



Date: April 21, 2021
To: Members of Senate
From: Senate Committee on Appeals
Re: **2020/2021 Annual Report**

The terms of reference for the Senate Committee on Appeals require that the Chair provide an annual report to Senate at its May meeting. This report covers the 2020/2021 academic year.

Appeals Received

The Senate Committee on Appeals received 15 appeals in 2020/2021.

Non-Academic Misconduct Appeals:

The committee did not receive any non-academic misconduct appeals in 2020/2021.

Academic Appeals

The committee received 15 academic appeals in 2020/2021, Of these appeals, 6 have been resolved (decided, reached a mediated solution, or withdrawn), 1 was outside of the committee's jurisdiction, and 8 are ongoing at different stages of the process. Below is a brief description of each of these appeals:

1. The first case involved an appeal which had not yet exhausted all final forms of appeal open to the Appellant. As the Senate Committee on Appeals is an impartial final appeal body of last resort for students at the University of Victoria, a student who wishes to appeal must, prior to filing an appeal to the Committee, have exhausted any other reviews, appeals, or remedies provided by the University of Victoria's policies, undergraduate and graduate calendars, or by the Student's faculty. The student was redirected and subsequently dropped the appeal to the Senate Committee on Appeals.
2. The second case involved a second violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity involving plagiarism and unauthorized use of materials during an examination. The Appellant withdrew their appeal.
3. The third case involved a violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity for conduct regarding a plagiarized assignment. The Hearing Panel conducted the appeal on the basis of written materials. The Panel dismissed the appeal, but allowed the Appellant to write a previously missed final examination.
4. The fourth case involved a second violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity regarding plagiarism of a submitted assignment. The Appellant withdrew their appeal.

5. The fifth case involved a decision to assign an Aergotat grade notation to a course in response to a request for an academic concession. The Hearing Panel conducted the appeal on the basis of written materials and the case was dismissed.
6. The sixth case involved an appeal which turned solely on a question of academic judgment and thus fell outside the jurisdiction of the Senate Committee on Appeals.
7. The seventh case involved a second violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity for conduct regarding plagiarism on a submitted assignment. The parties reached a mediated agreement, and the matter did not proceed to a hearing.
8. The eighth case involves a second violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity regarding sharing information during an online quiz. The appeal is ongoing.
9. The ninth case involves a third violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity regarding sharing information during a homework assignment. The submission of appeal documents is not yet complete.
10. The tenth case involves a violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity regarding plagiarism during a homework assignment. The appeal submission is not yet complete.
11. The eleventh case involves a second violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity regarding the sharing of information during a final examination. The appeal is ongoing.
12. The twelfth case involves a second violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity regarding the sharing of information during a final examination. The appeal is ongoing.
13. The thirteen case involves a second violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity regarding plagiarism during a homework assignment. The appeal is ongoing.
14. The fourteenth case involves an appeal regarding a decision to overturn a grade change form. This appeal is ongoing.
15. The fifteenth case involves an appeal regarding the denial of a request for an academic concession. The appeal is ongoing.

Recommendations

A substantial number of appeal cases in 2020-21 related to the challenges arising from what is, for many, the new arena of online learning and teaching. It seems likely that the online administration of exams and student home environments during the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the increased number of appeals this year, although some of the online contexts for the academic integrity concerns raised in these appeals are not pandemic specific.

The committee understands that the Senate Committee on Academic Standards (SCAS) is currently conducting a review of the Policy on Academic Integrity. The Senate Committee on Appeals recommends that SCAS pay particular attention to online learning and evaluation in

the course of this review, so as to reduce the ambiguities that sometimes arise in academic appeals. Without intending to limit or direct this review, some potential points for consideration include including more examples of violations of academic integrity in online environments such as the use of homework helper websites/applications to assist in producing answers for exams or assignments. Similarly, SCAS could consider whether the Policy adequately addresses the online administration of exams and assignments, where students are working in home environments over longer periods and in courses with related online discussion forums. In these contexts, the boundaries of “sharing information” may be less obvious.

Below is a chart showing the number of appeals filed in recent years:

Year	Number of appeals
2020/2021	15
2019/2020	11
2018/2019	10
2017/2018	2
2016/2017	4
2015/2016	1
2014/2015	1
2013/2014	0

For the past three years, the workload of the Senate Committee on Appeals and those staff members within the University Secretary’s office responsible for supporting the work of the committee has consistently increased.

Like last year, we requested that the Senate Committee on Agenda and Governance support this increase through the participation of additional student Senators in hearing panels.

Conclusion

Thank-you to all members of the Senate Committee on Appeals. The work of this committee is very important to the just operation of the university and your contributions are greatly appreciated.

2020/2021 Senate Committee on Appeals

Kathryn Chan, Faculty of Law, (Chair until December 31, 2020)
Janna Promislow, Faculty of Law (Chair effective January 1, 2021)
Mauricio Garcia-Barrera (Vice-Chair), Faculty of Graduate Studies
Carolyn Butler-Palmer, Faculty of Fine Arts
Brittany Berge, Student Senator
Dale Ganley, Peter B. Gustavson School of Business
Benjamin Gijzen, Student Senator
Daniel Gudino Perez, GSS Student Representative
Emily Hiser, Student Senator
Mark Laidlaw, Faculty of Science
Jillian Roberts, Faculty of Education
CindyAnn Rose-Redwood, Faculty of Social Sciences
Stephen Ross, Faculty of Humanities
Poman So, Faculty of Engineering
Susan Strega, Faculty of Human and Social Development
Ada Saab (Secretary), Associate University Secretary