

Attachment #2

14 DECEMBER 2009

To: Faculty Senate  
From: Chairperson, Academic Standards Committee

Subj: PROPOSED CHANGES TO ACADEMIC POLICY

Ref: (a) Millersville University Governance and Policies, Academic Policy: Undergraduate Studies ACADEMIC STANDARDS, PROBATION, and DISMISSAL (<http://www.millersville.edu/about/administration/policies/pdf/academics/Academic%20Policy-UD%20-%20Academic%20Standards,Probation,Dismissal.pdf>)

Encl: (a) Revised version of Millersville University Governance and Policies, Academic Policy: Undergraduate Studies ACADEMIC STANDARDS, PROBATION, and DISMISSAL

1. As background, the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) holds two days of dismissal appeal hearings in January and June. During the hearings, ASC is divided into subcommittees with each subcommittee reviewing and deciding the cases of a unique pool of appellants.
2. Changes to reference (a) were developed by the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 ASC. Enclosure (a) reflects those changes. It was drafted during the Spring 2009 semester by the ASC Chairperson and edited over the summer of 2009 by the Registrar and the ASC Chairperson. The 2009-2010 ASC voted 14-0 in favor of the proposal.
3. The following outlines the rationale of major proposed changes to reference (a) as depicted within enclosure (a). Minor proposed changes to reference (a) can also be found within enclosure (a) along with corresponding comments.
  - a. Currently, students who are dismissed but are awaiting an appeal can attend classes (winter and summer 1 sessions), mainly because the registration for such coursework occurs before a student is dismissed. Thus, we changed the language of enclosure (a) to reflect that practice.
  - b. The Registrar's Office staff handles the logistics of the dismissal appeal hearings. In-person appeals during the January hearings are quite problematic for the Registrar's Office. This is because of the brief time allotted to winter break under the common calendar. At the request of the Registrar's Office, the ASC considered potential solutions to this problem. Two corresponding face-to-face meetings were held (8 April 2008 and 22 April 2008) and attended by several members of the ASC. In addition there was an email-based discussion by ASC members.

Using the dialogue referenced above, the following ballot was developed, which was voted on by 19 of the 24 ASC members during the Spring 2008 semester. Voting results are listed in bold:

- Item 1: First dismissal appellants may appeal only by letter: **0**  
First dismissal appellants may appeal by letter (required) and, if they choose, by an in-person interview with ASC: **19**
- Item 2: Second dismissal appellants may appeal only by letter: **14**  
Second dismissal appellants may appeal by letter (required) and, if they choose, by an in-person interview with ASC: **5**
- Item 3: Third or greater dismissal appellants may appeal only by letter: **11**  
Upon the third or greater dismissal, no appeal will be granted: **8**

Enclosure (a) reflects the results of the voting. Note that the changes are for both the January and June hearings for the sake of continuity. Using the statistics from the last three dismissal appeal hearings, the adoption of the above vote would reduce the number of in-person appeals by about 20 to 30 percent.

c. When considering appeals in the recent past, both the subcommittees and the Chairpersons of the ASC have granted lesser dismissal periods than those described within reference (a). For example, a 2nd dismissal appellant may have been dismissed for one semester rather than one academic year. We stopped following that practice beginning with the June 2008 hearings. If Faculty Senate wishes to grant the ASC the latitude of changing the consequences of a dismissal, language granting that latitude should be incorporated into enclosure (a). We recommend Faculty Senate not grant that latitude in order to preserve continuity and consistency in the decisions of the ASC from subcommittee to subcommittee and from year to year.

d. The role of the ASC Chairperson in the appeal process is documented in the ASC Annual Report from 2001-2002:

[http://www.millersville.edu/~fsenate/Committees/Acad\\_Sta/Ann\\_Rep/2001\\_02.html](http://www.millersville.edu/~fsenate/Committees/Acad_Sta/Ann_Rep/2001_02.html)).

The precedent recorded in the 2001-2002 Annual Report allows for an appellant who believes he/she did not receive an appropriate or fair hearing from a subcommittee to appeal the decision to the Chairperson. The stated rationale is to reduce the number of students employing the University's general appeal process to the Associate Provost for Academic Administration.

In order to preserve continuity and consistency in the decisions of the ASC from year to year, we do not recommend that the Chairperson opt to serve in the capacity outlined above. Indeed, we have not followed that practice beginning with the June 2008 hearings. Instead, the Chairperson has directed all further appeals to the Associate Provost for Academic Administration.

Corresponding draft language was developed in consultation with the Associate Provost for Academic Administration, and inserted into enclosure (a). It clearly states that an ASC subcommittee's decision is on behalf of the entire ASC and that the academic decision of the ASC is final and not subject to review. Only the process may be appealed to the Associate Provost for Academic Administration.

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