

## **Dominican College Grievance Policies:**

### Academic Grievances:

The following Academic Grievance Policies were designed by Dominican College to afford students an opportunity to formally grieve academic related complaints.

### Transfer Credits Appeals:

A student wishing to challenge course credits not transferred must file a written appeal with the academic program chair for reconsideration. Within ten days of receipt of the appeal, the program chair will notify the student of the results of the review. Any changes will be communicated to the Registrar's Office for official processing. A student dissatisfied with the results of the appeal at the program level may submit a written appeal and program notification to the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean for a final review. The Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean provides dated acknowledgement of receipt of the appeal to the student. Within ten days of receipt of the appeal, the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean will notify the student of the results of the review. Any changes will be communicated to the Registrar's Office for official processing.

### Grade Appeals:

Students who have reason to believe that an error has occurred with regard to the grade assigned are directed to discuss the issue with the faculty member who assigned the grade. The deadline for pursuing a grade appeal is four weeks after the official posting of the grade. The faculty member shall meet with the student within 2 weeks thereafter, and review the records and evidence together, to determine whether any error or omission has occurred. If the issue is not resolved between the student and the faculty member, the student may bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate Discipline Coordinator/Program Director in writing, with supporting evidence, and then to the Division Director. If a student's concern persists, an appeal may be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean, who may refer the matter to the Committee on Academic Standards or the Graduate Studies Council. Hearing by the Committee on Academic Standards—and for graduate students, the Graduate Studies Council—is the final level of appeal in all matters related to disputed grades or to alleged violations of academic integrity.

The Committee has the option of reviewing the written appeal only or of inviting the student making the appeal, the instructor who assigned the grade, and/or any other relevant concerned party to appear before them. After hearing the appeal, the appropriate committee will make a formal recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean regarding any actions. If the committee determines that the grade should be changed, it will provide the instructor with a written explanation of its reasons and will request that the instructor change the grade. The instructor will either make the recommended change or provide a written explanation to the committee for not doing so. Only then, upon the written recommendation of the appropriate

committee, will the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean have the authority to effect a change in grade over the objection of the instructor.

Evaluation of student performance in most college and university courses is the prerogative and responsibility of the course instructor. Students should be aware that, in questions relating to the quality of that performance, the professional judgment of the faculty member is commonly accepted as authoritative. An appeal is most likely to result in a change of grade for a course if it includes evidence that there was an error in computing the grade, that the grade was determined by standards improperly different from those applied to other students in the course, or that the methods of the grading were inconsistent with the policy stated in the course syllabus.

In ordinary circumstances, grade appeals should be resolved within one month of the beginning of the next semester. In cases involving graduating seniors, an expedited timeline may be established on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean, who may refer the matter directly to the Academic Standards Committee or the Graduate Studies Council as applicable. If a student grade appeal submitted by a graduating senior in her/his last semester is successful after the student has been graduated, the registrar is authorized to make any grade change to the student's final transcript upon notification from the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean.

#### Breaches of Academic Integrity:

A student has the right to appeal the decision for disciplinary action assigned by an instructor or the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean. All appeals must be made in writing by the deadline stated in the letter of notification and indicating the basis for the appeal.

Appeals are limited to:

1. Irregularity in the investigation;
2. The punishment, penalty, or discipline was excessive or inconsistent with the nature of the offense; or
3. New and pertinent evidence issue or facts that were unavailable at the time of the action.

If the student does not file the appeal within the specified deadline, the decision of the faculty member or the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean shall be final. The burden of proof shall be on the student challenging a determination and that burden must be satisfied by the preponderance of the information. Preponderance of the information means that a greater weight of the evidence is required in order to decide in favor of one side over the other, to determine whether a fact is true and/or to establish that an event occurred.

Sanction Imposed by Instructor: In the case where the decision is made by the instructor, the appeal shall be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean. The Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean may

affirm the faculty member's decision if it is determined that the appeal on its face is frivolous or without merit, which shall be communicated in writing to the student. If the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean determines that the appeal has merit, the sanction may be lifted or reduced. In the alternative, the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean may refer the matter to the Committee on Academic Standards or the Graduate Studies Council as applicable.

**Sanction Imposed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean:**  
Decisions of the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean may be appealed to the Committee on Academic Standards or the Graduate Studies Council as applicable. The student's appeal must be in writing and submitted to the chair of the Committee on Academic Standards or the Graduate Studies Council within ten business days of the official notification of the sanction imposed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean.

The student's notice of appeal should describe in detail any relevant evidence and line of argument. Appeals are limited to the criteria outlined above.

A hearing of the appeal will be held within fifteen business days of the notice of appeal. If the notice of appeal is received by the chair of the Committee on Academic Standards or the Graduate Studies Council with fewer than fifteen business days remaining in the semester, the appeal process will begin with the opening of the following semester. The process may, however, go forward during intersession or the summer if the student so requests, the instructor can be present, and Committee on Academic Standards or the Graduate Studies Council members are available.

Classroom Procedures and Other Academic Grievances:

A student shall contact the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean in writing, within 5 class days from the date of the grievance. The Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean (or a designee) shall meet with the student within 2 weeks from the receipt of the grievance to settle the problem. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the student can appeal by following the procedure for the Grade Appeals above.

Non-Academic Student Grievance Policy:

An action or decision is grievable only if it involves a misapplication or misinterpretation of Dominican College policy, regulation, or rule, or a violation of state or federal law. Grievances may not be used to challenge policies or procedures of general applicability.

Complaint to the New York State Education Department:

Students who believe that the College has not properly addressed the concerns pursuant to the above policy may send a letter or telephone the Post Secondary Complaint Registry to request a complaint form:

New York State Education Department  
Post Secondary Complaint Registry

One Park Avenue, 6th Floor  
New York, NY 10016