

## POLICY G27 Appeal Process for Academic Grievance: Grade Appeal

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Policy Name: Appeal Process for Academic Grievance: Grade Appeal  
 Policy Category & Number: G27  
 Person Responsible: Dean  
 Approved by: Dean  
 Effective Date: May 25, 2022  
 Version: 1.0  
 Policy Status: Approved

- I. Policy:  
It is the policy of Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital School of Medical Imaging (SOMI) that appropriate processes and procedures be followed in all matters pertaining to the rights of students.
  
- II. Purpose:  
The appeals policy described below is applicable to academic student grievances.
  
- III. Scope:  
This policy applies to all students and faculty at SOMI.
  
- IV. Policy Details:  
**Initiation of a Grievance**  
 Academic grievances may be submitted electronically by email. An academic grievance must be initiated at the end of the semester, no later than two (2) business days after the day final grades are due as published in the academic calendar. Students are encouraged to contact their Advisor if assistance is needed in understanding this policy. In addition, the Advisor will assist students in determining the appropriate person with whom a student must file an appeal and provide that person's contact information.

Academic grievances must be submitted according to the following order:

Level I	Level II	Level III
Faculty (Copy to Program Coordinator)	Program Coordinator (Copy to Dean)	Dean

### Procedures

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### Level I

#### **Student**

1. The student with an academic grievance must provide in writing a formal letter/email to the faculty member, with a copy to the Program Coordinator, including the following:
  - a. Description of the grade the student is grieving
  - b. Supporting information for the grievance
  - c. Request to meet with the faculty member
2. Silent observer: Prior to the meeting, the student may request to have a silent observer in the meeting. Both the student and faculty member must agree to the student's silent observer. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting, but both parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.
3. At the meeting, the student must clearly present his/her case regarding the grieved grade and the resolution that he or she would like to occur. Every reasonable effort should be made by both parties to resolve the matter at this level.
4. If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of his/her grievance at Level I, he/she may continue to Level II.

#### **Faculty Member**

1. The faculty member has a maximum of ten (10) business days from the date the grievance is received to schedule a meeting with the student. The meeting may be conducted in person, virtually, or by phone.
2. Silent observer: The faculty member may have a silent observer in attendance at the meeting. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting, but both parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.
3. Within five (5) business days after meeting with the student, if an agreement regarding the appeal is made, a copy of the agreement and other appropriate documentation, including the original grievance letter, is sent to the student, and forwarded to the Dean.
4. If the faculty member and student do not have agreement, a copy of the

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original grievance letter and reason for the faculty decision is sent to the student and Program Coordinator. If the student chooses to elevate the grievance to Level II, the faculty member will provide the student with guidance on initiating a Level II grievance and inform the Dean of this outcome.

### **Program Coordinator**

1. The Program Coordinator ensures the Level I meeting between faculty member and student is held.
2. In the event the faculty member is unavailable, the Program Coordinator has the discretion to move to Level II or postpone the hearing until the faculty member is available.
3. The Program Coordinator will communicate his/her decision to move the Level I meeting to a Level II hearing, or to postpone the hearing until the faculty member is available.

### Level II

#### **Student**

1. The student may file a written appeal of the Level I grievance decision with the Program Coordinator within five (5) business days after the written decision from the Level I meeting has been communicated.
2. The written statement provided for Level I describing the grade being grieved must be part of the student's written request for the Level II meeting.
3. Silent observer: If the Program Coordinator convenes a meeting to discuss the grievance; prior to the meeting, the student may request to have a silent observer in the meeting. Both the student and faculty member must agree to the student's silent observer. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the conference, but both parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.
4. At the meeting, the student must clearly present his/her case regarding the grieved grade and the resolution that he/she would like to occur. Every reasonable effort should be made by both parties to resolve the matter at this level.
5. If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of his/her grievance at

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Level II, he/she may continue to Level III.

### **Faculty Member**

1. Faculty member provides information to the Program Coordinator as requested for the investigation.
2. Silent observer: If a meeting is called, the faculty member may have a silent observer in attendance at the meeting. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting, but both parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.

### **Program Coordinator**

1. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of the Level II written grievance, the Program Coordinator will fully investigate the grievance.
2. This investigation may include review of material submitted by both parties, and the scheduling of a meeting with the parties if needed, in an effort to resolve grievance (the actual conference may occur after the 10 days, but its date should be established within this time frame). The meeting may be held in person, virtually, or by phone.
3. If a meeting is called, the role of the Program Coordinator is to chair the meeting, facilitate the discussion, seek to mediate a resolution between the parties, ensure that school policies have not been violated, and render a decision concerning the matter.
4. Silent observer: Prior to the meeting, the student may request to have a silent observer in the meeting. Both the student and faculty member must agree to the student's silent observer. The faculty member may also have a silent observer in attendance at the meeting. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting, but both parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.
5. Within ten (10) business days after receipt of the grievance, or completion of the meeting if called, the Program Coordinator shall prepare a report of the disposition of the matter providing copies to the student and the faculty member.
6. A copy of the report and the official grievance letters (Level I and Level II)

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must be forwarded to the Dean.

### Level III

#### **Student**

1. If the student is not satisfied with the disposition at Level II, within five (5) business days from the communication of the disposition from the Program Coordinator, the student may file a Level III written appeal to the Dean.
2. The written appeal describing the grade being grieved, and reasons for the grievance must be part of the student's written request for the Level III hearing.
3. Silent observers: Prior to the meeting, the student may request to have a silent observer in the meeting. Both the student and the faculty member must agree to the student's silent observer. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting.

#### **Dean**

1. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of this appeal, the Dean will fully investigate the grievance and schedule a meeting with the student, Program Coordinator and faculty member, either together or separately. The meeting may take place after the ten (10) business days but must be established in this time frame. The meeting may be held in person, virtually or by phone.
2. The role of the Dean is to chair the meeting, facilitate the discussion, seek to mediate a resolution between the parties, ensure that school policies have not been violated, and render a decision concerning the matter.
3. Silent observers: Prior to the meeting, the student may request to have a silent observer in the meeting. Both the student and faculty member must agree to the student's silent observer. The faculty member may also have a silent observer in attendance at the meeting. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting, but both parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.
4. Within ten (10) business days after the meeting, the Dean shall prepare a report of the disposition of the matter providing copies to the student and the faculty member.

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5. This is the final decision by the institution/program officials.
6. The student must first attempt to resolve the grievance directly with the institution/program officials by following the grievance procedures provided by the institution/program officials. After following the aforementioned procedures, if the student is still not satisfied, the student may, as a last resort, contact any or all of the agencies listed at the end of this document to file a complaint.

### **Final Disposition of Records**

All materials and decisions related to the appeal will remain confidential and will be retained by the Dean.

### **External Complaints**

In the event of a formal grievance/complaint alleging the program is not in compliance with one or more of the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) Standards for an Accredited Program in Radiology, the complainant may file an allegation of non-compliance with the JRCERT. The allegation procedure is available at [www.jrcert.org](http://www.jrcert.org)

In the event of a written complaint to one of these agencies listed below, or a “Standards” non-compliance issue, and subsequent notification to the school, immediate priority will be given to the resolution of the deficiency in order to maintain accreditation. The Dean is expected to respond to the agency in the time frame provided outlining the resolution/plan for resolution of the issue addressed.

Contact Information for these agencies:

#### **Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES)**

7777 Leesburg Pike, Suite 314 N.

Falls Church, Virginia 22043

Phone: (703) 917-9503

Fax: (703) 917-4109

Website: [www.abhes.org](http://www.abhes.org)

Email: [info@abhes.org](mailto:info@abhes.org)

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### **Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT)**

20 N. Wacker Drive  
Suite 2850  
Chicago, IL 60606-3182  
Phone: (312) 704-5300  
Fax: (312) 704-5304  
Website: [www.jrcert.org](http://www.jrcert.org)  
E-mail: [mail@jrcert.org](mailto:mail@jrcert.org)

### **State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)**

James Monroe Building  
101 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Phone: (804) 225-2600  
Fax: (804) 225-2604  
Website: [www.schev.edu](http://www.schev.edu)  
Email: [communications@schev.edu](mailto:communications@schev.edu)

#### V. Definitions:

**Academic grievance:** a formal process through which a student can appeal through his/her course instructor and the Schools's administrative leadership the student's final grade in a course. A final course grade appeal must be based on at least one of the following claims:

- Capricious action on the part of the faculty member that affects the student's final grade; A capricious action is defined as one made on a whim or without justifiable reasons.
- Prejudicial treatment of the student by the faculty member with respect to the application of the course syllabus, thereby affecting the student's final grade; Prejudicial treatment is defined as treating the student lodging the final grade appeal differently than other students in the course with respect to the instructor's application of the course syllabus.
- Erroneous judgment of the faculty with regard to the correct answer for exam item(s). A claim of erroneous judgment means that the student is able to produce evidence (from textbooks, class notes provided directly

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from the faculty, or other valid materials) to substantiate that a different answer other than that keyed is a correct response.

- A documented error in calculating the student's final grade.
- Extenuating circumstance(s) that significantly impacted the student's performance and grade in a course.

VI. Attachments:

N/A

VII. Related Policies:

None

VIII. Disclaimers:

- a. Nothing in this policy creates a contractual relationship between Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital School of Medical Imaging (SOMI) and any party. SOMI, in its sole discretions, reserves the right to amend, terminate or discontinue this policy at any time, with or without advance notice.
- b. Non-retaliation – Students will not be subjected to adverse actions by any School official as a result of initiating or participating in the investigation of a complaint.
- c. Decision Standard – Decisions made in grievance cases are determined on a preponderance of the evidence. A preponderance of the evidence is evidence that as a whole shows that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not.

IX. Version Control:

Version	Date	Description	Prepared by
1.0	5/25/2022	New Template & Revisions	Dean