

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**  
**GOVERNING COUNCIL**

**REPORT NUMBER 294 OF THE ACADEMIC APPEALS COMMITTEE**

February 14, 2005

To the Academic Board,  
University of Toronto.

Your Committee reports that it held a policy meeting on Monday, January 31, 2005, at which the following members were present:

Professor Emeritus R. Scane (Chair)  
Professor M. Beattie  
Professor C. Beghtol  
Ms A. Dong  
Ms B. Goldberg  
Professor Y. Johnson  
Mr. A. Kopolovic  
Professor I. McDonald  
Mr. S. Neata  
Ms F. Ko  
Ms S. Somerville  
Ms O. Varga

Mr. L. Charpentier, Secretary of Governing Council  
Mr. P. Holmes, Judicial Affairs Officer

**1. Sub-Committee to Review the Guidelines for Academic Appeals Within Divisions**

The Senior Chair, acting on the recommendation of the Provost, called a policy meeting of the Academic Appeals Committee for the purpose of appointing a Sub-Committee to review the *Guidelines for Academic Appeals Within Divisions*. In discussion, the following points were raised:

- A member introduced a motion which would direct the Sub-Committee to consult with SAC, APUS and GSU. The motion was defeated. In discussion, however, it was agreed that the Sub-Committee would consult broadly and that it would consider how it could receive input most effectively from relevant groups and individuals.
- A member introduced a motion to amend the Terms of Reference to include a demographic examination of appellants at the divisional and Governing Council levels. It was noted that these data are not readily available. The motion was defeated.

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- A member questioned the absence of a part-time undergraduate student in the membership of the Sub-Committee. The Terms of Reference were amended to permit the Sub-Committee to "...co-opt, at its discretion, a part-time undergraduate student from within or without the Academic Appeals Committee of Governing Council."
- A member raised a point with respect to paragraph (f) of the Sub-Committee's mandate to "...examine and make recommendations on mediation and dispute resolution procedures." The member wondered if any lessons had been learned that would assist faculty and students and help to avoid future appeals.
- A member raised a question concerning the range of remedies of appeal bodies. The proposed Terms of Reference were amended to include this point as item "(g)" in the mandate of the Sub-Committee.
- A member raised a question concerning the types of matters that could be appealed. The proposed Terms of Reference were amended to include this point as item "(h)" in the mandate of the Sub-Committee.

On motion duly moved and seconded,

It was RESOLVED

THAT the Terms of Reference of the Subcommittee to Review the Guidelines for Appeals Within Divisions be approved.

THAT the membership of the Sub-Committee to Review the Guidelines for Academic Appeals Within Divisions be approved with the ability of the Sub-Committee to co-opt, at its discretion, a part-time undergraduate student from within or without the Academic Appeals Committee of Governing Council.

The Terms of Reference have been appended to this Report as "Appendix A".

## **2. Other Business**

There was no other business.

Paul Holmes  
Secretary

Ralph Scane, Q.C.  
Senior Chair

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**Appendix “A”**

**To Report 294 of the Academic Appeals Committee of Governing Council**

**University of Toronto**

**The Governing Council**

**Academic Appeals Committee of the Governing Council**

**Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee to Review the *Guidelines*  
for *Academic Appeals Within Divisions***

**Mandate:**

To review the *Guidelines for Academic Appeals Within Divisions* [the “*Guidelines*”] and determine whether or not the *Guidelines* meet the current needs of the University and the academic divisions.

In fulfilling its mandate, the Subcommittee may:

- (a) assess the continued appropriateness of the minimum standards set out in the *Guidelines*, and specifically whether or not they ought to be raised;
- (b) review current practices within the University;
- (c) consider the introduction of time-lines;
- (d) specifically examine and make recommendations on the grade appeal process throughout the University;
- (e) make recommendations on procedures for settling appeals outside of a hearing;
- (f) examine and make recommendations on mediation and dispute resolution procedures;
- (g) examine the remedies which should be available to appellate committees;
- (h) examine what matters should fall within the definition of an academic appeal.

**Background:**

Governing Council approved the *Guidelines* in the mid-seventies. Other than a minor amendment in the late-seventies, the *Guidelines* remain in the original form drafted by the Chair of the Academic Appeals Board (now the Academic Appeals Committee of Governing Council).

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### **Background:** (cont'd)

The *Guidelines* were not intended to be a comprehensive set of procedures for divisional academic appeals. Rather, the purpose of the *Guidelines* is to set minimum standards across the University and at the same time permit the academic divisions room to implement precise procedures according to local needs.

The present *Guidelines* establish the following principles for academic appeals across the University:

- Clear and concise regulations should be published;
- Regulations should not be changed to the detriment of students who have relied upon them;
- Grading schemes should be established early on in each course and not altered thereafter;
- Divisions should have formal procedures to deal with appeals but should not be averse to dealing with matters informally in the first instance;
- Students should be provided a hearing before the divisional appellate committees;
- The right of appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee of Governing Council should be published;
- Students should be entitled to appear with or without counsel before divisional appeal bodies;
- Divisional appeal committees should provide written reasons;
- Grade appeals should be referred to external experts where the divisional appeal body has reason to believe a significant error has occurred.

### **Composition:**

Including the Chair, the Sub-Committee, like its parent Committee, is representative of all the estates of Governing Council, namely; faculty, students, administrative staff, alumni and government appointees. The composition of the Sub-Committee is as follows:

Ms. Bonnie Goldberg – Chair (Co-Chair, Academic Appeals Committee)  
Prof. Clare Beghtol (Teaching Staff)  
Mr. Brian Davis (Administrative Staff)  
Dr. Gerald Halbert (L.G.I.C.)  
Ms. Françoise Ko (Graduate Student)  
Mr. Stefan Neata (Undergraduate Student)  
Ms. Maureen Somerville (Alumni)

The Sub-Committee may, at its discretion, co-opt a part-time undergraduate student from within or without the Academic Appeals Committee.