

**Official Memorandum of Action – MOA-15/01  
Revised Graduate Program Dismissal Appeals Policy**

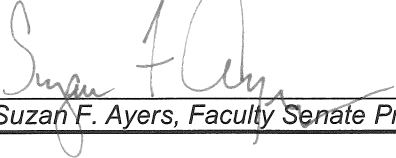
Name of Council/Committee  
Faculty Senate Executive Board

Date of Meeting  
27 January 2017

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Implementation Date  
Upon Administrative Approval**

The Faculty Senate Executive Board recommends revision of the Program Dismissal Appeals Policy in the Graduate Catalog.

  
Suzan F. Ayers, Faculty Senate President

Date 27 January 2017

Approve  
Comments:

Disapprove

Return to council/committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Suzan F. Ayers, Faculty Senate President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approve  
Comments:

Disapprove

Other action

\_\_\_\_\_  
Timothy J. Greene, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approve  
Comments:

Disapprove

Other action

\_\_\_\_\_  
John M. Dunn, WMU President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Official Memorandum of Action – MOA-15/01 Revised Graduate Program Dismissal Appeals Policy

### Rationale

#### *Program Dismissal Appeals Policy*

The suggested changes were made to fill specific gaps in the program dismissal policy for graduate students:

- The changes define specific timelines and process steps for students to appeal a program dismissal.
- The changes close a loophole where program dismissal could be appealed, but the dismissal was based on student grades that were as a result of academic integrity sanctions.

#### *Expedited Readmission*

In certain cases, particularly where students are dismissed administratively (i.e. automatic dismissal due to performance below University GPA standards, etc.), rapid readmission may be desired to keep a student in sync with program timelines, or for similar reasons. The changes in policy that address this case were made to clarify the basis, timelines, and process for expedited Program Dismissal appeal. The name was also changed from “Immediate” to “Expedited” Readmission.

### CURRENT POLICY WITH REVISIONS IN BOLD AND DELETIONS WITH STRIKETHROUGH

#### Graduate Catalog

##### Program Dismissal Appeals

This section applies when a student wants to appeal a decision to dismiss the student from an academic program for reasons other than charges of violations of academic integrity policies. Appeal panels are assembled ~~from the faculty~~ under the authority of and by the designate of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Throughout this process, the Office of the Ombudsman is available to students and instructors for assistance on procedures and clarification of the rights of all parties.

The accepted bases of a program dismissal appeal are:

- A. The program dismissal decision was made in a manner inconsistent with University policy or the program policy.
- B. The program dismissal procedures were not followed.
- C. Evaluation/performance standards were arbitrarily or unequally applied.

A program dismissal appeal cannot be made in response to an academic integrity or conduct dismissal from the University. **If program dismissal results, in whole or in part from an academic integrity violation, including but not limited to grade sanctions imposed as a result of academic integrity violation whether in the current course or a previous course, then the program dismissal may not be appealed.** ~~from grade sanctions applied as a result of academic integrity violation, the dismissal may not be appealed.~~ The student’s status, as dismissed from the program, will remain unaltered until a successful appeal is completed.

**Note:** A program dismissal appeal based on charges of discrimination or sexual harassment should be taken to the Office of Institutional Equity or other office, pursuant to other University policies and procedures.

**NOTE:** A program dismissal appeal based on genuine hardship should be addressed according to the University hardship policies.

~~Appeal to committee: The student may appeal to a Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC). This appeal must be initiated within twenty business days of the notification of program dismissal. The student will initiate an appeal through the Office of the Ombudsman. When the appeal is received, the Provost or designate will schedule a meeting of GAPDAC using procedures determined by the Professional Concerns Committee of the Faculty Senate. The GAPDAC will consist of three members drawn from a panel of faculty established for this purpose. In a program dismissal, the student appellant should attend the meeting of the appeal panel and must provide a written statement describing the grounds for appeal. A University representative from the program must attend the meeting and must provide a written statement describing the grounds for and circumstances of dismissal.~~

**Note:** A program dismissal appeal based on genuine hardship should be addressed according to the University hardship policies.

When appealing a program dismissal, a student must take the following steps:

1. Submit a letter requesting an appeal to the academic unit chair/director. This letter must be received by the academic unit chair/director within twenty business days of notice of dismissal from the program. The letter must identify the basis of the appeal and must state in detail why the student believes that dismissal should be reversed **and schedule a conference with the department chair/director.**
2. Following a conference with the student, the chair/director must respond in writing to the student with copies to the unit's dean, the graduate dean, and the Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC) within twenty business days. In this letter, the chair/director should confirm the meeting with the student, recap their discussion, and state whether the student has an appeal which meets the established criteria above. If the situation appears to meet the criteria for appeal, the chair/director may recommend readmission to the graduate dean.
3. Should the academic unit fail to provide a timely response or sustain the dismissal, the student may appeal directly to the graduate dean. The graduate dean will readmit the student or **sustain uphold** dismissal, based on the academic unit's recommendation or the student's direct appeal, within ten business days.
4. Should the graduate dean **sustain uphold** the dismissal, the student may appeal to GAPDAC. This appeal must be initiated within ten business days of the graduate dean's written decision. The student will initiate an appeal through the Office of the Ombudsman. When the appeal is received, the Provost or designate will schedule a meeting of GAPDAC using procedures determined by the Professional Concerns Committee of the Faculty Senate. The GAPDAC will consist of three members drawn from a panel of faculty established for this purpose. In a program dismissal, the student appellant should attend the meeting of the appeal panel and must provide a written statement describing the grounds for appeal. A University representative from the program must attend the meeting and must provide a written statement describing the grounds for and circumstances of dismissal.

A GAPDAC may reverse or **sustain uphold** a program dismissal by majority vote. The decision of the hearing panel is final and not subject to appeal.

### **Selection, Training, And Organization of Grade and Program Dismissal Appeal Committee (GAPDAC)**

A Grade and Program Dismissal Appeal Committee (GAPDAC) will be drawn from a pool of faculty who are trained under procedures determined by the Professional Concerns Committee (PCC) of the Faculty Senate. For each appeal that requires review, a GAPDAC panel will be selected to hear the appeal and to decide the matter.

Each academic college shall provide a cohort of tenured or tenure-track faculty members to serve on the GAPDAC pool in proportion to its respective student credit hour production. Faculty members will serve three-year terms (with staggered terms for the first GAPDAC pools, to ensure continuity of experience and training). It will be necessary to include in the pool those who can serve during summer sessions.

Each GAPDAC shall be composed of three faculty members, at least one of whom is from the college where the course or program in question resides. Each GAPDAC will elect a faculty member to chair the

committee, and each GAPDAC must have all three members present to have a quorum. Procedures for selection of a GAPDAC will be constructed and administered by the PCC.

### **Faculty Oversight of Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committees**

The PCC shall function as an oversight committee for reviewing and monitoring all University policies and procedures dealing with grade and program dismissal appeal issues. A report of all GAPDAC activities shall be made to the Faculty Senate Executive Board each year by the PCC, and recommendations for changes in policies and procedures regarding grade and program dismissal appeal issues may be part of that annual report. Such recommendations may result in modifications to these policies and procedures.

### **Immediate Re-admission**

~~A dismissed student has the option to petition the department/unit (or graduate dean if a non-degree student) for immediate re-admission. The department/unit/graduate dean then may elect to not re-admit the student at all, to re-admit the student immediately, or to re-admit the student for a later enrollment period. The department/unit/graduate dean may also elect to re-admit the student on either Probation status or Extended Probation status (Probation status will allow the student up to two enrollments to achieve Good Standing, while Extended Probation status will allow one enrollment). Should the department/unit/graduate dean elect to re-admit the student immediately a request should be made to the Office of the Registrar. If the student is to be re-admitted for a later enrollment period, the change should be made on a date which precludes registration in an earlier enrollment period.~~

### **Expedited Re-admission**

If a student is dismissed for reasons other than active decision by an academic unit or the Office of Student Conduct, the student has the option to petition the academic unit (or graduate dean if a non-degree student) for expedited re-admission within ten business days of the dismissal notice. The chair/director of the academic unit shall, within ten business days, recommend to the graduate dean to re-admit the student immediately, to re-admit the student for a later enrollment period, or to sustain dismissal. For expedited re-admission recommendations, the academic unit may also recommend either Probation status or Extended Probation status to the graduate dean. (Probation status will allow the student up to two enrollments to achieve Good Standing, while Extended Probation status will allow one enrollment). If the academic unit fails to make a timely recommendation, degree students may then petition the graduate dean directly. Decisions on expedited re-admission will be made by the graduate dean or designee within ten business days. Students denied expedited re-admission may still appeal their dismissal through the standard dismissal appeal process.

Should the graduate dean elect to re-admit the student on this expedited basis, a request should be made to the Office of the Registrar. If the student is to be re-admitted for a later enrollment period, the change should be made effective on a date which precludes registration in an earlier enrollment period.