Academic Petitions

All students of the College of Environmental Science and Forestry have the right to “Petition to the Faculty” to grant an exception to accepted College academic and curricular requirements, policies, or procedures. This policy is outlined as follows on Page 26 of the College Catalog:

***Exceptions to Curriculum and Academic Policy Requirements***

*Exceptions to academic policies stated in this document and curriculum requirements may be made by the Faculty Subcommittee on Academic Standards, which also may delegate this authority. Exceptions may not violate standards established by the State University of New York or the New York State Education Department.*

*Exceptions must be requested on a petition form and must have a recommendation from the student’s advisor and department chair or designee. In those cases where an action is requested involving a specific course, the petition must also have a recommendation from the course instructor.*

**Current Petition Process:**

Students may present a petition to the faculty using the “Petition to the Faculty” forms available at the Registrar’s Office in 111 Bray Hall. Petitioning students must clearly state their request for exception from a specific requirement, policy, or procedure and then provide adequate justification, including supporting evidence if appropriate (such as attaching a course description or providing official transcripts to the Registrar’s Office). If requests include multiple items, it may be advisable to prepare a separate petition form for each.

Decisions regarding petitions are then approved first by the home department of the student. All matters related to curriculum are within the specific prerogative of the departmental faculty, and the specific approval procedures are determined by individual departments. These typically take the following form and sequence:

1. Approval, if appropriate, of the course instructor. This is required for late course additions or drops, extensions of “I” grades, or as required by departments in the review of requests concerning course equivalency.
2. Approval and signature of the Academic Advisor or Major Professor
3. Approval of the Curriculum Coordinator and/or Curriculum Committee, with a signature from the Coordinator
4. Approval and signature from the Department Chair (may be delegated to the curriculum coordinator if desired)

Each of these preliminary approvals constitutes a recommendation for final action to be made by the Associate Provost for Instruction, this power having been delegated to this office by ESF Faculty Governance. Following Departmental review and approval, petitions are forwarded for final review to the Office of Instruction and Graduate Study in 227 Bray Hall. Final Approval may then be granted or denied by the Associate Provost for Instruction. Additional authority for review may also be retained by the Faculty Governance Committee on Instruction and its subcommittees, such as in the case of exceptions to General Education requirements, or requests for “late course drops.” The final level of review and action is primarily made to assure that departmental recommendations have been reached in a fair and impartial manner, and that requested exceptions are in fact within the prerogative of the Faculty and not in violation of SUNY or NYSED requirements, policies, or procedures.

Final decisions made by the Associate Provost are then forwarded to the Registrar for entry into the petitioning student’s official academic record, with a copy of the final approved or denied petition sent via USPS to the student.

**Proposed Revision to Petition process**

A variety of specialized actions currently, for lack of a better process, use the petition form and approval process. These include the following:

* Declaration of intent to purse an “academic minor”
* Change in graduate degree program
* Late additions of courses (following the drop/add period)