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Online Student Appeal Procedures

Dakota Wesleyan University online students can expect fair treatment during their academic program, from the admissions process through to graduation. The admissions counselors, the instructors, the program directors, the support offices, and the registrar staff all provide student support. It is recommended that students seeking more information about any aspect of their online program should first contact their program director.

DWU online students have the right to appeal a course grade, a program suspension, and a second or subsequent academic integrity violation if they feel the decision was not made fairly.

Grade Appeal

DWU online students have the right to appeal a grade if they feel they have been graded unfairly. Initially, students should direct their appeals to their course instructor. Students who are not satisfied by the instructor's response to their appeal are free to submit an appeal to the provost no later than four calendar weeks following the posting of the grade in question. The appeal should include a written rationale for why the student believes his or her grade to be unfair. Requests for appeal are considered by the appeals board, which consists of the provost, the director of student life, the college dean and the department chair associated with the course in which the grade is being appealed. The student will be notified, in writing, of the decision of the appeals board. The decision of the appeals board is final.

Program Suspension Appeal

DWU online students have the right to appeal a suspension. All appeals must be submitted in writing to the provost and must include the following:

- A statement explaining why the student has not succeeded in achieving good academic standing.
- A plan detailing how the student will improve his or her academic performance.
- A written statement supporting the student's appeal from a DWU faculty or staff member.

Violations of Academic Integrity

Violations of this academic integrity policy will, at the discretion of the faculty member, result in one of the following:

- A reprimand (written or verbal) for unintentional violations; or
- A zero (or other significant grade reduction) for the assignment (paper, exam or project) for intentional or flagrant violations; or
- A grade reduction or failing grade in the course for intentional or flagrant violations.

Unintentional infractions may be reported to the provost at the discretion of the faculty member. All infractions deemed by a faculty member to be intentional must be communicated to the student and reported to the provost, using the appropriate form.

The provost shall keep a record of all reported infractions and accompanying sanctions in their office. The provost may use this information, at their discretion, to impose more severe penalties for students who violate the policy more than once (but who may do so in different classes and/or with different instructors). A second violation of the university's academic integrity policy shall, generally, result in failure for the course in question. A third violation shall, generally, result in expulsion from the university. The provost may modify these penalties at their discretion.

Not all academic integrity decisions are subject to appeal. First-time violations are not subject to appeal. Only second or third violations are subject to appeal.

A student wishing to appeal either a second or third violation of the university's academic integrity policy must submit his or her written appeal within five (5) business days of receiving their written communication from the provost. The appeal should be submitted to the office of the provost. Appeals will be reviewed by an academic integrity committee consisting of the two college deans overseeing the colleges in which the most recent academic integrity violation *did not occur* and the director of student life. The decision of the appeals committee shall be final.

Other Student Concerns

DWU online students who believe they received unfair treatment, not related to a course grade or program dismissal, and who wish to file a formal complaint may do so by submitting a written statement of their reason for concern to the provost no later than two weeks following the occurrence. The provost will review the complaint and address the concern with the corresponding instructor, program director, support department, or the appeals board, if necessary. The provost will report any action or decision to the student.

SARA Complaint Procedures for Distance Education Students

Pursuant to the United States Department of Education Program Integrity Rule, DWU is required to provide all prospective and current distance education students with the contact information of the state agency or agencies that handle complaints about postsecondary institutions offering distance learning or correspondence education within that state. For students residing in a SARA state, the complaint must be brought to the institution's home state SARA portal entity.

Please note that complaints involving student grades or academic integrity violations are governed entirely by institutional policy. Also note that complainants must first go through the institution's appeal process before the complaint is submitted to the SARA portal entity.

DWU online students residing in SARA states may submit complaints to the SD-SARA portal entity directed by the South Dakota Board of Regents: <https://www.sdbor.edu/administrative-offices/academics/SD-SARA/Pages/default.aspx>

SD-SARA Complaint form: <https://www.sdbor.edu/administrative-offices/academics/SD-SARA/documents/ComplaintForm-SD-SARA.pdf>

DWU online students residing in California may submit complaints to the California Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education: <https://www.bppe.ca.gov/enforcement/complaint.shtml>