

**Western Michigan University  
Faculty Senate  
Memorandum of Action**

MOA – 25/09

Revise Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs to Change Grade Appeal and Program Dismissal Appeal Committee (GAPDAC) to the Academic Appeals Review Committee (AARC)

**Name of Council/Committee:**  
Professional Concerns Committee

**Approval Date:**  
21 April 2025

**Implementation Date:**  
Upon Administrative Approval

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Professional Concerns Committee recommends changing the name of the Grade Appeal and Program Dismissal Committee (GAPDC) to the Academic Appeals Review Committee (AARC), based on proposal by the University Ombuds.

*Michael Kahwaji*

Jul 4, 2025

Michael, Kahwaji, Chair, Professional Concerns Committee

Date

☐ Approve    ☐ Disapprove    ☐ Other Action

Comments:

*Amy Naugle*

Jul 5, 2025

Amy Naugle, WMU Faculty Senate President

Date

☒ Approve    ☐ Disapprove    ☐ Other Action

Comments:

*Christopher Cheatham*

Jul 7, 2025

Christopher Cheatham, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date

☐ Approve    ☐ Disapprove    ☐ Other Action

Comments:

*Russ Kavalhuna*

Russ Kavalhuna, WMU President

Date

*July 17, 2025*

**Western Michigan University  
Faculty Senate  
Memorandum of Action**

MOA – 25/09

**Revise Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs to Change Grade Appeal and  
Program Dismissal Appeal Committee (GAPDAC) to the Appeals Review  
Committee (ARC)**

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Professional Concerns Committee recommends changing the name of the Grade Appeal and Program Dismissal Committee (GAPDC) to the Appeal Review Committee (ARC), based on proposal by the University Ombuds.

**RATIONALE/PURPOSE**

The current name of the Grade Appeal and Program Dismissal committee currently reflects the two less-frequent types of appeals the committee adjudicates, course grade and program dismissal appeals, while omitting the most common appeal hardship withdrawal. Additionally, the acronym GAPDAC has proven difficult for WMU shareholders to pronounce and understand. Finally, members of the Professional Concerns Committee and the Office of the University Ombuds believe that Appeals Review Committee (ARC) better reflects the nature of the committee and the constructive solution-focused processes it oversees.

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICE(S) AND ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL(S):**

The current policies regarding the Grade Appeal and Program Dismissal Committee have been enacted by the Professional Concerns Committee on behalf of the WMU Faculty Senate. The policies are enforced and committees recruited, scheduled and facilitated, by the Office of the University Ombuds.

**STAKEHOLDERS**

WMU's faculty and students, staff and external shareholders who engage in fact-finding or support of other individuals directly engaging in these processes.

**HISTORY:**

- a) Effective date of current version: 2020
- b) Date first adopted: 1998
- c) Revision history: 2004, 2011, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2020
- d) Proposed date of next review: spring 2028

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**CURRENT POLICY MODIFICATION** (additions in bold and deletions with strikethrough):

*Undergraduate Catalog*

*University Policies, Statements and Procedures*

*Course Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals*

*Course Grade Appeals*

This section applies when a student wants to appeal a final course grade that has been recorded by the Registrar on the student's academic record. Appeal panels are assembled from the faculty under the authority of and by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or designate. Throughout this process, the Office of the Ombuds is available to students and faculty members for assistance on procedures and clarification of the rights of all parties.

The accepted bases of course grade appeal are:

1. Grades were calculated or the program dismissal decision was made in a manner inconsistent with the University policy, the syllabus, or changes to the syllabus.
2. The grade(s) was/were erroneously calculated.
3. Grading/performance standards were arbitrarily or unequally applied.
4. The faculty member failed to assign or remove an Incomplete or to initiate a grade change as agreed upon with the student.
5. Late withdrawal from class(es), after grades have been assigned, due to genuine hardship. (Students appealing on this basis should proceed by contacting the Ombud's Office and following the procedures for hardship determination. [wmich.edu/ombuds/appeal-hardship](http://wmich.edu/ombuds/appeal-hardship).)

A grade appeal cannot be made in response to a grade penalty assessed as a result of an official finding of responsibility for academic integrity violation(s). Such a finding will have been made through the Academic Integrity Hearing process, described in the Student Code at: [wmich.edu/studentrights](http://wmich.edu/studentrights) (MOA 24/07, 19/03 & 18/11)

The steps to be taken in appealing a grade are:

1. Informal meeting with instructor: A student is encouraged to begin the appeal process by meeting with the instructor who assigned the grade. Such meetings often help students understand the grading practices of instructors and often lead to resolution of differences over grades.
2. Written appeal and conference with the academic unit chair/director: A grade appeal must be in writing, in hard copy, and must be submitted to the academic unit chair/director. This appeal must be received by the academic unit chair/director within 20 business days of the last day of the semester or session in which the grade was recorded on a student's record. The Provost or designate may grant an extension should a genuine hardship arise (i.e., illness, death in the immediate family). The letter must identify the basis of the appeal and must state in detail why the student believes the grade should be changed. Following a conference with the student, the chair/director must respond in writing to the student with a copy to the instructor, their dean, and the ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC)~~ **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)** within 20 business days. In this letter, the chair/director should confirm the meeting with the student, recap their discussion, and state whether the student has an appeal which meets the established criteria (A, B, C, or D above). If the situation appears to meet the criteria for appeal, the chair/unit director may recommend that the instructor reevaluate the student's work. The chair/director cannot change the student's grade without the instructor's agreement. Note: Grade appeals or other complaints based on charges of protected class discrimination or sexual harassment should be taken to the Office of Institutional Equity or other office, pursuant to other University policies and procedures.
3. Appeal to committee: After the chair has completed the response to the student's appeal, the student may appeal to the ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC)~~ **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)**. This appeal must be initiated within 20 business days completion of step 2. If the student has requested a meeting with the academic unit chair/director and has not been granted such a meeting within 40 business days of the student's request, the student may then initiate an appeal to ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC**. The student will initiate an appeal through the Office of the Ombuds. When the Ombuds receives an appeal, the Provost or designate will schedule a meeting of ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC** using procedures determined by the Professional Concerns Committee (PCC) of the Faculty Senate. The ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC** will consist of three members drawn from a pool of faculty established for this purpose. In a grade appeal, both the student(s) and the instructor should provide a written statement describing the situation under consideration. An appearance to provide additional information at the appeal by either the instructor or student(s) may be requested by the appeals committee. A ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC** can effectuate a grade change by majority vote. The decision of the hearing panel is final and not subject to appeal.
4. Instructor unavailable to assign grade: Circumstances may arise which may prevent an instructor from assigning a grade in a timely manner. In such instances, the academic unit chair/director will make reasonable efforts to contact and ask the instructor to supply a grade. If these efforts are

unsuccessful, the instructor's academic chair/director will appoint another qualified faculty member to assign the grade.

#### *Hardship Withdrawal Policy*

##### *Guiding principles*

Grading is within the purview of the faculty. Hardship must be verifiably documented and approved by a Hardship Assessment Panel. Decisions of the Hardship Panel are final and may not be appealed. Except for documented and exceptional circumstances, hardship petitions will not be accepted more than one year after the end of the term or session for which the hardship was documented. All petitions filed after the one-year timeline must be granted an exception by the office of the provost prior to consideration by the Hardship Assessment Panel.

Undue hardship is not strictly defined but often involves medical or compassionate grounds, and must result from circumstances beyond the student's control. Each case is unique and will be assessed on its own merits. The student is encouraged to consult with a faculty member, academic advisor or the University Ombuds to assist in determining whether a hardship condition may exist.

Some example conditions in which hardship might apply are listed below:

- Severe physical or mental illness or injury of student or close family member, particularly involving prolonged duration or recovery
- A traumatic event, such as death of close family member or act of violence, that prevents the student from academically performing in the usual manner for a prolonged period
- Exigencies of military service where established procedures are not applicable

Some example conditions in which hardship shall not apply are listed below:

(Note that for some conditions, other academic recourse such as an incomplete grade "I," or Student-Initiated Withdrawal may be appropriate.)

- Student dislikes the course, teaching method, or professor
- Student believes the course is too difficult
- Student has taken on more academic or other obligations than he or she can handle
- Situations in which any resolved or unresolved academic integrity charges exist

#### *Documentation Requirements*

Complete and verifiable documentation must be provided for any hardship-related request.

Documentation shall consist of a hardship status petition form, a student's written personal statement and appropriate documents from any cognizant third parties. The documents should explicitly describe the nature of the hardship and its impact on the student's academic performance or attendance. Examples include:

- Official letter from a medical professional;
- Police reports;
- Written verification by a credible third party (unrelated to the student) of a prolonged non-medical emergency

#### *Hardship Assessment Panels*

- Hardship Assessment Panels shall follow the policies of **GAPDAC ARC** and consist of three members of the Board-appointed faculty. Members will be recruited, trained, and administered by the University Provost or designee as part of the **GAPDAC ARC** process.
- Hardship Assessment Panels can effectuate a grade change in accord with the **GAPDAC ARC** and course withdrawal policies when a determination of hardship is made.
- Panel hearings will be convened as needed and decisions rendered within 20 business days after receipt of a student's complete hardship petition and associated documents.
- Regular reports of the activity of Hardship Assessment Panels will be made to the Professional Concerns Committee of the Faculty Senate.



#### *Forms and Further Information*

- Appropriate forms may be obtained from the Office of the Ombuds webpage, [wmich.edu/ombudsman/forms](http://wmich.edu/ombudsman/forms).
- Specific deadlines and details concerning any tuition refund that may be allowed are published by the Registrar's Office, [wmich.edu/registrar/calendars/academic](http://wmich.edu/registrar/calendars/academic).

#### *Program Dismissal Appeals*

This section applies when a student wants to appeal a decision to dismiss the student from an academic program for reasons other than charges of violations of academic integrity policies. Appeal panels are assembled under the authority of and by the designate of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Throughout this process, the Office of the Ombuds is available to students and instructors for assistance on procedures and clarifications of the rights of all parties.

#### *The accepted bases of program dismissal appeal are:*

1. The program dismissal decision was made in a manner inconsistent with University policy or the program policy.
2. The program dismissal procedures were not followed.
3. Evaluation/performance standards were arbitrarily or unequally applied.

A program dismissal appeal cannot be made in response to an academic integrity or conduct dismissal from the University. If program dismissal results, in whole or in part from an academic integrity violation, including but not limited to grade sanctions imposed as a result of academic integrity violation whether in the current course or a previous course, then the program dismissal may not be appealed. Nothing in this policy shall prevent a student from reapplying for admission to a program from which they have been dismissed. Readmission of a student, who had been dismissed from a program, shall be at the discretion of the program, as long as such decisions are consistent with all other University policies.

#### *Note:*

- A program dismissal appeal based on charges of protected class discrimination or sexual harassment should be taken to the Office of Institutional Equity or other offices, pursuant to the other University policies and procedures.
- A program dismissal based on genuine hardship should be addressed according to the University hardship policies.

#### *When appealing a program dismissal, a student must take the following steps:*

1. Submit a letter requesting an appeal to the academic unit chair/director. This letter must be received by the academic unit chair/director within twenty business days of notice of dismissal from the program. The letter must identify the basis of the appeal and must state in detail why the student believes that dismissal should be reversed and schedule a conference with the department chair/director.
2. Following a conference with the student, the chair/director must respond in writing to the student with copies to the unit's dean, and the ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC)~~ **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)** within twenty business days. In this letter, the chair/director should confirm the meeting with the student, recap their discussion, and state whether the student has an appeal which meets the established criteria above. If the situation appears to meet the criteria for appeal, the chair/director may recommend readmission to the unit's dean.
3. Should the academic unit fail to provide a timely response or sustain the dismissal, the student may appeal directly to the unit's dean. The unit's dean will readmit the student or uphold dismissal, based on the academic unit's recommendation or the student's direct appeal, within ten business days.
4. Should the unit's dean uphold the dismissal, the student may appeal to ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC**. This appeal must be initiated within ten business days of the unit's dean's written decision. The student will initiate an appeal through the Office of the Ombudsman. When the appeal is received, the Provost or designate will schedule a meeting of ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC** using procedures determined by the Professional Concerns Committee of the Faculty Senate. The ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC**

will consist of three members drawn from a panel of faculty established for this purpose. In a program dismissal, the student appellant should attend the meeting of the appeal panel and must provide a written statement describing the grounds for appeal. A University representative from the program must attend the meeting and must provide a written statement describing the grounds for and circumstances of dismissal.

A **GAPDAC ARC** may reverse or sustain a program dismissal by majority vote. The decision of the hearing panel is final and not subject to appeal.

*Selection, Training, and Organization of ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeal Committee (GAPDAC)~~ **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)***

A ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeal Committee (GAPDAC)~~ **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)** will be drawn from a pool of faculty who are trained under procedures determined by the Professional Concerns Committee (PCC) of the Faculty Senate. For each appeal that requires review, a **GAPDAC ARC** panel will be selected to hear the appeal and to decide the matter.

Each academic college shall provide a cohort of tenured or tenure-track faculty members to serve on the **GAPDAC ARC** pool in proportion to its respective student credit hour production. Faculty members will serve three-year terms (with staggered terms for the first **GAPDAC ARC** pools, to ensure continuity of experience and training). It will be necessary to include in the pool those who can serve during summer sessions.

Each **GAPDAC ARC** shall be composed of three faculty members, at least one of whom is from the college where the course or program in question resides. Each **GAPDAC ARC** will elect a faculty member to chair the committee, and each **GAPDAC ARC** must have all three members present to have a quorum. Procedures for selection of a **GAPDAC ARC** will be constructed and administered by the PCC.

*Faculty Oversight of ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee~~ **Appeals Review Committee***

The PCC shall function as an oversight committee for reviewing and monitoring all University policies and procedures dealing with grade and program dismissal appeal issues. A report of all **GAPDAC ARC** activities shall be made to the Faculty Senate Executive Board each year by the PCC, and recommendations for changes in policies and procedures regarding grade and program dismissal appeal issues may be part of that annual report. Such recommendations may result in modifications to these policies and procedures. (MOA 16/03)

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**CURRENT POLICY MODIFICATION** (additions in bold and deletions with strikethrough):

*Undergraduate Catalog*

*Glossary of Terms*

*Hardship Panel-approved withdrawal*

Withdrawal from a course at any time after the end of the student-initiated withdrawal period is effectively a grade change. As such, it will be permitted only through the **Course** Grade Appeal Process, as described in the section, Students Rights and Responsibilities, "~~Course Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals.~~" **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)**. To change an assigned grade to "W," documented hardship *must* be determined to have existed by a **GAPDAC ARC** Hardship Assessment Panel, as described in the section, Students Rights and Responsibilities, "Hardship Status" (MOA 24/08)

Except for documented and exceptional circumstances, hardship petitions will not be accepted more than one-year after the end of the term or session for which the hardship was documented. All petitions filed after the one-year timeline must be granted an exception by the Office of the Provost prior to consideration by the Hardship Assessment Panel.

The student is strongly encouraged to consult with the University Ombuds before initiating a hardship-based withdrawal appeal.



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**CURRENT POLICY MODIFICATION** (additions in bold and deletions with strikethrough):

*Graduate Catalog*

*Students' Rights and Responsibilities*

*Course Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals*

*Course Grade Appeals*

This section applies when a student wants to appeal a final course grade that has been recorded by the Registrar on the student's academic record. Appeal panels are assembled from the faculty under the authority of and by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or designate. Throughout this process, the Office of the Ombuds is available to students and faculty members for assistance on procedures and clarification of the rights of all parties.

The accepted bases of course grade appeal are:

1. Grades were calculated or the program dismissal decision was made in a manner inconsistent with the University policy, the syllabus, or changes to the syllabus.
2. The grade(s) was/were erroneously calculated.
3. Grading/performance standards were arbitrarily or unequally applied.
4. The faculty member failed to assign or remove an Incomplete or to initiate a grade change as agreed upon with the student.
5. Late withdrawal from class(es), after grades have been assigned, due to genuine hardship. (Students appealing on this basis should proceed by contacting the Ombud's Office and following the procedures for hardship determination [wmich.edu/ombuds/appeal-hardship](http://wmich.edu/ombuds/appeal-hardship).)

A grade appeal cannot be made after an official finding of responsibility for academic integrity violation(s) has been made through the Academic Integrity Hearing process, described in the Student Code at [wmich.edu/conduct/code](http://wmich.edu/conduct/code). (MOA 19/03 & 18/11)

The steps to be taken in appealing a grade are:

1. Informal meeting with instructor: A student is encouraged to begin the appeal process by meeting with the instructor who assigned the grade. Such meetings often help students understand the grading practices of instructors and often lead to resolution of differences over grades.
2. Written appeal and conference with the academic unit chair/director: A grade appeal must be in writing, in hard copy, and must be submitted to the academic unit chair/director. This appeal must be received by the academic unit chair/director within 20 business days of the last day of the semester or session in which the grade was recorded on a student's record. The Provost or designate may grant an extension should a genuine hardship arise (i.e., illness, death in the immediate family). The letter must identify the basis of the appeal and must state in detail why the student believes the grade should be changed. Following a conference with the student, the chair/director must respond in writing to the student with a copy to the instructor, their dean, and the ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC)~~ **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)** within 20 business days. In this letter, the chair/director should confirm the meeting with the student, recap their discussion, and state whether the student has an appeal which meets the established criteria (A, B, C, or D above). If the situation appears to meet the criteria for appeal, the chair/unit director may recommend that the instructor reevaluate the student's work. *The chair/director cannot change the student's grade without the instructor's agreement.*  
Note: Grade appeals or other complaints based on charges of protected class discrimination or sexual harassment should be taken to the Office of Institutional Equity or other office, pursuant to other University policies and procedures.
3. Appeal to committee: After the chair has completed the response to the student's appeal, the student may appeal to the ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC)~~ **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)**. This appeal must be initiated within 20 business days completion of step 2. If the student has requested a meeting with the academic unit chair/director and has not been granted such a meeting within 40 business days of the student's request, the student may then initiate an appeal to ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC**. The student will initiate an appeal through the Office of the Ombuds. When the Ombuds receives an appeal, the Provost or designate will

schedule a meeting of **GAPDAC ARC** using procedures determined by the Professional Concerns Committee (PCC) of the Faculty Senate. The **GAPDAC ARC** will consist of three members drawn from a pool of faculty established for this purpose. In a grade appeal, both the student(s) and the instructor should provide a written statement describing the situation under consideration. An appearance to provide additional information at the appeal by either the instructor or student(s) may be requested by the appeals committee. *A GAPDAC ARC can effectuate a grade change by majority vote.* The decision of the hearing panel is final and not subject to appeal.

4. Instructor unavailable to assign grade: Circumstances may arise which may prevent an instructor from assigning a grade in a timely manner. In such instances, the academic unit chair/director will make reasonable efforts to contact and ask the instructor to supply a grade. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the instructor's academic chair/director will appoint another qualified faculty member to assign the grade.

#### *Hardship Withdrawal Policy*

##### *Guiding principles*

Grading is within the purview of the faculty. Hardship must be verifiably documented and approved by a Hardship Assessment Panel. Decisions of the Hardship Panel are final and may not be appealed. Except for documented and exceptional circumstances, hardship petitions will not be accepted more than one year after the end of the term or session for which the hardship was documented. All petitions filed after the one-year timeline must be granted an exception by the office of the provost prior to consideration by the Hardship Assessment Panel.

Undue hardship is not strictly defined but often involves medical or compassionate grounds, and must result from circumstances beyond the student's control. Each case is unique and will be assessed on its own merits. The student is encouraged to consult with a faculty member, academic advisor or the University Ombuds to assist in determining whether a hardship condition may exist.

Some example conditions in which hardship might apply are listed below:

- Severe physical or mental illness or injury of student or close family member, particularly involving prolonged duration or recovery
- A traumatic event, such as death of close family member or act of violence, that prevents the student from academically performing in the usual manner for a prolonged period
- Exigencies of military service where established procedures are not applicable

Some example conditions in which hardship shall not apply are listed below:

(Note that for some conditions, other academic recourse such as an incomplete grade "I," or Student-Initiated Withdrawal may be appropriate.)

- Student dislikes the course, teaching method, or professor
- Student believes the course is too difficult
- Student has taken on more academic or other obligations than he or she can handle
- Situations in which any resolved or unresolved academic integrity charges exist

#### *Documentation Requirements*

Complete and verifiable documentation must be provided for any hardship-related request.

Documentation shall consist of a hardship status petition form, a student's written personal statement and appropriate documents from any cognizant third parties. The documents should explicitly describe the nature of the hardship and its impact on the student's academic performance or attendance. Examples include:

- Official letter from a medical professional;
- Police reports;
- Written verification by a credible third party (unrelated to the student) of a prolonged non-medical emergency



#### *Hardship Assessment Panels*

- Hardship Assessment Panels shall follow the policies of **GAPDAC ARC** and consist of three members of the Board-appointed faculty. Members will be recruited, trained, and administered by the University Provost or designee as part of the **GAPDAC ARC** process.
- Hardship Assessment Panels can effectuate a grade change in accord with the **GAPDAC ARC** and course withdrawal policies when a determination of hardship is made.
- Panel hearings will be convened as needed and decisions rendered within 20 business days after receipt of a student's complete hardship petition and associated documents.
- Regular reports of the activity of Hardship Assessment Panels will be made to the Professional Concerns Committee of the Faculty Senate.

#### *Forms and Further Information*

- Appropriate forms may be obtained from the Office of the Ombuds webpage, [wmich.edu/ombudsman/forms](http://wmich.edu/ombudsman/forms).
- Specific deadlines and details concerning any tuition refund that may be allowed are published by the Registrar's Office, [wmich.edu/registrar/calendars/academic](http://wmich.edu/registrar/calendars/academic).

#### *Program Dismissal Appeals*

This section applies when a student wants to appeal a decision to dismiss the student from an academic program for reasons other than charges of violations of academic integrity policies. Appeal panels are assembled under the authority of and by the designate of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Throughout this process, the Office of the Ombuds is available to students and instructors for assistance on procedures and clarifications of the rights of all parties.

#### **The accepted bases of program dismissal appeal are:**

1. The program dismissal decision was made in a manner inconsistent with University policy or the program policy.
2. The program dismissal procedures were not followed.
3. Evaluation/performance standards were arbitrarily or unequally applied.

The student's status, as dismissed from the program, will remain unaltered until a successful appeal is completed.

A program dismissal appeal cannot be made in response to an academic integrity or conduct dismissal from the University. If program dismissal results, in whole or in part from an academic integrity violation, including but not limited to grade sanctions imposed as a result of academic integrity violation whether in the current course or a previous course, then the program dismissal may not be appealed. Nothing in this policy shall prevent a student for reapplying for admission to a program from which they have been dismissed. Readmission of a student, who had been previously dismissed, shall be at the discretion of the program, as long as such decisions are consistent with all other University policies. Expedited readmission may not be invoked if the program dismissal was the result of an academic integrity dismissal.

#### **NOTE:**

- A program dismissal appeal based on charges of discrimination or sexual harassment should be taken to the Office of Institutional Equity or other office, pursuant to other University policies and procedures.
- A program dismissal appeal based on genuine hardship should be addressed according to the University hardship policies.

#### *When appealing a program dismissal, a student must take the following steps:*

1. Submit a letter requesting an appeal to the academic unit chair/director. This letter must be received by the academic unit chair/director within 20 business days of notice of dismissal from the program. The letter must identify the basis of the appeal and must state in detail why the student believes that dismissal should be reversed and schedule a conference with the department chair/director.

2. Following a conference with the student, the chair/director must respond in writing to the student with copies to the unit's dean, the graduate dean, and the ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC)~~ Appeals Review Committee (ARC) within 20 business days. In the letter, the chair/director should confirm the meeting with the student, recap their discussion, and state whether the student has an appeal which meets the established criteria above. If the situation appears to meet the criteria for appeal, the chair/director may recommend readmission to the graduate dean.
3. Should the academic unit fail to provide a timely response or uphold the dismissal, the student may appeal directly to the graduate dean. The graduate dean will readmit the student or sustain dismissal, based on the academic unit's recommendation or the student's direct appeal, within 10 business days.
4. Should the graduate dean uphold the dismissal, the student may appeal to ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC. This appeal must be initiated within 10 business days of the graduate dean's written decision. The student will initiate an appeal through the Office of the Ombuds. When the appeal is received, the Provost or designate will schedule a meeting of ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC using procedures determined by the Professional Concerns Committee of the Faculty Senate. The ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC will consist of three members drawn from a panel of faculty established for this purpose. In a program dismissal, the student appellant should attend the meeting of the appeal panel and must provide a written statement describing the ground for appeal. A University representative from the program must attend the meeting and must provide a written statement describing the grounds for and circumstances of dismissal.

A ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC may reverse or uphold a program dismissal by majority vote. The decision of the hearing panel is final and not subject to appeal.

*Selection, Training, and Organization of ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeal Committee (GAPDAC)~~ Appeals Review Committee (ARC)*

A ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeal Committee (GAPDAC)~~ Appeals Review Committee (ARC) will be drawn from a pool of faculty who are trained under procedures determined by the Professional Concerns Committee (PCC) of the Faculty Senate. For each appeal that requires review, a ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC panel will be selected to hear the appeal and to decide the matter.

Each academic college shall provide a cohort of tenured or tenure-track faculty members to serve on the ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC pool in proportion to its respective student credit hour production. Faculty members will serve three-year terms (with staggered terms for the first ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC pools, to ensure continuity of experience and training). It will be necessary to include in the pool those who can serve during summer sessions.

Each ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC shall be composed of three faculty members, at least one of whom is from the college where the course or program in question resides. Each ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC will elect a faculty member to chair the committee, and each ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC must have all three members present to have a quorum. Procedures for selection of a ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC will be constructed and administered by the PCC.

*Faculty Oversight of ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committees~~ Appeals Review Committee*

The PCC shall function as an oversight committee for reviewing and monitoring all University policies and procedures dealing with grade and program dismissal appeal issues. A report of all ~~GAPDAC~~ ARC activities shall be made to the Faculty Senate Executive Board each year by the PCC, and recommendations for changes in policies and procedures regarding grade and program dismissal appeal issues may be part of that annual report. Such recommendations may result in modifications to these policies and procedures.

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**CURRENT POLICY MODIFICATION** (additions in bold and deletions with strikethrough):

*Graduate Catalog*  
*Glossary of Terms*

~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC)~~ **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)**  
The ~~Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC)~~ **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)** renders the final decision on student grade and program dismissal appeals. The complete policy is contained in this catalog in the section entitled Student Rights and Responsibilities.

*Grade Appeal*  
See ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC** above.

*Hardship Panel-Approved Withdrawal*  
Withdrawal from a course at any time after the end of the student-initiated withdrawal period is effectively a grade change. As such, it will be permitted only through the **Course Grade Appeal Process**, as described in the section, Students Rights and Responsibilities, "~~Course Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals.~~" **Appeals Review Committee (ARC)**. To change an assigned grade to "W," documented hardship *must* be determined to have existed by a ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC** Hardship Assessment Panel, as described in the section, Students Rights and Responsibilities, "Hardship Status".

Except for documented and exceptional circumstances, hardship petitions will not be accepted more than one-year after the end of the term or session for which the hardship was documented. All petitions filed after the one-year timeline must be granted an exception by the Office of the Provost prior to consideration by the Hardship Assessment Panel.

The student is strongly encouraged to consult with the University Ombuds before initiating a hardship-based withdrawal appeal. (MOA 24/08)

*Program dismissal appeal*  
See ~~GAPDAC~~ **ARC** above.

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## KEY DEFINITIONS/GLOSSARY

**Grade Appeal and Program Dismissal Appeal Committee** – the committee comprised of tenured or tenure-tracking faculty created to adjudicate student appeals for final course grade change, program dismissal reinstatement and hardship withdrawal. The committee has rotating membership drawn from a pool of volunteers from academic departments at WMU representing every college. The committee membership, training and meetings are facilitated by the Office of the University Ombuds.

**GAPDAC** – the acronym for the Grade Appeal and Program Dismissal Committee.

**Course Grade Appeal** – the appeal process created by the faculty of WMU and adjudicated by the GAPDAC that allows students to appeal the final overall grade they received in a course.

**Program Dismissal Appeal** – the appeal process created by the faculty of WMU and adjudicated by the GAPDAC that allows students to appeal their dismissal from an academic program at WMU.

**Hardship Withdrawal Appeal** – the appeal process created by the faculty of WMU and adjudicated by the GAPDAC that allows students to appeal to be withdrawn from a course or courses for hardship circumstances after the student-initiated withdrawal period for a given semester has passed.