



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 64.07: Graduate Student Appeals

DATE: May 25, 2023

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to outline the disposition of cases involving graduate student appeals.

REVIEW: This Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) will be reviewed in October of even-numbered years by the Dean of the Graduate School with substantive revisions forwarded to the Vice Provost for Academic Innovation and Student Success and the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (PSVPAA).

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. This policy applies to specific grievances arising from matters affecting students' academic standing and performance, other than admission to the Graduate School (see [OP 64.01, Admission to the Graduate School](#)) and academic dishonesty (see the *Code of Student Conduct*). Such matters include, but are not limited to, disputes concerning comprehensive and qualifying examinations, theses and dissertations, academic probation and suspension, publications, and graduate assistantships. Appeals, other than probation and suspension, may be made only when alleged prejudice or arbitrary or capricious action is involved. Appeals of course grades are made through the dean of the college in which the course is offered and, therefore, are excluded from consideration in this OP.
2. The burden of proof of unfair influence or action rests with the student.
3. A student wishing to appeal a decision or action first should discuss the matter with the faculty member or members involved.
4. If not satisfied with the outcome of this effort, the student should contact the chairperson of the department concerned. This contact, like that with the faculty members, normally is informal, and the department chairperson may take whatever action is deemed advisable in attempting to resolve the issue. All parties involved should make every effort to resolve the issue without going beyond this level.
5. If still not satisfied following these meetings and discussions, the student may make a written formal appeal to the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School. The appeal must include supporting information that details specifically all aspects of the student's grievance. Supporting information must be received by the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School within 14 business days after notifying the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School of the appeal request.
6. The Dean of the Graduate School may first convene an informal committee of at least two associate deans to evaluate the information and seek further information from the academic department involved. The Dean may render a decision on the basis of this investigation and

evaluation or may choose to defer a decision until the case has been considered by a hearing committee (normally the Student Affairs Committee of the Graduate Council). Ordinarily, this committee will meet only in the fall and spring semesters, due to the difficulty of securing relevant participants in the summer months.

7. If an appeals committee is convened, it will examine the evidence and hold what hearings and meetings it deems necessary to make a recommendation in the case. It is not necessary for the parties to appear unless requested by the committee, but parties have the right to appear if they wish to do so. The Dean of the Graduate School may attend meetings of the appeals committee but will not be present during the committee's deliberation of its final recommendation. Members of the committee who have professional or personal relationships with either party in a dispute that would create a hindrance to objective judgment or a conflict of interest must withdraw themselves or be recused from the committee. The Dean will name a replacement. After appropriate deliberation, the committee will make its recommendation to the Graduate Dean.
8. Taking into account the recommendation of the appeals committee (if convened), the Dean of the Graduate School will make a decision on the appeal, which will be sent in writing to the student, the department involved, and the chairperson of the appeals committee. The decision of the Dean is final unless a further appeal (section 9) can be justified.
9. An appeal of the Dean's decision may be made only on the basis that due process was not followed. Appeals must be submitted in writing, with accompanying evidence and history, to the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (PSVPAA) either by the student or by the faculty member(s) involved.
10. If an appeal is made to the Office of the PSVPAA, the PSVPAA or designee will determine whether to hear the appeal. If the appeal is heard, the Office of the PSVPAA will render a decision on the basis of the evidence and history provided. The decision will be sent in writing to the student, the department involved, the chairperson of the appeals committee, and the Dean of the Graduate School. The decision of the Office of the PSVPAA will be considered the final disposition of the case, without any further appeal at Texas Tech University.