

Educational Psychology Academic Appeals/Grievance Process

This appeal process is to be used by graduate students in Educational Psychology (EPS) in the case of an academic matter related to policies and procedures of the EPS department other than a grade appeal. A student may bring an appeal/grievance in cases of admission decisions, issues of professional conduct evaluation, program of studies issues, and other department related matters.

For other disagreements, complaints, misunderstandings and grievances at Northern Arizona University, please refer to the Student Grievance Policy in the Student Handbook: <http://www4.nau.edu/stulife/handbookgrievance.htm>. It is also the official policy of Northern Arizona University to prohibit discrimination, to inform individuals of their right to be free from such behaviors, and to promote the safety of all individuals at university sites and activities. For more information, please read the Safe Working and Learning Environment policy at <http://www4.nau.edu/diversity/swale.htm>.

Students who believe they have grounds for an appeal or a grievance related to policies and procedures of the EPS department other than a grade appeal must first utilize the steps outlined below. Appeals/grievances will only be considered in the Fall or Spring semester. A grievance/appeal through the formal process must be initiated within the academic semester when the concern was raised.

The following procedures outline the steps of the academic appeals process. It is expected that all of the parties involved in these steps make a good faith effort to resolve the issues.

Procedure:

1. The student who has a specific problem or grievance should first discuss the problem or grievance with the faculty member/faculty advisor * where the problem originated.
 - a. Once the student has identified the issue (s) giving rise to the grievance/appeal, new issues may not be introduced at a later stage unless the student can demonstrate that:
 - i. He/she could not reasonably have known about these issues;
 - ii. The new issues have direct and pertinent bearing on the grievance/appeal, highlighting aspects that would otherwise be unclear.
 - b. The faculty member/faculty advisor must be prepared to defend the decision or action on the basis of departmental policy, professional standards, or sound professional judgment.

*Please note that some decisions that a student wishes to appeal may occur at the program committee level and as such the appeal process will begin with Step 2 in these cases.

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2. If a satisfactory resolution with the faculty member/advisor is not achieved, the student may appeal to the EPS Department Chair, who will attempt to reconcile the differences between the student and the faculty member/advisor within two weeks of the issue being raised. The EPS Department Chair shall send a letter to the student and the instructor documenting that the meeting occurred and confirming the decision that was made.

*If this appeal is related to a committee decision, the student will only meet with the EPS department chair. All other procedures described in the step will remain the same.

3. If the student believes that the issue was not resolved at level described in Step 2, the student shall submit a written request to the program committee directly related to their discipline (i.e., School Psychology, Counseling, or Learning and Instruction). The written request must detail;
 - a. Identification of the issue involved;
 - b. A description of the appeal or grievance; and
 - c. A description of the action(s) taken by the student, faculty member, and the EPS department chair.
- 3a. The faculty member/advisor/program committee will be provided a copy of the student's written request and will have the opportunity to provide a written statement to the program committee in response. If the instructor (where applicable) makes no written response within fourteen (14) days the process will proceed.
- 3b. The program committee will render a decision in writing no later than 30 days during the academic year after receiving the appeal. This decision will include a justification for and reasons for the decision. Copies of the written decision shall be provided to the student and others who have been involved in the appeal process.
4. If the decision rendered by the program committee does not resolve the complaint, and if the student requests in writing, then the dean (or dean's designee) will convene an ad hoc committee composed of the persons listed below. The faculty member/program committee representative and the student will be given full opportunity to present their positions to this committee. The ad hoc committee shall consist of:
 - a. Dean (or dean's designee) who serves as the nonvoting chair of the committee;
 - b. One faculty member from the program involved;
 - c. One faculty member from the College of Education outside the Educational Psychology department;
 - d. A student representative from the College of Education.

A summary of the hearing shall be kept in the office of the dean/dean's designee. A letter shall be sent to the student and involved parties indicating the decision of the committee. The decision shall be final and end any further College of Education involvement.