

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

REPORT NUMBER 161 OF THE ACADEMIC APPEALS COMMITTEE

March 5th, 1993

To the Academic Board,
University of Toronto.

Your Committee reports that it held a hearing on Friday, March 5th, 1993 at 1:30 p.m. in the Flavelle Room, Faculty of Law, 78 Queen's Park Crescent at which the following were present:

Professor A. Weinrib, Vice-Chairman
Professor C. C. Brodeur
Mrs. D. Hellebust
Mr. H. Heller
Professor E. Seaquist

Ms L. Snowden, Secretary

In attendance:

Ms A.S., the appellant
Mr. A. Nathanson, Downtown Legal Services, counsel for the appellant
Professor M. Donnelly, for the Faculty of Arts and Science

On March 5th, 1993 the Academic Appeals Committee of the Governing Council heard the appeal of Ms A.S., a student in the Faculty of Arts and Science, from a decision of the Faculty that she had failed SOC 345Y.

After an extensive career in the public service, mostly with the Department of Agriculture, Ms A.S. retired in 1988. She has registered in a number of courses in the Faculty of Arts and Science, mostly at the rate of one a year. In 1990-91 she took SOC 345Y. On the two term papers she obtained grades of 63% and 60%. The papers account for 50% of a student's final grade. On the mid-term and final examinations her marks were 12% and 25% respectively. Each examination was worth 25% of the final grade. During the spring term there was a strike of both library workers and teaching assistants. These facts may have made it more difficult for students to write term papers, but on the evidence we heard, these events should not have overly influenced the final examination mark. In any event, the instructor in the course allowed Ms A.S. to attempt to raise her grade to the passing level by completing a take-home examination. The arrangements for the taking of the examination were completed around the beginning of July, 1991. The examination was available to be picked up by the student at 9:00 a.m. on July 22nd and it was to be returned by 5:00 p.m. on July 23rd. The instructor set the same questions as she had set on the final examination that spring. Ms A.S. received a grade of 20% on the take-home examination. She thereby failed the course.

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Ms A.S. appealed to the Academic Appeals Board of the Faculty requesting that some way be found to grant her a pass in the course. The Board dismissed her appeal on the ground that to allow her appeal would have been unfair to the other students in the course.

This Committee dismisses the appeal from the Faculty's Appeals Board. The instructor seems to have gone out of her way to provide the appellant with an opportunity to pass the course. In the circumstances, we cannot accede to Ms A.S.'s request that she be graded solely on the basis of the two term papers. She obviously has problems with examinations, but we cannot give her relief on that ground.

Ms L. Snowden
Secretary

Professor A. Weinrib
Vice-Chairman

March 12th, 1993