



State University of New York
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

College-wide Governance

Wednesday, 3/27/2013 at 12:45

Baker 146

Agenda

1. Announcements (Spotlight on Research)
2. FAQ on the Accessory Credits (Bongarten)
3. Public Service and Outreach (Fierke)
4. Bylaws Changes (Donaghy)
5. COC Actions (Hassett)
6. IQAS Grievance Policy (Crovella)
7. Call for Nominations (Donaghy)

Appendix C: Grade Grievance Procedures

Basis for a Grade Grievance

Assignment of grades is at the discretion of the instructor. However, assignment of grades must not be arbitrary or prejudicial; all students must be treated similarly and in accordance with grading policies articulated in the course syllabus. Grade grievances, therefore, are restricted to claims of arbitrary or prejudicial grading practices.

Jurisdiction

The College Faculty has jurisdiction for the resolution of grade grievances, and through its bylaws has delegated that authority to the Faculty Instructional Quality and Academic Standards Committee (IQAS).

Time Limit for Initiating a Grievance

An academic grievance must be initiated by the end of the semester following the semester in which the act or circumstances causing the grievance occurred. This time limit may be extended by the Chair of IQAS, upon good cause.

Grade Grievance Process

Initiation of Grade Grievance. Before filing a Grade Grievance, the complainant must have met with the instructor to explain his/her complaint and to seek a resolution. Failing resolution through discourse with the instructor, the complainant may file a Grade Grievance with the Associate Provost for Instruction (hereafter referred to as the Associate Provost). The Grievance must be in the form of a written statement indicating the course and instructor, and making the case that the grade assignment was arbitrary or prejudicial. The Associate Provost will determine if the statement describes a possible case of arbitrary or prejudicial grading. If so, the Associate Provost will notify the instructor's department chair and the Chair of IQAS of the Grade Grievance and the process will proceed to mediation.

Mediation. The Associate Provost will arrange for the student and the instructor to meet with an impartial, professional mediator. The mediator will submit a report to the Associate Provost indicating the outcome of the mediation. If the mediation results in a mutually agreeable resolution, a written statement of the resolution, signed by the complainant and the instructor, will be part of the mediator's report; the Associate Provost then will notify the disputants, the instructor's department chair, and the Chair of IQAS that the Grievance is closed. If no mutually agreeable

resolution is achieved through mediation, the Grievance will proceed to a Grievance Hearing.

Grievance Hearing

Composition of the Hearing Committee. IQAS will create a Hearing sub-Committee (hereafter called the Hearing Committee) that shall consist of three elected members of the IQAS Committee and two officers from either the Undergraduate Student Association (in the case of undergraduate grievances) or the Graduate Student Association (in the case of graduate student grievances). The IQAS members will be selected at random. Hearing Committee members who cannot serve impartially should recuse themselves. Disputants concerned about the impartiality of any member, should bring their concern to the attention of the Associate Provost before the hearing. The Associate Provost, in collaboration with the Chair of Faculty Governance, is authorized to replace Hearing Committee members who, in his/her judgment, have potential conflicts of interest regarding the case.

Operating Procedures. A hearing will be conducted at which the complainant, the instructor, and the Hearing Committee should be present. The Student Conduct Coordinator will officiate.

Prior to the hearing, the complainant's written grievance, the instructor's written response (if one has been provided), and the mediator's report should be provided to the Hearing Committee. The complainant and/or the instructor may also provide additional supporting documentation to the Hearing Committee (through the Associate Provost) prior to the hearing.

To begin the hearing the complainant will state his/her full case. The instructor may then provide a rebuttal. The complainant and instructor will each be given one additional opportunity to address points made by the other. Hearing Committee members may ask clarifying questions of the complainant and the instructor during or after the disputants' testimony. When the testimony and questions have concluded, the disputants will be dismissed and the Hearing Committee will determine, by majority vote, the resolution to the dispute. The resolution will be in written form and provide definitive actions and the rationale for them. The resolution will be given to the Student Conduct Coordinator for transmittal to the Associate Provost.

Hearings shall be conducted in confidence; the Associate Provost will keep a record of all grievance proceedings and all documentation.

Resolutions. The Associate Provost will transmit the written findings and decisions of the Hearing Committee to the disputants with acknowledgment of receipt required. Copies will be also sent to the Chair of IQAS and the instructor's department chair. The Associate Provost will execute the Hearing Committee's decisions, informing the above-mentioned parties when it has been completed.

Appeals. All decisions of the IQAS hearing committee are final and may not be appealed unless there is substantial and documentable evidence of a procedural error denying either party of due process, or if new and extraordinary evidence contradicting the findings of the Hearing Committee can be provided. Appeals should be submitted to the Associate Provost for Instruction who will determine if the conditions for appeal have been met. If the request for appeal is accepted, the Hearing Committee shall be reconstituted at the direction of the Associate Provost and Executive Chair of Faculty Governance with the consultation of the Chair of IQAS.

Time Limits. The academic grievance shall be resolved during the semester in which the formal review occurs. The time limits defined for the grievance process can be extended a semester in the event that the Associate Provost or the Chair of the Instructional Quality and Academic Standards Committee believes that it is in the best interest of justice to do so.