

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

REPORT NUMBER 5 OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC APPEALS

To the Academic Affairs Committee,  
University of Toronto.

Your Subcommittee reports that it held meetings on April 5th, April 26th and April 29th, 1974, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Faculty of Pharmacy, at which the following were present:

Meeting of April 5th

Professor J. B. Dunlop (Chairman)  
Mr. John Creelman  
Professor V. E. Graham  
President J. M. Kelly  
Dr. J. C. Laidlaw  
Professor J. A. Sawyer  
Mr. C. Ian P. Tate  
Professor A. M. Wall  
Miss M. Salter, Secretary

Meetings of April 26th and 29th

Professor J. B. Dunlop (Chairman)  
Mr. John Creelman  
President J. M. Kelly  
Dr. J. C. Laidlaw  
Mr. J. K. Martin  
Professor H. W. Smith  
Mr. C. Ian P. Tate  
Professor A. M. Wall  
Miss M. Salter, Secretary

By Invitation, Meeting of April 26th, 1974

Mr. T.

Professor S. M. Waddams,  
Co-ordinator, Certificate Programme in Criminology

THE FOLLOWING ITEM IS REPORTED FOR APPROVAL

1. Guidelines for Academic Appeals

At two meetings, on April 5th and April 29th, the Subcommittee considered guidelines for procedures relating to academic appeals at the divisional level. A copy of the resulting document, entitled "Guidelines for Academic Appeals" is attached hereto as Appendix "A".

The Subcommittee requested academic divisions of the University to inform it of the structures and procedures in effect for dealing with academic appeals at the divisional level. A good response was received and the Subcommittee was able to determine that considerable variation in structures and procedures exists. Some divisions have well-developed and appropriate procedures. Others have none at all, dealing with appeals on an ad hoc basis. In order to ensure that appeals be properly considered at the divisional level and thus to reduce the need for appeals to the Subcommittee, it was felt that guidelines to be followed by all divisions should be established. Existing structures and procedures conforming to the spirit of these guidelines would not need to be changed. Divisions not having adequate structures and procedures should be required to establish them in conformity with the spirit of the guidelines.

Section 6 of the document, under the heading "General Principles" embodies a statement concerning a deadline for the announcement by course instructors of the work required for credit and the grading scheme of courses. The section was drafted in response to an issue raised during discussion of the Code of Behaviour and the Disciplinary Structures and Procedures and referred by the Academic Affairs Committee to the Subcommittee on Academic Appeals.

YOUR SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDS

THAT the "Guidelines for Academic Appeals", attached hereto as Appendix "A", be adopted and that academic divisions of the University be required to establish structures and procedures conforming to the spirit of these guidelines and submit them for approval.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE REPORTED FOR INFORMATION

2. Mr. M.

Mr. M. appeared before the Subcommittee on Academic Appeals at its meeting of April 26th to appeal a failing mark in the course "Theory and Methods of Criminology" in the Certificate Programme in Criminology.

After consideration of the documentary and oral evidence,

It was duly moved and seconded,

- (1) THAT the appeal of Mr. M. against a decision of the Examiners' Committee of the Certificate Programme in Criminology be allowed, and
- (2) THAT Mr. M. be permitted to write another essay in the course "Theory and Methods of Criminology" to replace the final term paper on which he received a failing grade, to be completed no later than September 1, 1974.

The motion was carried.

3. Miss T.

Mr. T. the father of Miss T. a student, sought leave to appeal a decision of the Committee on Academic Standards of the Faculty of Arts and Science denying Miss T. petition for a review of her final mark of 74 in French 271. The Subcommittee heard representations from Mr. T. as to why the appeal should be heard without the knowledge or participation of the student. It noted that its terms of reference permitted appeals by students. While it felt this could in some circumstances include appeals on behalf of students, it did not feel that the circumstances of this case justified such an unusual proceeding.

It was duly moved and seconded,

THAT the petition for leave to appeal be denied.

The motion was carried.

The meetings adjourned at 5:30 p.m., 6:00 p.m. and 5:45 p.m. respectively.

Secretary

Chairman

May 30th, 1974.

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC APPEALS

APRIL 5th, 1974

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC APPEALS  
OF THE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, held on April 5th, 1974 at 4:00 p.m. in  
the Council Chamber, Faculty of Pharmacy at which the following were present:

Professor J. B. Dunlop (Chairman)	Professor J. A. Sawyer
Mr. John Creelman	Mr. C. Ian P. Tate
Professor V. E. Graham	Professor A. M. Wall
President J. M. Kelly	Miss M. Salter, Secretary
Dr. J. C. Laidlaw	

1. Request from Mr. T.

The Chairman outlined briefly some of the facts concerning the case of Miss T<sub>9</sub>, a student in the Faculty of Arts and Science. Miss T<sub>9</sub> had appealed a low grade in one of her courses, which had resulted in the loss of a scholarship. The appeal had been dismissed by the Committee on Academic Standards of the Faculty of Arts and Science and Miss T<sub>9</sub>'s doctor had informed her that she should not carry on with it for the sake of her health. Her father did not feel that the matter should rest there, but could not involve his daughter in any further proceedings because of her doctor's advice. He had requested that he be permitted to carry the appeal forward in his daughter's behalf. Professor Dunlop had explained to Mr. T. that according to its terms of reference, the Subcommittee was to hear appeals by students. However, he had agreed to present this request to the Subcommittee. He asked whether members felt that the Subcommittee should be prepared to consider appeals in which for medical or other reasons it was impossible for the student to personally make the appeal. He pointed out that in this case, not only would the student not be making the appeal, but would know nothing about it being made.

Members discussed the matter at some length and expressed willingness to be as flexible as possible in dealing with appeals in which a student might be prevented from carrying on an appeal personally because of illness or other unusual circumstances. It was agreed that Mr. T. be asked to provide written grounds for the appeal as well as an explanation of why the appeal should be pursued without the consent of his daughter.

2. Request from Mr. P.

The Chairman informed members that a notice of appeal addressed to Her Majesty the Queen had been received from Mr. P. In the covering letter, Mr. P. had requested the transcript, notes, or minutes from the hearing. He had been informed that his request would be considered by the Subcommittee on Academic Appeals. The Subcommittee had decided not to keep a transcript of the hearing, because it had not felt that this was necessary and the minutes were not required to form a part of the record.

The Subcommittee agreed that the minutes of the hearing not be released.

3. Academic Appeals - Principles and Procedures

The Chairman presented and reviewed a paper entitled "Academic Appeals - Principles and Procedures", a copy of which is attached hereto as Appendix "A".

Professor Dunlop noted the variation in appeal procedures throughout the University and explained that the paper had been developed with a view to providing guidelines for divisions in establishing appeal procedures which would conform to certain general principles while still leaving a degree of flexibility for local circumstances. He drew particular attention to a principle outlined in Section 6 concerning a deadline for announcement by instructors of the work required and the grading scheme of courses. This had been a matter raised during discussion of the Code of

3. Academic Appeals - Principles and Procedures (Cont'd)

Behaviour and the Structures and Procedures and an undertaking had been given to bring it before the Academic Affairs Committee. Since the Subcommittee on Academic Appeals would be dealing with this general area, it was agreed to refer this matter to it.

In Section 5, a member referred to the phrase "All regulations and requirements should be established...". He pointed out that it was impossible to publish in the calendar every regulation, since there were many rules established by precedent. Members were agreed that while all regulations could not be put in the calendar, they should be available somewhere for students. It was suggested that there be a reference in the calendar to additional regulations and that they were available in the registrar's office or some other central place. It was agreed that the word "all" at the beginning of Section 5 be deleted.

Some concern was expressed that in Section 11, which referred to appeals concerning grades, there was an inference of an automatic right to have work examined by an expert. The Chairman noted that this had been done in some cases on an informal level and it had been his intention simply to indicate that this was a possibility where there was reason to believe that it might be useful. In this connection it was also pointed out that it was difficult for work to be assessed in the absolute sense, since grading was done in the context of a course and it would be difficult for outside experts to decide whether the work was at an appropriate level. It was noted, however, that the opinion of such outside experts was only one factor to be taken into consideration by a committee in making its decision. The Subcommittee agreed to make two revisions in Section 11 as follows: "examination or other written work" and "the work should be referred to one or more outside experts in the field of study concerned". There was some discussion of frivolous appeals and it was pointed out by the Chairman that the Subcommittee, in its terms of reference, had the right to refuse to hear an appeal by unanimous consent. It was suggested that this was one instance where the opinion of an outside evaluator would be useful, particularly in a case where a student was alleging bias.

The Subcommittee agreed to consider appeal procedures again, with a view to presenting recommendations to the Academic Affairs Committee. The Chairman suggested that the Academic Affairs Committee might then send the recommendations to each division for comment.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.