

Motion to Revise the Policy on University-Level Petitions
Passed by Admissions and Standards, November 19, 2008

Overall Ideas

1. Get the petition decided as close to the student level as possible.
2. Use publicity instead of committees to insure consistency.

Effective Spring 2009

Motion:

The Policy and Procedures for Student Complaints, Petitions for Policy Waivers and Variances, and Appeals is modified as follows:

--Section I., paragraph 4 is deleted

This paragraph stated that the entire policy did not cover admissions appeals. But the policy below does cover admissions appeals.

--Section IV.B. is replaced with the following:

B. University-Level Policy Waiver or Variance Petitions

1. Students may request a waiver or variance of a policy established by the University or the Board of Regents (BOR).

2. All requests for waivers or variances from university and BOR level policies will be made based only on the written record.

3. All petitions must include the following: (a) The section number from the Catalog (or other official University document) of the policy or requirement from which the student is requesting a waiver; (b) the deviation being sought; (c) the reason(s) why the exception should be granted; (d) a current copy of the student's academic evaluation record; (e) a current copy of the student's Georgia State University transcript (unless the petitioner is not yet a Georgia State student); and (f) transcripts from all other colleges the student has attended (if the petitioner has attended other colleges).

4. Admissions Appeals (Appeals of Rules Currently in Section 1100 of the Catalog)
 - a. Appeals of denial of admission and for waivers of the admissions rules will be made in the first instance by the Director of Admissions.
 - b. If the petition is denied, the student may appeal to the Admissions Appeals Committee, a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards. The student must appeal in writing and within 10 business days of being notified of the decision of the Director of Admissions.
 - c. The Director of Admissions will copy the Chair of the Admissions Appeals Committee on all letters to students notifying them of results of their petitions. Every semester, the Director of Admissions will distribute to the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards a report that

indicates (at a minimum) the number of petitions filed, the number granted, and the number denied. This report will cover all admissions petitions, including those considered by the Special Talents Committee. Any member of Admissions and Standards may review the documents of any petition when there is a legitimate educational interest.

d. This ~~motion~~ policy does not change the Special Talents policy or the policy on admissions discipline review.

5. Financial Aid Appeals (Appeals of Rules Currently in Section 1200 of the Catalog)

a. Appeals of financial aid rules will be made in the first instance by the Director of Financial Aid.

b. If the petition is denied, the student may appeal to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, a committee appointed by the Associate Provost for Academic Programs. The student must appeal in writing and within 10 business days of being notified of the decision of the Director of Financial Aid.

6. Add, Drop and Withdraw Appeals (Appeals of Rules Currently in Section 1332 of the Catalog)

a. Appeals of the add, drop and withdrawal rules will be made in the first instance by the University Registrar.

b. If the petition is denied, the student may appeal to the Registration Appeals Committee, a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards. The student must appeal in writing and within 10 business days of being notified of the decision of the University Registrar.

c. The Registrar will copy the Chair of the Registration Appeals Committee on all letters to students notifying them of results of their petitions. Every semester, the University Registrar will distribute to the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards a report that indicates (at a minimum) the number of petitions filed, the number granted, and the number denied. Any member of Admissions and Standards may review the documents of any petition when there is a legitimate educational interest.

d. This ~~motion~~ policy does not change the Hardship Withdrawal policy.

7. Course Load, Scholastic Discipline, Course Substitution in the Core, and Regents Test Appeals (Appeals of Rules Currently in Sections 1330.30, 1360, 1410, and 1420 of the Catalog)

a. Appeals of rules regarding course load, scholastic discipline, course substitution in the core, and Regents Test will be made in the first instance by the Director of the Student Advisement Center. However, appeals for waivers of Section 1330.30 (Course Load) will be considered by the student's college if the student has declared a college and will follow the procedure outlined in Section IV.A above.

b. If the petition is denied by the Director of the Student Advisement Center, the student may appeal to the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee, a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards. The student must appeal in writing and within 10 business days of being notified of the decision of the Director of the Student Advisement Center.

c. The Director of the Student Advisement Center will copy the Chair of the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee on all letters to students notifying them of results of their

petitions. Every semester, the Director of the Student Advisement Center will distribute to the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards a report that indicates (at a minimum) the number of petitions filed, the number granted, and the number denied. Any member of Admissions and Standards may review the documents of any petition when there is a legitimate educational interest.

8. Academic Regulation and Graduation Requirement Appeals (Appeals of Rules Currently in Other Parts of Sections 1300 and 1400 of the Catalog)

a. Appeals of other university-level academic rules and graduation requirements will be made in the first instance by the Academic Director of Student Retention.

b. If the petition is denied, the student may appeal to the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee, a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards. The student must appeal in writing and within 10 business days of being notified of the decision of the Academic Director of Student Retention.

c. The Academic Director of Student Retention will copy the Chair of the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee on all letters to students notifying them of results of their petitions. Every semester, the Academic Director of Student Retention will distribute to the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards a report that indicates (at a minimum) the number of petitions filed, the number granted, and the number denied. Any member of Admissions and Standards may review the documents of any petition when there is a legitimate educational interest.

9. Subsequent Appeals

a. The student may appeal the decisions of the Admissions Appeal Committee, Financial Aid Appeals Committee, the Registration Appeals Committee, and the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee to the Associate Provost for Academic Programs in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the decision. The Associate Provost will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.

b. The student may appeal the Associate Provost's decision to the Provost in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the decision. The Provost will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.

c. The student may appeal the Provost's decision to the President in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the Provost's decision. The President will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.

d. The student may appeal the President's decision to the Board of Regents in writing within 20 business days of being notified of the President's decision.

10. Should a reorganization of offices lead to a case where the position of University Registrar or one of the Directors noted above no longer exists, the Associate Provost for Academic Programs and the Chair of the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards will jointly designate an individual to handle petitions until the Senate can revise this policy to reflect the new organization.

Implementation Recommendation:

Students need more help with the petitions process. They are currently: (a) filing petitions when none are necessary, (b) filing petitions that are confusing and thus require more time to review, (c) failing to file the proper kind of petition, (d) failing to file appropriate documentation with their petitions. Admissions and Standards recommends that the University provide a first point of contact for students who wish to petition. The role of this person/office would be to help students determine if a petition is necessary, help students file the correct petition with the correct documentation in the correct office, and help students write clear and complete petitions.

Rationale:

Due to the increase number of students and SACS requirement that we publicize our petitions process, the number of petitions has exploded. The load is simply too much for faculty and staff to bear. In addition, the time that students have to wait to receive a decision has lengthened greatly. We need to streamline our process in light of the increased demand.

Here is the relevant portion of the policy passed in Spring 2007

B. University-Level Policy Waiver or Variance Petitions

1. Students may request a waiver or variance of a policy established by the University or the Board of Regents .
2. All requests for waivers or variances from university-level policies will be made based only on the written record.
3. The student must submit a petition for a waiver or variance in writing to the Academic Administrator in charge of the office that administers the policy in question. (These offices include the Dean of Students, Registrar's Office, Student Advisement Center, Undergraduate Admissions, and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs.) The petition must include the following: (a) The policy or requirement from which the student is requesting a waiver; (b) the deviation being sought; (c) the reason(s) why the exception should be granted; (d) a current copy of the student's academic evaluation record; and (e) a current copy of the student's Georgia State University transcripts, which should also include transcripts from any other college the student has attended.
4. The Academic Administrator will review the petition, attach additional documentation if necessary, and forward his or her recommendations in writing for action to the Committee on Admissions and Standards of the University Senate.
5. All petitions for a waiver or variance of a University-level policy are reviewed by a

subcommittee of the Committee on Admissions and Standards. Petitions may be initiated, in writing, by students, faculty, or staff. Scholarship Appeals subcommittees will be composed of at least two faculty. Academic Regulations and Graduation Requirements Appeals subcommittees will be composed of at least three faculty. The subcommittee will make a recommendation to the Dean of Students. The decisions of the Dean of Students and all supporting documents will be distributed, as an information item, to every member of the Committee on Admissions and Standards. The Dean of Students will notify the student of the decision on the petition. Submission of petition documents does not guarantee that a waiver or variance will be granted.

6. The student, any member of the faculty of Georgia State University, or any member of the Committee on Admissions and Standards may appeal the decision of the Dean of Students to the Associate Provost for Academic Programs, in writing, within 10 business days from when the Dean of Students's decision is distributed to the student and to the Committee on Admissions and Standards.

7. The student may appeal the Associate Provost's decision to the Provost in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the decision. The Provost will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.

8. The student may appeal the Provost's decision to the President in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the Provost's decision. The President will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.

9. The student may appeal the President's decision to the Board of Regents in writing within 20 business days of being notified of the President's decision.