

ACADEMIC APPEALS AND STANDING POLICY

Academic Appeals

I. JURISDICTION:

The Academic Appeals Committee will hear academic grievances from and about students enrolled in the undergraduate program. It will also serve as a hearing board for students charged with academic dishonesty.

II. PROCEDURES FOR COURSE GRADE APPEAL:

A. In the event a student wishes to appeal an instructor's grade, the process for filing an appeal:

1. The student will bring a written statement to the instructor explaining in detail all the facts relevant to the appeal. This must be discussed with the instructor. If a decision or resolution acceptable to the student is not reached:
2. The instructor shall give the student a written statement of their decision, explaining in detail their reasons for that decision within one week of meeting with the student.
3. The student will then bring both statements to the chair of the academic department sponsoring the course. The chair will read and discuss the statements with the student and consult with the faculty member as appropriate.
4. The chair will provide the student with a written statement of their decision, recommending support or denial of the case decision within one week of meeting with the student. If a decision or resolution acceptable to the student is not reached:
5. All materials will be forwarded to the Dean of Academic Studies who will read and discuss all the statements with the student and other parties.
6. The Dean will forward all information to the Registrar. Meetings of the Academic Appeals Committee will be called as needed by the Registrar. Requests for a hearing before the Academic Appeals Committee must include written statements from all parties as outlined above. Such requests must be made to the Registrar within thirty days of initiating the appeal.

B. In cases involving appeals of a course grade a student has one month into the following semester to initiate an appeal relating to grades earned in the regular Fall or Spring semesters. In all other cases (e.g. summer) the student has one month after receipt of the grade to initiate an appeal through the aforementioned channels. No grade appeals can be made after the above deadlines.

III. PROCEDURES FOR ACADEMIC SUSPENSION:

A. In cases involving academic suspension, students wishing to be readmitted must appeal in writing by the date specified in the student's suspension notice. Forms explaining suspension appeal will be sent to the student at the time of notification.

1. Students will submit WRITTEN appeals ONLY. Any documents found not to be truthful and accurate to the best of the student's knowledge will result in a referral to the Student Conduct Program.
2. The Academic Appeals Committee has the authority over enrollment conditions, including, but not limited to,

mandating course selection for students and mandating the number of credits taken per semester.

B. All students academically suspended from the college must minimally meet the following conditions for readmission:

1. At least six credits of transferable credit from another institution or six credits from MCLA earned as a non-matriculated student during the suspension period with a GPA of at least 2.0.
2. A Readmission Approval Form must be completed by the student and approved by the Office of Academic Affairs or its designate, prior to enrolling in classes. Courses must be taken at an accredited institution other than MCLA or at MCLA as a non-matriculated student.
3. Students must sit out the following academic semester from MCLA. Students will be allowed to finish any courses in which they are attending classes at the time of suspension. However, such courses will not count for purposes of readmission.
4. Other conditions may be imposed by the Academic Appeals Committee or the Office of Academic Affairs or its designate, based on the student's overall record.

C. A student academically suspended from MCLA more than twice may appeal and may be eligible for readmission at the discretion of the Academic Appeals Committee.

IV. APPEAL PROCEDURES - ACADEMIC HONESTY:

A. Upon an occurrence of alleged academic dishonesty, the instructor may exercise their discretion in imposing a sanction. The instructor may further file charges with the Academic Appeals Committee against the student if they believe that additional sanctions would be appropriate.

B. The instructor must notify the Registrar in writing of any occurrence of academic dishonesty whenever they have imposed sanctions.

Such notification shall include the student's name, course title, date of occurrence, type of dishonesty, sanction (s) being imposed, and any further action requested. This notification shall be effected within 14 days after discovery of the incident. A copy of said notice shall be sent to the student involved, including the charges made against the student and the grounds, if proven, that would justify failure or other academic sanctions.

C. The Registrar maintains a log of reports of academic dishonesty. The Registrar must refer reports of second and/or subsequent offenses of academic dishonesty for committee action.

D. If the student wishes to appeal the sanction imposed by the instructor, the student must initiate an appeal within 14 days after receipt of notification.

E. The Academic Appeals Committee shall consider as a basis for a hearing that:

1. The student claims not to have been academically dishonest.
2. The student claims the instructor imposed an inappropriate sanction.
3. The nature of the offense merits further action.

F. In academic dishonesty cases, the committee may receive requests for hearings from students, individual faculty, staff members, or the Registrar.

1. A hearing is requested by notifying the Registrar in writing. The Registrar is the chairperson of the Academic Appeals Committee.
2. A faculty or staff member may bring charges against a student when sanctions of grading do not appear appropriate to the faculty or staff member, in light of the academic dishonesty.
3. The Registrar must refer cases of second and/or subsequent offenses of academic dishonesty for committee action.

G. If occurrence does not concern work performed for direct academic credit, the member of the faculty, staff, or administration filing charges shall maintain all supporting documentation and shall notify the Registrar of the suspected violation(s). The Registrar will then institute the established college procedure for dealing with violations of academic ethics.

H. Upon request for a hearing, it is the duty of the Registrar as chairperson of the appeals committee, to schedule such a hearing within 30 days if school is in session. All parties to the case shall receive written notification of the hearing 7 days in advance, including date, time, and place. The student should be given the names of witnesses and an oral or written report on the facts to which each witness shall testify, so that the student may prepare a defense.

I. The student may elect to waive their right to a hearing before the Appeals Committee, and admit to the charge(s) addressed. In such cases the committee will then proceed to the assessment of the appropriate sanction.

J. The Appeals Committee may recommend the following sanctions for cases involving Academic Dishonesty:

1. Academic Reprimand, which consists of a notice placed in the official file in the Registrar's Office. The Academic Appeals Committee may recommend that such notice remain on file for up to five years.
2. Current semester dismissal for the semester in which the offense was committed. Grades of "WX" will be recorded on the courses no matter when the sanction is imposed; however, the instructor of the course in which the academic dishonesty occurred may exercise their option of assigning an "F" in that course.
3. Semester dismissal both for the semester in which the academic dishonesty occurred and the following semester.
4. A student who has been dismissed or suspended from classes may not enroll in any course offered by the college.

K. If a student is dismissed for academic dishonesty, the student's transcript will state that the student was dismissed for academic dishonesty and will indicate the date on which the student was dismissed. The student may petition the Vice President of Academic Affairs five years after the date of dismissal to have this statement removed from their academic transcript.

L. Students will be informed in writing of any sanction imposed on them, by the Academic Appeals Committee.

M. A student who has been dismissed from the college for academic dishonesty may appeal for readmission. The Office of Academic Affairs or its designate, may determine additional conditions of readmission.

N. If a student has been academically dismissed from MCLA more than twice for repeated violation of the academic honesty policy, the student is ineligible for readmission.

V. HEARING PROCEDURES:

A. Appeal hearings will be closed to all but the student and/or faculty involved. Either party involved in the case may petition the committee in writing, within 24 hours prior to the hearing, to allow students and/or faculty members involved in the case to participate in or sit-in during the hearing. Petitions will be approved at the discretion of the Academic Appeals Committee.

B. Either party to a grade or academic honesty appeal may testify on their own behalf.

C. The Committee reserves the right to allow the faculty member involved to hear the student's testimony.

D. The student has the option to stay and hear the testimony of the faculty member and any other witnesses. The student will then be given an opportunity to respond to the testimony of those witnesses.

E. The committee will entertain a written petition for rehearing only in exceptional instances in which either party can demonstrate significant new factual information.

F. The Academic Appeals Committee reserves the right not to hear an appeal in any case where data is not sufficient, the necessary steps have not been followed or when jurisdiction is not clear.

VI. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:

A. The membership of the Academic Appeals Committee hearing Academic Suspension Appeals shall consist of:

1. Two faculty members appointed by the President of the Faculty Association for a two-year term.
2. One faculty member appointed by the President of the Faculty Association for a three-year term.
3. Two MCLA Administrators appointed by the President of the College or their designee.
4. The Dean of Academic Affairs.
5. The Registrar shall act as Chair - voting only in the event of a tie.
6. The Dean of Academic Affairs or the Office of Academic Affairs or its designate, shall act as chairperson in the absence of the Registrar.

B. Membership of the committee hearing Grade Appeals and/or Academic Dishonesty Appeals shall consist of all members listed above as well as two students selected by the Office of Student Affairs. If necessary other appropriate students will be selected by the Registrar.

VII. VOTING PROCEDURES:

- A. A quorum shall be at least two faculty, and one administrator for suspension appeals (in addition, one student for grade and dishonesty appeals).
- B. In all cases any action requires a majority of those present.
- C. Voting will be by secret ballot.
- D. Any member of the committee who is involved in a particular case may not participate in that case.

VIII. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE DECISIONS:

- A. In all cases the committee's recommendations along with all pertinent documents will be forwarded to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for their recommendation. The committee's and the Vice President's recommendations will be forwarded to the President for final approval. If requested, the President will provide written rationale to either party involved in the case.
- B. The Registrar shall record all sanctions imposed for academic dishonesty by the instructor and by the President unless there is a finding of acquittal. In the case of acquittal, the record of the charge will be deleted from the files.
 1. Such records of sanctions shall be maintained by the Registrar separately from the permanent file, and will be made available to the Admissions Office should the student apply for readmission.
 2. All such records shall be destroyed upon graduation or five years from the last date of attendance.
 3. In the specific instance of a student dismissed from the college for academic dishonesty such records shall remain permanently on file, unless petition is made to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Academic Standing

The Academic Standing Policy is intended to provide early identification of students requiring additional academic or other institutional support and governs the eligibility of all undergraduate students for enrollment.

Undergraduate students are required to meet or exceed the following standards each semester:

- A cumulative grade point average of 2.00
- Completion of graduation requirements within 150 percent of the published length of their program

I. Failure to Meet Academic Standing Standards

Students who fail to meet the Academic Standing standards for the first time will be placed on Academic Probation. Students on Academic Probation are given one additional semester of enrollment eligibility to meet the Academic Standing standards.

All students on Academic Probation are required to register for and pass the Thriving in College and Beyond course. Students enrolled in the Thriving in College and Beyond course will also be required to work with a Success Coach to develop and sign an Academic Recovery Contract and create an individualized Academic Success Plan to help them meet Academic Standing standards. Students who do not pass Thriving in College and Beyond will be mandated to retake the course in order to maintain enrollment eligibility.

Students in their first or second semester of enrollment (1-24 credits) will also be required to retake any course(s) with a grade of F in the subsequent semester contingent on course offering. The total number of registered credits for these students must not exceed 13 in the subsequent semester.

Any exception to these requirements must be approved by the student's primary advisor and communicated to the Office of Student Records in writing.

Students on Academic Probation status who continue to fall below the Academic Standing standards after their additional semester of enrollment eligibility will be academically suspended from MCLA.

Students who reach the level of Academic Probation for a second time, excluding Probation after Suspension, are required to retake Thriving in College and Beyond and create an Academic Success Plan with a Success Coach.

Students who reach the level of Academic Probation for a third time or more, excluding Probation after Suspension, will be academically suspended from MCLA.

II. Academic Suspension

Students who do not meet the Academic Standing standards for two consecutive semesters or reach the level of Academic Probation for a third time or more will be academically suspended from MCLA and are ineligible to enroll at MCLA as a matriculated student.

Students may return to MCLA after one semester of suspension provided they have completed the following steps specified on their suspension notice:

1. Completion of 6 or more transfer credits with grades of "C" or higher in all classes at an accredited institution (credits earned before the date of the Academic Suspension notice will not satisfy this requirement); or
2. Completion of 6 or more credits as a non-matriculated student at MCLA with grades of "C" or higher in all classes

III. Right of Appeal

Students placed on Academic Suspension may appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee for enrollment eligibility reinstatement by the date specified in the student's suspension notice. To be considered, appeals should include circumstances which affected the student's academic performance, how the student plans to raise their GPA, and what resources the student plans to utilize to meet Academic Standing standards. Optionally, the student may also include a letter of support from a faculty member. The Office of Academic Affairs will provide advocates to guide students through the preparation of their academic appeal and through the appeal process.

If approved, the Academic Appeals Committee will outline any requirements the student must meet in the subsequent semester. Any student who successfully appeals their suspension will be designated by a separate category of Probation after Suspension.

IV. Academic Standing and Financial Aid Eligibility

In order to meet financial aid eligibility, students must make satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree within 6 years of full-time attendance or 12 years of part-time attendance.

Students in their first year (1-24 credits) are also required to complete 60% of their attempted credits and maintain an overall minimum GPA of 1.75. In subsequent years, students must successfully complete 75% of their attempted credits and maintain an overall GPA of 2.0.

Details of Satisfactory Academic Progress for financial aid eligibility can be found on the Student Financial Services website (<https://www.mcla.edu/admission-aid/paying-for-college/financial-aid/academic-progress.php>).