

ACADEMIC REVIEW AND APPEAL POLICY

Responsibility of	Registrar
Approved by	Dean of the Seminary; Dean of the College
Revision History	Created May 29, 2001; modified June 29, 2006; updated June 16, 2014 (Terms) and February 5, 2015 (Roles, Emails), March 14, 2025
Next Review	2030

POLICY OVERVIEW

This policy outlines the process involved for undergraduate and graduate students who wish to appeal academic decisions or policy.

PRINCIPLES

The principles of natural justice, clarity, and transparency undergird this policy.

SCOPE

The policy applies to all graduate students of BCS.

POLICY STATEMENT

Occasionally students may wish to appeal decisions that relate to course work (e.g., mark on an assignment, exam, or course grade), to other academic issues (e.g., program requirements or transfer credits), or to the application of some policy (e.g., a discipline matter, a program requirement). The Academic Review and Appeal Process attempts to ensure that students are treated fairly and appropriately in such cases.**

PROCEDURES

Our goal is that the student will understand and accept the outcome of this process. When appeals reveal out-of-date policies or inadequate process Briercrest will work hard to learn from the process and adjust the policies and/or processes. As such, the principles of careful research, attentive listening, and spiritual sensitivity are all key to the Academic Review and Appeal Process.

1. *Request for review within the situation*

If a student wishes to petition a review of an outcome in a particular situation, whenever possible the request for a review should begin with the individual(s) who made the decision; such a request can be made either verbally or in writing. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the faculty member or administrator's decision, he or she may begin the appeal process as outlined below.

2. Appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee

Following the outcomes of her or his request for review from the faculty member or administrator, there may be situations where a student feels that an appeal of this outcome is in order. Such an appeal must be in writing (see guidelines below) and must be submitted to the Registrar. The Registrar will take this appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee, who may ask for a written response from the faculty member or administrator involved in the case, after which the Committee will render a decision. The student will receive a written response within one week of submission indicating the outcome and the individual who coordinated the review. The Committee maintains the right to defer the appeal to the next level (Dean of the Seminary or the Deans Council) if for some reason broader counsel is needed to make the decision.

3. Appeal to the office of the Dean of the Seminary or the Deans Council

If a student wishes to appeal the situation beyond the steps indicated above, the student may submit a written appeal/grievance to the office of the Dean of the Seminary (seminary students) or the Deans Council (college students) within fourteen days of the decision of the Academic Appeals Committee (unless it relates to a time sensitive issue like exam schedules, in which case the appeal must occur within the appropriate time frame). The appeal must be in written form and should include all the details of the case as well as the decisions rendered in the appeals process.

For Seminary Appeals: The appeal will be reviewed by the Dean of the Seminary, the registrar, and at least one seminary faculty member who has not been involved in the appeal process. The office of the Dean of the Seminary will communicate the decision to the student within two weeks of the appeal. Also note that the Dean of the Seminary maintains the right to defer the appeal to the next level (Executive Leadership Team) if for some reason broader counsel is needed to make the decision.

For College Appeals: College student appeals should be directed to the College Deans (deanscouncil@briercrest.ca) and the appropriate College Dean will present the appeal to the Deans Council. The Deans Council will communicate the decision to the student within two weeks of the appeal. Also note that the Deans Council maintains the right to defer the appeal to the next level (Executive Leadership Team) if for some reason broader counsel is needed to make the decision.

4. Grievance to the Executive Leadership Team

If, after following the appeal process up to and including the office of the Dean of the Seminary or the Deans Council, the student is still dissatisfied with the outcome of her or his appeal, he or she may choose to file a grievance with the Executive Leadership Team. This grievance must be in written form and should include all the details of the case as well as the decisions rendered in the appeals process. The grievance should be submitted to the Provost. At this point, the Executive Leadership Team may recommend some form of Christian conciliation where an external ombudsman is asked to come and lead the review process. The decision of the Executive Leadership Team shall be considered the final stage of appeal within either Briercrest Seminary or Briercrest College.***

Notes:

*The student can receive helpful guidance for beginning the appeal process from the Registrar.

**When necessary, a student or designate may be asked to be present at any point in the appeal process.

***To appeal the decision of the Executive Leadership Team, a student may contact the Association of Theological Schools.

Guidelines for appeals at all levels

1. All appeals must be submitted in writing, and must include the student's full name and contact information, and date of submission.
2. The appeal of course grades cannot be started later than 30 days after the start of the following semester.
3. Appeals must include a concise description of the reason(s) why the student is seeking an appeal.
4. Appeals must include details of any prior decisions along with the rationale given from the deciding body.
5. All decisions will be communicated to the student in writing and copies of the communication will be filed at each level.

In recognition of the need for impartiality throughout the appeal process, no one will be allowed to make decisions on the student's appeal at more than one level, though he or she may be asked to clarify the rationale for her or his decision. Example: If a faculty member denies the student's appeal, that faculty member will not be responsible for making further decisions on that case if the student decides to appeal to a higher level.

APPENDIX A

Related Forms/Policies	Student Request/Academic Appeal Form – available in Academic Services Office Faculty Senate By-laws – Academic Appeals Committee
Where is this policy published	Seminary Academic Calendar (http://www.briercrest.ca/seminary/academics/seminary-calendar/)
Contact Information	Registrar