click or tap here to digitally sign.

Click or tap to enter a date.

This form should be completed by the student and returned via email to [dchs.adsaa@health.slu.edu](mailto:dchs.adsaa@health.slu.edu) within 15 days of receiving the academic decision from the program or department.

Click or tap here to digitally sign.

Click or tap to enter a date.

## Appendix B

### DCHS Academic Department Response to Student Academic Decision Appeal

Click or tap here to enter **Student Name**

Click or tap here to enter **Student 9-digit Banner Number**

Click or tap here to enter **Academic Department**

Click or tap here to enter **Name(s) of Person(s) Completing Form.**

What is the subject of the appeal? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Course Grade
- ☐ Program Dismissal
- ☐ Academic Warning or Probation
- ☐ Other (please describe) Click or tap here to enter text.

Has the student attempted to resolve the academic decision at the department level?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

Provide a summary of relevant events leading up to the student academic decision and appeal.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Include the specific department policies/procedures that were considered in the academic decision.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please specify how and when the student was notified of the policies/procedures related to the academic decision. Please attach any relevant departmental/program policies that should be included in the review of the student academic decision appeal.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please describe the program and department level appeal process. Please provide the outcome of the student appeal at the program/department level. Please attach any relevant documentation of the student appeal of the academic decision at the department level.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please respond to the specific grievances that the student has provided in the student appeal.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please use this space to provide any additional information relevant to support the academic decision.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please provide a summary of the attachments and/or supporting documentation that have been submitted with this Academic Department Response to Student Academic Decision Appeal

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please specify the information that has been provided to the student regarding their options to attend didactic classes to avoid interruptions to academic progression and continue in clinical and practice laboratory sessions, provided the appeal is not for an academic dismissal based on violations related to student conduct and/or professional standards. If the student will not be attending clinical and practice laboratory sessions, please describe the specific student conduct and/or professional standards violations in the program/department policy that support this decision.

Click or tap here to enter text.

By typing your name in the box below, you are digitally signing this document.

Click or tap here to digitally sign.

Click or tap to enter a date.

## **Appendix C**

### **Student Hearing Procedures**

1. If a hearing is needed, AAC members will solicit names of student representatives. Several students should be identified, so there is a pool of students to draw from once the hearing has been scheduled.
2. Administrative Support Staff works with the AAC Chair, the student, and/or Academic Department to schedule the hearing day, time, and location. All hearing participants are informed of the date and time of the hearing.
3. *The student portion of the hearing is held separately and before the Academic Department portion.*
4. The student can bring one support person to the hearing, such as a friend, mentor, or parent. This person may not provide legal counsel. The support person may be present but does not participate in the hearing proceedings.
5. Prior to the hearing, the student and Academic Department Chair are provided with copies of all evidence that the AAC reviewed, including the student appeal, and the Academic Department's written response, and any other documents or information that was gathered during the review process.
6. If the student fails to attend the hearing after being given reasonable notice of the date, time, and location, the hearing will continue without the student.
7. The student and the Academic Department representative meet with the hearing panel separately. The procedures during the hearing are as follows:
  - a. The AAC Chair calls the hearing to order, and each participant introduces themselves.
  - b. The AAC chair summarizes the appeal and asks the respondent (i.e., student or Academic Department representative) to verify the accuracy of the summary.
  - c. The respondent can provide additional information in support of or in disagreement with the appeal. The AAC members may ask questions.
  - d. At the end of the hearing, the respondent may make a closing statement. They are then dismissed from the hearing.
8. After the hearing, the AAC will discuss the case until each member is ready to vote. The recommendation is based on the majority vote.