

Grading and Academic Integrity Appeals, Cowles Library, Drake University Appeals Procedure for Grades, Grading Practices, and disputes over Academic Integrity in courses with the LIBR designation

As reviewed and approved by the Cowles Library Faculty Council, March 2014

Scope: This document is an appendix to: *Curricular Policies and Procedures: Overview and Guiding Principles for Classroom Activities*. It is designed to provide specific procedures for instances of appeals of grades or academic integrity disputes.

Section I: Grade Appeals

A student who wishes to challenge the grading practices of an instructor from Cowles Library may appeal for a change of grade, using the following procedures. These guidelines only apply to courses with the LIBR designation.

A. Timetable:

First, the student must meet with the instructor involved in an attempt to resolve the problem. The student must initiate the appeals procedure with the instructor on or before the third Wednesday of the semester following the issuance of the grade in question (excluding J-terms or summer terms). For disputes regarding grades received from J-Term, the student must initiate the appeals procedure with the instructor on or before the third Wednesday of the Spring semester following the issuance of the grade in question.

B. First Appeal:

If, after discussing the grade with the instructor, the matter remains unresolved, the student must request a meeting at which the Chair of the Cowles Library Curriculum Committee, the instructor, and the student are present. The student must make this request to the Chair of the Cowles Library Curriculum Committee by the fifth Wednesday of the semester following issuance of the grade in question (excluding summer terms). The student shall be given the opportunity to explain his/her position and present relevant documentation to the Chair of the Cowles Library Curriculum Committee.

The Chair of the Cowles Library Curriculum Committee shall prepare a written summary of the issues, his or her findings of fact, and a proposed resolution to be presented to the student and the instructor.

In cases in which the Chair of the Cowles Library Curriculum Committee is the instructor, the Dean of Cowles Library will appoint a library faculty member with classroom teaching experience to serve in his or her place.

C. Second Appeal:

If the proposed resolution of the Chair or the substitute appointed by the Dean of Cowles Library is unsatisfactory to the student, he or she may appeal the disputed grade in writing to the Dean, who will refer the appeal to the Cowles Library Academic Integrity Policy Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee.") (Note: The composition of the Committee is detailed in the Curricular Policies and Procedures document (link above)). All second appeals must be delivered to the Dean within ten (10) working days of presentation of the proposed

resolution to the student and instructor. Absent a timely appeal by the student, the proposed resolution of the Chair or Dean becomes final.

a. Procedures of The Committee

Upon receipt of the appeal, the Committee shall invite the instructor to submit a written response to the appeal.

The Committee may meet, alone or with some or all of the parties involved, (1) to familiarize itself with the relevant facts and review the instructor's written grading policy as stated in the syllabus and other relevant documents and (2) to decide if a formal hearing is necessary. Note: A formal hearing is not necessary unless there is at least one material disputed fact issue, the outcome of which depends upon the credibility of a witness.

If the Committee determines that a hearing is unnecessary, the Committee shall determine, by a preponderance of the evidence, whether the grading practice and/or grade under review is either (1) arbitrary and capricious or (2) unsupported by the relevant facts and academic standards. If either question is answered in the affirmative, the Committee shall recommend the appropriate change in grading practice and/or a particular grade. If not, the Committee shall recommend that the grading practice and/or grade remain unchanged. The Committee, having considered all appropriate information, shall submit to the Dean, in writing, its findings of fact and recommendations within three (3) working days of its decision.

b. Hearing Procedures.

If the Committee determines that a hearing is necessary, the Committee shall notify the student and the instructor in writing at least ten (10) working days prior to the hearing date. The notification shall include a summary of the facts, copies of any documents which may be relied upon by the Committee, a description of the hearing procedures, and the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Committee's charge is to determine, by a preponderance of the evidence, whether the grading practice and/or grade under review is either (1) arbitrary and capricious or (2) unsupported by the relevant facts and academic standards. If either question is answered in the affirmative, the Committee shall recommend the appropriate change in grading practices and/or a particular grade. If not, the Committee shall recommend that the grading practice and/or grade remain unchanged. The Committee, having considered all appropriate information shall submit to the Dean, in writing, its findings of fact and recommendations within three (3) working days of its decision.

c. Final Decision.

The Dean of Cowles Library shall review the Committee's findings and recommendations and makes a final and un-appealable decision with regard to all matters pertaining to the appeal within ten working days of receiving the Committee's recommendations. The Dean shall provide a concise written decision to the members of the Committee, the student, and the instructor within three (3) working days of the Dean's decision.

Section II: Academic Integrity Appeals

Suspected Academic Dishonesty, Cowles Library

“Academic dishonesty is an encompassing term involving any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done or to deliberately damage or destroy the work of others. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting another’s ideas, phrases, discourse or works as one’s own. Cheating is defined as the act, or attempted act, of giving or obtaining aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any academic requirements, including examinations.”

The above is Drake University's definition of academic integrity; for more, see:

<http://www.drake.edu/studentrecords/academicpolicies/academicintegritypolicy/>

When a student is found committing an act of academic dishonesty in an LIBR course the instructor will discuss the matter with the student, face to face, within two weeks of the suspected incident. If it is determined by the instructor that the student has committed a significant violation of academic integrity, it is the prerogative of the instructor to assign a penalty. Possible penalties include a reprimand, and/or a grade reduction (including the possibility of a failing grade). The penalty for violating academic integrity will vary from incident to incident depending upon the scope and magnitude of the offense and the circumstances in which it occurred; and upon evidence suggesting the existence or absence of a pattern of violations in the academic performance of the student committing the offense. Instructors in this situation are encouraged to discuss the case (confidentially) with another instructor before making a decision.

If a penalty for the violation of academic integrity is imposed by the instructor, the incident must be reported, in writing, within two business days to the Dean of Cowles Library; the report shall also be shared with the penalized student. The report must, at a minimum, state the nature of the misconduct and the penalty assigned. The Dean’s copy will be kept in a private file devoted exclusively to reports of this kind. The Dean will report the incident for information purposes to the Dean of the college/school in which the student is enrolled.

In the case of a severe offense, the Dean may recommend further disciplinary action to the student’s college/school; in such instances, the Provost shall also be made aware of the recommendation.

If the student appeals the instructor’s determination of a violation of academic integrity and/or the penalty imposed by the instructor, the procedure provided in section I. of this document (above) will be followed beginning with Step B. If after appeal, it is determined that there is insufficient evidence of a violation of academic integrity, the instructor is bound by that finding and may only evaluate the assignment as to its content or other time-honored bases of academic evaluation.