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| <b>SUBJECT:</b>          | <b>Academic Concerns Resolutions Policy</b>  |
| <b>REVIEWED/REVISED:</b> | 7/2013; 9/2015; 4/2019; 8/2020   |
| <b>PURPOSE:</b>          | To provide an impartial review of academic situations and issues for ensuring the rights of all students are recognized and protected. |
| <b>POLICY OWNER:</b>     | Vice President of Academic Affairs   |

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The Academic Concerns Resolution Policy is to be used for instances in which a student has an academic concern regarding:

- **The grade received in a course;**
- **A decision that impacts one's academic progression; or**
- **Program dismissal.**

It is the student's responsibility to justify and provide documentation why he/she disagrees with a grade, decision or dismissal from a course or program. No adverse action will be taken against a student who chooses to utilize this process. Non-academic concerns are handled through the College Code of Conduct policy. Sexual harassment/misconduct concerns are handled through the College's Title IX-Sexual Misconduct Policy.

The resolution process for an academic concern must be initiated no later than two (2) weeks from the occurrence of the concern. A student is encouraged to talk with the Dean of Students to allow him/her to offer an assessment of the concern and to clarify the steps of the resolution process.

Nebraska Methodist College may be required to share with institutional or programmatic accreditation agencies information about written concerns received from students. However, the information shared relates to the nature of the concerns and does not include the identity of the student(s) who submitted the concern. Therefore, the identities of students who submit written concerns shall remain anonymous.

#### **STEP 1: Informal Resolution.**

It is expected students initiate the process of resolving the concern by communicating with the involved faculty member. Student shall communicate the concern with the respective faculty member to resolve the concern before proceeding to Step 2. If academic concern is not resolved to the reasonable satisfaction of the student under informal resolution measures, the student may file a formal academic concern through the [Student Academic Concerns reporting form](#). The student must acknowledge on the reporting form that they have attempted to resolve their concern by meeting with their faculty member or program director.

**STEP 2: Formal Academic Concern and Resolution.**

Students have five (5) business days after meeting with the faculty member to file a formal academic concern via the [Student Academic Concerns reporting form](#), which is forwarded to the Academic Dean.

The Academic Dean will arrange a meeting with those involved to mediate a resolution within five (5) business days of receiving the student's concern. If the academic concern is not resolved to the reasonable satisfaction of the student, the student may appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA).

**STEP 3: Appeals Process.**

To initiate an appeal, the student, within five (5) business days of being notified of the Step 2 decision, shall provide a written notification letter to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) specifying:

- A statement of facts as the student perceives them citing specific instances where policies and procedures were violated or were unfairly applied;
- A summary of the outcome from Steps 1 and 2;
- New evidence the student wishes to present; and
- The best method to communicate with the student (phone, e-mail, etc.).

The VPAA will evaluate the student's notification letter for new information and evidence that the decision was capricious, arbitrary or unfair. If VPAA deems the student's appeal does not meet these criteria, the appeals process is terminated.

If the VPAA deems the student's appeal is valid, the VPAA will convene the Appeals Committee within five (5) business days of receipt of the student's notification letter. The Appeals Committee will include the following individuals:

- Two (2) Academic Deans;
- Two (2) faculty members, selected by the Faculty Senate President from a pool of faculty volunteers who have had minimal academic interaction with the student, and who have been at the NMC at least one year; and
- One (1) Student Representative, chosen by the VPAA from students holding a leadership role at the college (Ambassador, Student Government, MAHSA, etc.) who is not enrolled as a student within the academic program from which the appeal originated.
- Once the Appeals Committee meeting date/times are determined, both the faculty member involved and student will be invited to attend. Attendance is welcomed, but not mandatory.

The Appeals Committee will be responsible for reviewing the student's notification letter (with all identifying information removed for confidentiality) along with any other pertinent documentation to evaluate the concern and render a decision. The VPAA will notify the student via written communication of the decision. The student does not have the right to legal representation within an academic hearing. A majority decision by the Appeal Committee is final and ends the academic concern resolution appeals process.