

Petitions to Academic Policy

In particular circumstances, a student may submit a petition to request an exception to or application of a university policy. A petition is a formal written request for an exception to a published policy or requirement. The petition should cite the regulation in question and state the basis for the waiver or exception upon which the request rests. Petitions are special requests, so students must present compelling, exceptional, and documented circumstances in making their requests.

University policies and deadlines are established by the faculty to protect the integrity of the academic experience. Petitions will be evaluated according to the standards and principles of university policies along with considerations of fairness and equity for all students. Petitions will only be granted upon a demonstration of exceptional cause.

Petitions may be submitted for academic standing decisions, for general academic policies, or for their deadlines. Graduation requirements such as total credits required, GPA, credits and GPA in the major, and residency credits may not be petitioned.

Procedures for Petitioning Policies

1. General Academic Policies

- a. General academic policies include such things as class drop or add, overload course registration and fees, withdrawals, and official deadlines.
- b. The general academic policy petition form may be found online or in the Registrar's Office.
- c. The student should fill out the form according to the instructions on the form and return it, along with any additional documentation, to the Registrar's office.
- d. The Registrar will notify the student of the decision based on the information supplied by the student as well as any other information pertinent to the issue.

2. General Education Designations

- a. The General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) designates certain Wittenberg courses as fulfilling specific general education requirements. Students may petition to have a course not so designated at Wittenberg or in transfer from another university count to fulfill a general education requirement at Wittenberg.
- b. A student who believes that a course taken at another school and transferred to Wittenberg should fulfill a general education requirement may complete the general education petition form found online or in the Registrar's office.
- c. The student should fill out the general education petition form and include the documentation requested on the form and return it to the Registrar's office, where it will be reviewed to make sure all the information is included. The Registrar's office will send the documents to the General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) for final review.
- d. When GEAC makes its decision, it will send the decision to the Registrar's office so that the record can be updated. The Registrar's Office will notify the student of the decision.

- e. If the student believes that a course taken at Wittenberg should have a general education designation that is not approved by GEAC, the student should fill out the general education petition form online or pick up a form in the Registrar's office.
- f. The student should fill out the form according to the instructions on the form and return it to the Registrar's office.
- g. The Registrar will include any additional information needed and send the form to the General Education Committee for evaluation.
- h. The General Education Advisory Committee will return the form with its decision to the Registrar's office, which will update the records and notify the student of the decision.

3. Course Grades

- a. A grade inquiry may be initiated when the student believes the final grade assigned for a course is inaccurate. The student may petition on the grounds that the faculty member did not follow published grading policies, that the grade was not correctly calculated, or that the process of grading was not applied consistently in the class. For grading matters pertaining to Honor Code violations, students must follow Honor Code procedures. Grades on assignments within a course may not be appealed.
- b. If a student believes a final course grade is inaccurate, the student should first discuss the grade with the faculty member.
- c. If that discussion does not resolve the question, the student should complete a grade appeal form and submit it to the chair of the department in which the course was taught.
- d. An appeal should be made as soon as possible after the grade is recorded, and in no case later than the end of the seventh week of the semester following the term in which the grade was given.
- e. If the appeal is denied, the student may submit the grade appeal form and any additional required documentation to the Provost.
- f. The Provost's office will evaluate the appeal and consult with the department chair and the faculty member. The faculty member completes a Change of Grade form, if necessary, and submits it to the Registrar. The Registrar makes any necessary changes to the student's grade in the system.
- g. If the faculty member who gave the grade is no longer at the university (in the case of an adjunct instructor, for instance), the department chair will contact the instructor and put the student and the faculty member in contact with each other to initiate the process.
- h. If a faculty member whose grade is challenged is no longer at the university, cannot be contacted, or does not respond to reasonable efforts at contact, then and only then will the department chair, in consultation with other members of the department in question, review the appeal. If the chair decides that the appeal has merit, he or she may then instruct the Registrar to make any necessary changes to the student's grade in the system.
- i. If the faculty member whose grade is being appealed is a department chair, the complaint will be explored and resolved in consultation between the faculty member and the provost.

4. Board of Academic Standards Decisions

- a. The Board of Academic Standards (BAS) evaluates students' academic progress according to the published policy and process (see section on Standards of Academic Progress). After the end of each semester, students placed on probation or suspension, or those dismissed from the university, will receive an email and letter notifying them of the Board's decisions.
- b. To appeal the BAS decision, the student should go to the BAS web page to see what information should be included in the appeal letter.
- c. The appeal letter and corresponding documentation should be sent to the office identified in the BAS decision letter by the deadline noted in the letter.
- d. The BAS will review the appeal and notify the student of its decision.
- e. If the appeal is denied, the student may further petition the Provost with any new and compelling information. The Provost will resolve the appeal and notify all concerned parties.

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