PROV-019

Student Academic Suspension Grievance Policy

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Status Final

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Policy Type Executive Vice President & Provost

Contact Office Executive Vice President and Provost (Office of the)

Oversight Executive
Executive Vice President and Provost

Applies To Academic Division.

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Reason for Policy

The University has established an academic suspension grievance process through which students can raise concerns about academic suspension decisions.

Definition of Terms

Academic Suspension Decision

Description

A decision made by an individual or committee acting in their official capacity at the University to academically suspend a student or deny a student's request to return to the University early from a previously imposed suspension.

School Designated Official(s)

Description

An individual or committee designated by the dean of a school to receive and adjudicate student academic suspension grievances. A school may have multiple Designated Officials.

Policy Statement

Any student who wishes to grieve an Academic Suspension Decision ("decision") affecting them may file an academic suspension grievance ("grievance") with the appropriate School Designated Official.

This process is intended to avoid potential harm to the grievant and not to impose punitive sanctions on University employees or other students. However, in some cases, a proposed corrective action may include a recommendation for disciplinary action to be taken toward a University employee or student. In such cases, the recommendation will be addressed under the appropriate University procedure.

Before initiating the grievance process, students should consult their school's section of the Undergraduate/Graduate Record (Record) to identify the School Designated Official to whom the grievance should be submitted. Schools are responsible for clearly posting in the Record the procedures for filing an academic suspension grievance, including listing the School Designated Official(s).

The student who is affected by the decision being contested must file the grievance in writing to the appropriate School Designated Official; other individuals may not file such grievances on the student's behalf.

The grievance must specify:

1. The decision being contested;
2. The basis for the grievance, such as the University or school academic policy or procedure that the student believes to have been violated;
3. The efforts the student has made to resolve the concern informally; and
4. The requested resolution.

It is the responsibility of the student filing the grievance to ensure that the grievance includes all necessary supporting documentation at the time of submission.

After receiving the written grievance, the School Designated Official will adjudicate the case. If the School Designated Official is party to the case or is otherwise unable to serve, the grievance should be filed with the school's associate dean. In circumstances where an associate dean is also party to the case or is otherwise unable to serve, a school dean will designate an alternative School Designated Official.

The School Designated Official (or associate dean) will investigate the complaint. Investigation will include, but is not limited to, reviewing submitted documentation and meeting separately with the student and the individual or committee who made the decision at issue. Within 30 calendar days after initially receiving the grievance in writing, the School Designated Official (or associate dean) adjudicating the case will communicate in writing their decision to both the student and the individual or committee who made the decision at issue.

Within five calendar days after receiving the decision, the student may appeal in writing to the school dean (or the dean's designee), as specified in the school's section of the Record. Dissatisfaction with the outcome of the initial adjudication of the grievance will not be grounds for appeal.

Within 30 calendar days after receiving the appeal in writing, the dean (or the dean's designee) will consider the evidence and communicate in writing their decision to the student, the individual or committee who made the decision at issue, and the School Designated Official (or associate dean) involved in the initial adjudication of the grievance case. The decision of the dean (or the dean's designee) will be final.

To ensure the University's compliance with the accreditation requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), schools will provide the following information to the University's SACSCOC Liaison within 30 calendar days following the conclusion of any grievance process:

- Date on which the initial grievance was filed;
- Individual who filed the grievance;
- Individual or committee who made the decision at issue;
- General nature of the grievance, including the specific policy or procedure that was alleged to be violated (where appropriate);
- Outcome of the grievance, including whether the initial adjudication was appealed; and
- Date of resolution.

The information submitted to the University's SACSCOC Liaison will be retained in a secure and confidential location for two years.

On a regular basis, the Office of Institutional Research and Analytics (IRA) will provide a summary report of academic suspension grievances to the vice provost for academic affairs (or designee), disaggregated by race, sex, and first-generation student status.

Procedures

Students wishing to file a grievance should first consult their school's section of the Undergraduate/Graduate Record for guidance as to the appropriate point of contact for the grievance submission. Before filing a grievance with the appropriate School Designated Official, the student should attempt to resolve their concerns directly with the individual or committee responsible for the academic suspension decision at issue. These attempts should be sincere and substantial.

Students who have exhausted the institutional academic suspension grievance procedures provided in this policy may follow the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) process for student complaints in accordance with federal and state regulations. The SCHEV website provides a Student Complaint Form that may be completed and submitted electronically.

Related Information

Academic suspension decisions do not include decisions regarding admission to the University or to a particular major or program of study, denials of applications to transfer from one school to another within the University, Honor or Judiciary Committee decisions , grading decisions, determination of grading criteria or course requirements, results from graduate qualifying examinations or thesis/dissertation/capstone defenses, decisions to place a student on academic warning, decisions to suspend or terminate a graduate assistantship, or allegations of professional misconduct unrelated to a student's academic standing or progress towards their degree.

Information regarding appealing a course grade can be found listed as "Grade Changes" in the University's Undergraduate and Graduate Records, under University Regulations: Academic, Grading System. See also each school's section of the Record for school-specific policies related to grade appeals, exceptions to school rules, and academic suspension.

Complaints of discrimination or harassment, that is any complaint that the student has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, veteran status, military status, or family medical or genetic information by the University, are not appropriate for review under the academic suspension grievance process described in this policy and are instead handled under policy HRM-009: Addressing Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation and the related complaint procedures maintained by the Office for Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights (EOCR).

Reports of sexual assault, sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, stalking, or sexual or gender-based harassment are not appropriate for review under the academic suspension grievance procedure described in this policy and are handled in accordance with policy HRM-041: Addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence and Reporting Disclosures and its appendices.

Complaints related to the suspension or termination of a graduate assistantship should be grieved under the provisions of policy PROV-001: Graduate Assistantships.

Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights Complaint Procedures

SCHEV Student Complaint Information

UVA SACSCOC Liaison

Major Category Executive Vice President & Provost Policies

Next Scheduled Review Saturday, September 5, 2026

Revision History
Revised 9/5/23; Updated 12/13/19; 8/19/15.

Approved By Executive Vice President and Provost

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