

VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Academic Credits Committee and Policies and Petitions Committee Procedures Manual

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VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Academic Credits Committee and Policies and Petitions Committee

Procedures Manual

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PART I: ACADEMIC CREDITS COMMITTEE (ACC)

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. PURPOSE AND DUTIES

Purpose

The purpose of the Academic Credits Committee (ACC) is to deliberate requests for exceptions to academic policies in the areas of readmission to the University after suspension for poor academic performance, residency requirements and proficiency examinations, and other areas not assigned to the schools. This committee serves as the final arbiter for these issues, and its policies and procedures are applicable to undergraduate students and programs. The Policies and Petitions Committee (PPC) serves as the final arbiter for issues related to graduate students and programs. This committee and its policies are addressed in Part II of this manual. Both the ACC and the PPC will provide a report of the types and disposition of cases to the Faculty Senate at the annual retreat.

Duties

ACC is charged with the following duties and responsibilities:

- A. Providing adjudication and disposition on student appeals of academic sanctions and other academic matters, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - Administrative withdrawal¹
 - Residency requirements and proficiency examinations
 - Readmission after academic sanctions
- B. Monitoring and making recommendations to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) relative to academic policy and procedure;

II. COMPOSITION

ACC is a group organized under the auspices of Office of the Provost/VPAA. The committee is convened and facilitated by the Provost or his/her designee(s). The following positions comprise the committee membership:

¹ See Appendix A for definitions.

- A. Provost (or designee), who will serve as chair
- B. Recorder (non-voting member designated by the Provost)
- C. Registrar (or designee)
- D. Vice President for Student Affairs (or designee)
- E. Deans of the Schools (or their designees)
- F. Four Faculty Representatives (Chair of the Faculty Senate [or designee], Chair of the Admission and Retention Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate and two faculty members at large designated by the Faculty Senate)

III. MEETINGS

ACC meetings are held at least twice during each fall and spring semester. Meetings are generally scheduled prior to the opening and closing of each semester. All meetings are scheduled by the Provost/VPAA (or his/her designee), who communicates with the Deans of the Schools to establish due dates for written appeals from students. A calendar of meeting dates shall be published. In addition, the ACC shall meet at least once each academic year to address policy matters and concerns relevant to the committee's work. Minutes of all meetings shall be housed in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

IV. DISPOSITIONS

ACC renders dispositions based upon students' appeals for exceptions to established University policy. Each appeal is considered on the basis of its individual merit, and exceptions are granted only if documentation clearly demonstrates at least one the following:

- A. Sanctions or other negative decisions based on incorrect or missing information;
- B. Extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control; or
- C. Situations where there is malfeasance on the part of the University.

The dispositions of ACC are the final recourse for students, i.e., students may not appeal to any other authority at the University. However, ACC decisions may be reviewed by the Provost who has the authority to reconvene ACC if additional information relative to a particular case becomes available after a disposition is rendered. ACC decisions are communicated to students via letter from the Office of the Provost with copies to the student's dean and department chairperson as well as the Office of the Registrar.

Minutes of the proceedings of the ACC are completed by the committee's recorder; hard copies are maintained in the Office of the Provost in accordance with the University's record retention policy. A summary of dispositions of the ACC shall be submitted annually to the Faculty Senate.

Members of the ACC must recuse themselves from deliberation on any case in which they have direct or indirect involvement, including familial relationship, personal ties to the appellant, or any other connection which might pose a conflict of interest.

V. ACTION ITEMS

Administrative Withdrawal: Administrative withdrawal (grade of “W” for all courses in a semester) is warranted based upon irrefutable documentation relative to attendance or other extreme circumstances (e.g., military deployment, medical emergencies, etc.).

Residency Requirements: The following is the University policy on residency:

A candidate for the bachelor's degree must spend the last year in resident study for the degree at Virginia State University. A year's residence is interpreted to mean the accumulation of a minimum of 27 hours of upper-level courses in (1) two regular semesters, or (2) three regular summer sessions, or (3) one academic semester and one summer of nine weeks. Subject to the discretion of the chair of the department, the student may be required to take in residence a maximum of fifty percent of the credit hours required in his or her major sequence. This may in no case be less than twenty-five percent.

Transfer students must spend a year in residence before graduation. A transfer student from a junior or community college must complete a minimum of 60 semester hours at Virginia State University to qualify for candidacy for a degree.²

Students may apply for exceptions to this policy in cases of extreme circumstances over which they have no control. ACC will consider each request on the basis of individual merit and documentation.

Proficiency Examinations: At the end of each semester, each academic dean shall submit to the ACC a summary report on proficiency examinations administered by each department. Only if circumstances warrant further deliberation will appeal matters regarding requests for a proficiency examination be referred to the ACC. (See Appendix F: Proficiency Examination Procedures.) Proficiency examinations must be requested by the end of the eighth week of the semester. No requests for proficiency examinations will be accepted during the semester in which the student will graduate.

Readmission after Academic Sanctions: Students who are suspended may apply for readmission to the University per the provisions of the Academic Sanctions policy. However, readmission to the University following academic suspension will be granted ONLY ONCE.

Students may be subject to academic sanctions which result in suspension in accordance with the following established University policy:

² See Virginia State University Catalog, “Last 27 Credits.”

Academic Sanctions

1. *A new student (freshmen or transfer student without an Associate Degree) must earn a minimum grade point average of 1.5 each semester during the first two regular semesters in residence. Thereafter, the student must earn at least 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension).*

Transfer students with the Associate Degree must maintain a 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension) to remain in good academic standing.

2. *Academic warning will occur when a student's semester average falls below the required minimum.*
3. *Probation occurs when a student's semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for two semesters.*
4. *Suspension for poor scholarship will occur when a student's semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for three semesters. Students will not be readmitted to the University except under the following circumstances:*
 - A. *Students who return to the University having earned an Associate Degree (college-prep track) will be readmitted under the same terms and conditions as a transfer student.*
 - B. *Under exceptional circumstances (such as serious and documented health or financial difficulties), a student may appeal his/her suspension to the department chair and school dean who may then, in turn, recommend readmission to the Academic Credits Committee. **Such an appeal can only be considered by the ACC after the student has been out for the period of one academic year.** The student must present a letter from at least one faculty member in support of his/her appeal. If the appeal is successful, the student will be readmitted on "warning."*
5. *If a student voluntarily withdraws from the university for a semester (for any reason), that student will return on the same status with which he/she left. (That is, if the student left on "warning," he/she will return on "warning;" if he/she left on "probation," he/she will return on "probation.")³*

Each request for readmission is evaluated by ACC. The appellant must demonstrate that he/she is prepared to succeed academically via written recommendation from the appellant's dean and department chairperson and documentation of academic pursuits/activities (e.g., college

³ See Virginia State University *Catalog*, "Academic Sanctions."

course work successfully completed at other accredited institutions, college-equivalency experiences, relevant internships, military service, etc., as applicable).

- If the request for readmission is approved, ACC may make stipulations with regard to maximum number of credit-hours in which the applicant may enroll, change of major, required cumulative or term grade point average, among others as deemed appropriate to the student's academic progress during previous enrollment and work completed during the period of suspension.
- If the request for readmission is denied, ACC will inform the applicant in writing as to what the student can do to reapply in the future, or the application may be denied and permanent expulsion imposed.

Other areas

ACC monitors grade appeals that are assigned to the schools and may recommend re-evaluation of specific dispositions as needed. These may include grade changes involving the "N" grade. (See Appendix B for Grade Appeal Procedure.)

PART II: POLICIES AND PETITIONS COMMITTEE (PPC)

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. PURPOSE AND DUTIES

Purpose

The purpose of the Policies and Petitions Committee (PPC) is to deliberate requests for exceptions to academic policies for graduate students in the areas of academic suspensions, time limit for the completion of degree requirements, and general student appeals. Both the ACC and the PPC will provide a report of the types and disposition of cases to the Faculty Senate at the annual retreat.

Duties

PCC is charged with the following duties and responsibilities:

- A. Providing adjudication and disposition on students' academic suspensions, and other academic matters, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - Time limit for the completion of degree requirements⁴
 - Reinstatement of students
 - Admission to Candidacy
 - Removal of I grades
 - Transfer Credit
- B. Monitoring and making recommendations to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) relative to academic policy and procedure

II. COMPOSITION

PCC is a group organized under the auspices of the Graduate Dean and Office of the Provost/VPAA . The Committee is convened and facilitated by the Dean of the Graduate School. The Committee is composed of six graduate faculty members of the Graduate Faculty, two from each of the three undergraduate schools. The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies serves as Chairperson of this Committee, giving it a seventh member. The Dean, as chairperson, votes on cases and issues only to break a tie vote.

III. MEETINGS

The PCC meetings are held at least twice during the semester; however, on certain issues, the Committee members are sent electronic information and are requested to vote on the matter. All

⁴ See Appendix A-1 for glossary related to graduate policies.

members are informed of the decision prior to informing the student. Minutes of the meetings are housed in the Office of the Graduate Dean.

IV. DISPOSITIONS

The PCC renders dispositions based upon students' appeals for exceptions to established University policy. Each appeal is considered on the basis of its individual merit, and exceptions are granted only if documentation clearly demonstrates at least one of the following:

- A. Sanctions or other negative decisions based on incorrect or missing information;
- B. Extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control; or
- C. Situations where there is malfeasance on the part of the University.

The dispositions of PCC are the final recourse for students, i.e., students may not appeal to any other authority at the University. However, PCC decisions may be reviewed by the Provost, who has the authority to reconvene PCC if additional information relative to a particular case becomes available after a disposition is rendered. PCC decisions are communicated to students via letter from the Dean of Graduate Studies with copies to the student's dean and department chairperson as well as the Office of the Registrar.

Members of the PPC must recuse themselves from deliberation on any case in which they have direct or indirect involvement, including familial relationship, personal ties to the appellant, or any other connection which might pose a conflict of interest.

Minutes of the proceedings of the PCC are completed by the committee's recorder; hard copies are maintained in the Office of the Graduate Dean in accordance with the University's record retention policy. A summary of dispositions of the PCC shall be submitted annually to the Faculty Senate.

V. ACTION ITEMS

Admission to Candidacy: Admission to graduate study does not imply admission to candidacy for a degree. Students initially admitted into a program leading to a degree are evaluated later for advancement to degree candidacy. Students are eligible to apply for candidacy after they have completed a minimum of 12 semester hours of course work at this university in their approved program of study. They must, however, attain candidacy no later than the semester before they expect to graduate. In order to become a candidate for the master's degree, a student must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Satisfactory completion of all requirements for unconditional admission to the School of Graduate Studies and to the academic program, including satisfactory scores on the Graduate Record Examination.
2. Satisfactory completion of the foreign language requirement, where applicable.

3. A minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate-level courses in an approved program of study with a minimum grade-point average of B (3.00).
4. Evidence of proficiency in the use of the English language.
5. Approval of the major professor and of the minor professor where applicable.

The application for admission to candidacy should be filed in duplicate. Application forms are obtained from the Graduate Office and from the school's website, and upon their completion, must be returned to the Graduate Office. Students may not enroll for Research and Thesis, Thesis in Absentia, Master's Project, or the Comprehensive Examination before they have been admitted to candidacy.

Auditing Courses: Students enrolled in a full program of study, or its equivalent, may audit a course which contributes to that program provided the student's advisor approves and the instructor of the course agrees. Credit or grades are not assigned for auditing. Audit courses are not accepted in seminars, practica, research courses, field courses, clinical courses, workshops, or similar courses. (See auditing fees under "Special Fees.")

Certifying Hours and Completion of Requirements: The Dean will certify the completion of degree requirements to an employer upon written request from the student. The request should include the full name, title, address, and zip code of the persons to whom the student wants such certification made. No more than 12 semester hours of course work toward the degree may be certified to any employer by the Dean of Graduate Studies prior to attaining candidacy.

Only the Dean of Graduate Studies is authorized to certify the number of hours completed and the completion of degree requirements to an employer.

Change of Degree Program: Admission to the Graduate School in one program does not entitle a student to transfer to another program without applying for and being accepted by the new program as a new student. Any student wishing to change from one program to another must complete a Change of Major form (which requires a number of signatures including those of the original advisor and the chairperson of the department to which the student wishes to transfer). The forms are available in the Graduate Office.

Course Load: The normal load for a full-time graduate student enrolled during a semester is nine semester hours; a maximum class load is 12 semester hours. To be considered in full-time study the

student must be registered for not less than nine semester hours of work. Non-traditional students who are enrolled in an Alternative Program may enroll in 12 semester hours.

The academic load of a graduate student cannot always be measured in terms of formal courses. Frequently, a student's assignment will consist largely or entirely of research. The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will determine the extent to which these assignments are the equivalent of a full academic load.

Part-time graduate students, in-service teachers, and other employed personnel are advised not to carry a load in excess of two graduate courses, except by special permission of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies on recommendation of the major advisor. Without special permission, the course load for part-time students may not exceed six credit hours.

General Student Appeals: A student who considers any of the regulations of the School of Graduate Studies, to have adverse effect upon his/her academic progress may request relief by addressing a written petition setting forth the particulars of the situation with approval of his /her advisor. The request should be addressed to the Policies and Petitions Committee in care of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. The Committee is composed of six graduate faculty members, plus the graduate dean.

During summer school, graduate students can carry 6 semester hours during both four and a half week sessions. Thus, a student may earn 12 semester hours of credit by attending two sessions of summer school.

Grade Appeal: The appeal procedure for a student in the case of a complaint about perceived inaccurate or unfair grading begins with contacting the faculty member and further contact with the instructor's department chairperson. If the complaint is not resolved at either of those levels, a written request for review of the situation is submitted to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies for review by the Policies and Petitions Committee, if necessary. The chair of this committee is the Graduate School Dean.

Graduate Record Examination (GRE): At Virginia State University, all individuals seeking master's and post-master's degrees must submit test scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). The GRE scores must be no more than six years old when the student is admitted to the Graduate School. If the GRE was taken earlier, the student must take it again and submit new scores. The GRE is to be taken prior to enrollment.

Probation/Dismissal: Graduate students must maintain a "B" average (3.00) in the courses taken in their approved graduate programs. A student who falls below 3.00 is put on probation with or without

written notice from the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. If the cumulative average is not raised to 3.00 in the following semester, students will be notified by the Dean, in writing, that they have been discontinued in the program.

Reinstatement: Graduate students suspended for academic reasons are never automatically reinstated. A student may appeal to the Policies and Petitions Committee to be given a chance to gain reinstatement. If the Committee approves, the student is allowed to enroll for one semester only to repeat the course or courses that pulled the average below 3.00 and caused the student to be dropped; no new course work may be taken while the student is seeking reinstatement. If the student succeeds that semester in raising the average to 3.00, the student must then appeal to the committee for full reinstatement. If, after reinstatement, the grade-point average falls below 3.00 again, the student will not be permitted to continue graduate study at Virginia State University.

Residence Requirements: A minimum of 21 semester hours in a 30-hour program or 24 semester hours in a 36-hour program must be completed through the offerings at Virginia State University. Although full-time study is desirable, it is not required and many of the programs can be completed through part-time study. Some programs have special stipulations concerning part-time study, which should be carefully followed.

Retention: To be retained in an approved program of study, a student is expected to maintain a minimum cumulative "B" average. If the cumulative average in the approved program of study falls below "B," with or without candidacy, the student must bring the cumulative average up to "B" during the next period of enrollment in the approved program of study. A students who fail to earn a "B" average, or whose average falls below "B" on a second occasion, will be dropped from the program in which they are enrolled.

For the purposes of retention, cumulative averages are to be computed on the basis of hours completed within a student's approved program of study.

Time Limit for the Completion of Degree Requirements: All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within six years from the date of initial registration in the graduate program; excluding periods of military service. Students who encounter unique problems which prevent compliance with this regulation may address an appeal to the Chairman, Policies and Petitions Committee, in care of the School of Graduate Studies.

Under compelling circumstances, students may be awarded extensions, totaling not more than two years, to the present limit of six years. This provision restricts the period for completion of the degree to a maximum of eight years.

All transfer credit for the degree must have occurred within the designated period (six years) prior to the date of graduation. Transfer courses are not eligible for an extension of time. Test scores submitted in support of applications for admission must be within the six-year period.

Transfer Credit from Another Institution: In a 30-hour program, nine semester hours earned at another accredited graduate school may be accepted toward the master's degree at Virginia State University. In a 36-semester hour program, 12 semester hours may be accepted. In any case, transfer credit from another institution must be approved by the department and must be of "B" quality or higher. Transfer of credit in the core courses is not permitted. The core courses are Foundations of Education, Statistical Procedures in Education and Psychology, and Educational Research.

All transfer credit will be applied after the student's application for advancement to candidacy. Transfer credit cannot be over six years old by the date of graduation; this limit cannot be extended.

Withdrawal from Graduate Study: Students who withdraw officially from the University will receive grades of "W" in the courses in which they are registered.

Students who withdraw without following official withdrawal procedures are subject to receiving the grade of record (F) on the final instructor's grade report.

Appendix A: Glossary to Section I: Academic Credits Committee

Administrative Error: A term used that identifies a mistake made by faculty, or an administrator.

Academic Grades: Symbols that are used to describe academic performance.

Academic Sanctions: A process that describes the steps leading to academic suspension of a student.

Academic Suspension: Will occur when a student's semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for three semesters. A new student (freshman or transfer student without an Associate Degree) must earn a minimum grade point average of 1.5 each semester during the first two regular semesters in residence. Thereafter, the student must earn at least 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension). Transfer students with the Associate Degree must maintain a 2.0 semester average each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or have a cumulative average of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension) to remain in good academic standing.

Academic Warning: Will occur when a student's semester average falls below the required minimum.

Administrative Withdrawal: Administrative withdrawal (grade of "W" for all courses in a semester) is warranted based upon irrefutable documentation relative to attendance or other extreme circumstances (e.g., military deployment, medical emergencies, etc.).

Dispositions: Final decisions made by the ACC involving requests for exceptions to academic policies in the areas of readmission to the University after suspension for poor academic performance, residency requirements and proficiency examinations, and other areas not assigned to the schools.

Grade Appeal: A series of steps that students must follow to get a grade changed if the student believes that the grade issued by the instructor was inaccurate or unfair.

Probation: Occurs when a student's semester and cumulative average falls below the required minimum for two semesters.

Proficiency Examination: An examination designed to allow students to receive academic credit by examination in those subjects in which competence can be demonstrated by examination in lieu of formal course work.

Re-admission after Academic Sanctions: Students who are suspended for poor academic performance may apply for readmission to the University per the provisions of the Academic Sanctions policy. However, readmission to the University following academic suspension will be granted **ONLY ONCE**.

Residency Requirement: A candidate for the bachelor's degree must spend the last year in resident study for the degree at Virginia State University. A year's residence is interpreted to mean the accumulation of a minimum of 27 hours of upper-level courses in (1) two regular semesters, or (2) three regular summer sessions, or (3) one academic semester and one summer of nine weeks. Subject to the discretion of the chair of the department, the student may be required to take in residence a maximum of fifty percent of the credit hours required in his or her major sequence. This may in no case be less than twenty-five percent.

Withdrawal: If a student voluntarily withdraws from the university for a semester (for any reason), that student will return on the same status with which he/she left. (That is, if the student left on “warning,” he/she will return on “warning;” if he/she left on “probation,” he/she will return on “probation.”)

Appendix A- 1: Glossary to Section II: Policies and Petitions Committee

Administrative Error: A term used that identifies a mistake made by faculty, or an administrator.

Academic Grades: Symbols that are used to describe academic performance.

Admission to Candidacy: A graduate school policy that ensures that all graduate students have met all requirements to become a candidate for the master’s degree.

Auditing a Course: A student who attends a class without working or expecting a formal grade.

Course Load: A normal load for full time graduate students is nine semester hours and for part-time students it is six semester hours.

Grade Appeal: A series of steps that students must follow to get a grade changed if the student believes that the grade issued by the instructor was inaccurate or unfair.

Probation: A status for students whose grade point average drops below 3.0.

Reinstatement: A procedure used by students to petition the Policies and Petitions Committee for readmission to the University.

Resident Requirement: A minimum of 21 semester hours in a 30 hour program or 24 semester hours in a 36 hour program must be completed through the offerings at VSU.

Time Limit for Completion of Degree: All requirements for the doctoral or master’s degree must be completed within six years from the date of initial registration in the graduate program; excluding periods of military service.

Appendix B: Grade Appeal Procedure for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

School Grade Appeal Committees consisting of at least one faculty member from each department shall deliberate requests for grade appeals and recommend an action to the school dean. The dean shall review the recommendation and make a decision on the outcome of the appeal. The dean shall serve as the final arbiter on the matter. Only if circumstances warrant further deliberation should a grade appeal be referred to the ACC. At the end of each semester, the dean shall submit to the Academic Credits Committee a summary report of the dispositions of grade appeals handled at the school level. The Chair of the Academic Credits Committee shall provide the Provost with a written acknowledgement of the deans' reports on grade appeals in their respective schools.

The appeal procedure for a student with a complaint about grading requires initial contact with the instructor involved and further contact with the instructor's department chairperson if the matter is not resolved between the instructor and student. If the matter is not resolved at the departmental level, a grade appeal should be submitted to the dean of the school in which the instructor teaches. The dean shall then forward the request to the grade appeal committee for deliberation.

Normally, students may appeal final grades based upon documented evidence that a grade was incorrectly awarded. **Grade appeals must be requested within ONE YEAR of the semester in which the grade was awarded.** Typically, grade changes are warranted based upon the following:

- The Professor did not have information or documentation at the time the grade was awarded;
- The Professor made an error of calculation (or other error) or entry of a grade;
- A grade of "I" (incomplete) was entered and the student completed the necessary work for the course.

Grade changes involving the "N" grade should be referred to either the Academic Credits Committee or the Policies and Petitions Committee as appropriate.

The student will follow the steps below:

1. Make his/her case (with documentation⁵) to the faculty member who awarded the grade. (If the faculty member is no longer employed by the University, the student may approach the Department Chairperson for the unit through which the course was offered.)
2. If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of the faculty member, he/she may repeat this process with the Department Chairperson.
3. If the student remains dissatisfied, he/she may appeal to the school grade appeal committee via a letter which states the student's case with supporting documentation appended.
4. After deliberation, the school grade appeal committee makes a positive or negative recommendation to the dean.

⁵ Privacy concerns may limit reviewers' access to sensitive and personal documents submitted by the student.

5. The dean will consider the appeal, entering one of two dispositions:
- The appeal has no merit and the faculty member's grade stands as entered;
 - The appeal has merit and is remanded to the department chairperson and faculty member for reconsideration. In these cases, the disposition of the faculty member is reported to the dean and is final.

Appendix C: Guidelines for Writing the Appeal Letter

Communication regarding appeals should be routed as follows: academic advisor, department chair, and school dean. The student's request for action should then be forwarded to the Academic Credits Committee.

Academic advisors, department chairs, and academic deans are encouraged to review the University's academic policies with the student to determine that the student is eligible to file an appeal. An appeal for readmission can only be made after the student has been out for a period of one year. Students seeking readmission should remember that they can be reinstated only **ONCE**. The Academic Credits Committee does not consider financial aid appeals or judicial affairs appeals.

Students should complete the "Appeal Action Request" form and attach it to the appeal letter following the guidelines below. All letters must first be reviewed by the department chair and academic dean **BEFORE** they are received by the Academic Credits Committee.

The appeal letter should be typed, grammatically correct, and signed by the student requesting consideration by the Academic Credits Committee. It is imperative that the letter contain the student's PERMANENT address, not campus address, to avoid delay. Documentation in support of the appeal must be submitted with the letter. This should be the same documentation that is presented to the academic advisor, department chair, and academic dean unless the additional documents were not available for review. If the appeal seeks readmission, it **MUST** be accompanied by a letter of support from at least one faculty member.

Suggested Format for the Appeal Letter

(RETURN ADDRESS or LETTERHEAD)

Student's **Permanent** Mailing Address
City, State ZIP

DATE

(ADDRESSEE)

ATTN: Academic Credits Committee
Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
P.O. Box 9404
Virginia State University, Virginia 23806

(SALUTATION)

Dear Academic Credits Committee:

(BODY OF LETTER)

FIRST PARAGRAPH

In three or four sentences, state the **PROBLEM** that you would like the Academic Credits Committee to address. Be clear in stating the nature of your appeal, including the academic policy in question and the exception you are requesting from the Committee. (Ex. seeking readmission after being academically dismissed.)

SECOND PARAGRAPH

Explain the reasons and history behind your appeal. Make sure you state your case in a clear and concise manner, furnishing pertinent details and extenuating circumstances. Present your case in chronological order so that the Academic Credits Committee can follow the sequence of events and follow your reasoning. Attach supporting documents that are RELEVANT to this case.

THIRD PARAGRAPH

State clearly what action you wish the Academic Credits Committee to take on your behalf. Describe also any actions that you have taken to convince the Committee to rule in your favor or actions you may have to take if the appeal is granted or denied. (For example, describe steps you are taking or have taken to resolve the difficulties that you are experiencing in your academic/personal life—attending community college, seeking counseling or medical treatment, etc.)

(CLOSING)

Sincerely,

Student's Signature

Student's Typed Name

Student's V#

Enclosure(s): List of Documents Attached

[illegible]

Appendix D: Appeal Action Request Form



APPEAL ACTION REQUEST FORM

NOTE: All appeal requests must begin in the academic department and follow the appropriate procedure. The Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will not receive requests submitted directly by faculty or students.

Directions: Please provide the information requested below and attach this form to the appeal packet.

I. Student Identification

Name: _____
Last First Middle Initial

Student Number: Major:

Department: _____

School: _____

II. Request for Action

(Check One)

Readmission after Academic Sanction

Request for Proficiency Examination

Waiver of Residency Requirement (last 27 hours at VSU) _____

Other (Please describe): _____

Student Name (Print): _____

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Appendix E



OFFICE USE ONLY	
Processed by:	_____
Date:	_____
Form #	_____

**OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR
GRADE CHANGE FORM**

(For grade changes not involving Incomplete ["I"] grades)

THIS FORM IS TO BE FORWARDED TO THE DEAN OF THE SCHOOL IN WHICH THE COURSE WAS TAKEN.

STUDENT'S V-NUMBER _____ STUDENT'S NAME _____

STUDENT'S DEPARTMENT _____

STUDENT'S SCHOOL _____

SEMESTER AND YEAR THAT COURSE WAS TAKEN: SEMESTER _____ YEAR _____

COURSE INFORMATION: CRN _____ COURSE NUMBER _____ SECTION _____

COURSE TITLE _____

CHANGE GRADE FROM _____ TO _____ SEMESTER HOURS _____

PLEASE FILL IN REASON FOR CHANGE: _____

INSTRUCTOR'S PRINTED NAME: _____

INSTRUCTOR'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE _____

CHAIRPERSON'S PRINTED NAME: _____

CHAIRPERSON'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE OF THE DEAN OF THE SCHOOL IN WHICH THE COURSE WAS TAKEN: _____

DATE _____

DISPOSITION OF ACADEMIC CREDITS COMMITTEE (IF APPLICABLE): _____ Grade Change Request Approved
_____ Grade Change Request Denied

AUTHORIZING ACC SIGNATURE

PRINT NAME

DATE

SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR: _____ DATE _____

NOTE: A grade change form must be received by the registrar's office directly from a University faculty or staff member. A form carried by a student WILL NOT be accepted. **Faculty and administrators must recuse themselves from grade change cases involving family members or other affiliations with a student which might pose a conflict of interest.** There is no further review beyond the school dean. The entire process must be completed within ONE YEAR of the semester in which the grade is contested.

DISTRIBUTION: After processing, notification will be sent to the INSTRUCTOR, CHAIR of the department offering the course, and CHAIR of the department in which the student is enrolled. The CHAIR of the department in which the student is enrolled will notify the student and the student's academic advisor.

Appendix F



OFFICE USE ONLY	
Processed by:	_____
Date:	_____
Form #	_____

JUSTIFICATION FOR ASSIGNING AN INCOMPLETE ("I") GRADE

NOTE: The grade of Incomplete ("I") should be assigned **ONLY** to a student who is otherwise passing the course but is unable to complete course requirements due to extenuating or extraordinary circumstances. If the "I" grade is not removed within **one year**, the grade will automatically become an "F." **This form must be submitted to the Department Chairperson housing the course.**

Student's V- Number _____

Student's Name _____

Course Title _____

Course Prefix/ Number/ Section _____

CRN _____

Current Course Grade _____

JUSTIFICATION:

RECOMMENDED DUE DATES:

DESCRIPTION OF WORK NEEDED TO COMPLETE FINAL GRADE:

Please attach a copy of assignments, tests, papers, and other work that must be completed by student before "I" can be removed. **Include a copy of the course syllabus.**

Instructor's Printed Name _____

Instructor's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Copies go to STUDENT, INSTRUCTOR, and INSTRUCTOR'S DEPARTMENT CHAIR.

Appendix F-1



OFFICE USE ONLY Processed by: _____ Date: _____ Form # _____

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR
REMOVAL OF AN INCOMPLETE ("I") GRADE FORM

(For grade changes involving Incomplete ["I"] grades **ONLY**)

THIS FORM IS TO BE FORWARDED TO THE CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT IN WHICH THE COURSE WAS TAKEN.

NOTE: The grade of Incomplete ("I") should be assigned **ONLY** to a student who is otherwise passing the course but is unable to complete course requirements due to extenuating or extraordinary circumstances. If an "I" grade is not removed within **one year**, the grade will automatically become an "F." Removal of "I" Grade Forms should be submitted **PRIOR** to the last class day of class during the semester in which the one-year grace period expires.

STUDENT'S V-NUMBER _____ STUDENT'S NAME _____

STUDENT'S DEPARTMENT _____

STUDENT'S SCHOOL _____

SEMESTER AND YEAR THAT COURSE WAS TAKEN: SEMESTER _____ YEAR _____

COURSE INFORMATION: CRN _____ COURSE NUMBER _____ SECTION _____ SEMESTER HOURS _____

COURSE TITLE _____

CHANGE GRADE FROM INCOMPLETE ("I") TO GRADE OF _____ DATE WORK COMPLETED _____

DESCRIPTION OF WORK COMPLETED: _____

INSTRUCTOR'S PRINTED NAME: _____

INSTRUCTOR'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE _____

CHAIRPERSON'S PRINTED NAME: _____

CHAIRPERSON'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR: _____ DATE _____

NOTE: ANY grade change form must be received by the registrar's office directly from a University faculty or staff member. A form carried by a student **WILL NOT** be accepted. **Faculty and administrators must recuse themselves from grade change cases involving family members or other affiliations with a student which might pose a conflict of interest.**

DISTRIBUTION: After processing, a copy of this form will be sent to the CHAIR of the department offering the course and the CHAIR of the department in which the student is enrolled. The CHAIRS will supply copies to the faculty member and student.

APPENDIX G Procedures for Completing the Proficiency Examination

Proficiency Examinations: The purpose of proficiency examinations is to allow students to receive academic credit by examination in those subjects in which competence can be demonstrated by examination in lieu of formal course work.

1. Proficiency examinations are coordinated by the individual departments.
2. The student will inform the department chairperson that he/she intends to take a proficiency examination in a given course in order to satisfy the requirements of the course. Proficiency examination forms are secured in the Office of the student's major department. The student will then seek counsel of the chairperson of the department in which the examination will be administered. The student will then be assigned to a specific instructor who will schedule the examination. A student must register for a proficiency examination by the **eighth** week of the semester in which he/she plans to take the examination. The proficiency examination must be administered and the grade submitted to the Office of the Registrar by the end of the **twelfth** week of the semester.
3. Students will receive credit for grades of A, B, and C earned on proficiency examinations. The grade will be recorded on the student's permanent record.
4. A maximum of twelve (12) semester hours may be earned through proficiency examinations.
5. The cost will be one-half of the regular fee per semester hour for proficiency examinations.
6. A committee in each department will be responsible for structuring and evaluating proficiency examinations. The examination should be so structured as to measure accurately the master of specific course content.
7. Instructors responsible for the administration of proficiency examinations should recommend or make available materials needed for preparation by the student.
8. No student may take a proficiency examination in the same course more than once.
9. Any student currently enrolled may request a proficiency examination.
10. Credit by proficiency examination shall not be granted for any course for which a student has been previously enrolled.
11. Continuing Education students and graduate students are not eligible to earn academic credit through proficiency examinations.
12. Proficiency examinations will not be administered without proof of payment of the required fee.

Completing the Proficiency Examination

Students requesting the awarding of academic credit through the completion of a proficiency examination should follow the procedure described below.

1. The student contacts the academic advisor to request a proficiency examination.
2. After the department provides the student the Request for Proficiency Examination form, the student completes the appropriate section of the form and submits the form to the academic advisor.
3. The academic advisor completes the appropriate section of the form and submits it to his or her department chair.
4. Upon approval, the department chair forwards the form to the chair of the department housing the course for which the proficiency examination is requested.
5. Upon approval, the chair of the department housing the course forwards the form to the dean of the school housing the course for which the proficiency examination is requested.
6. If the dean approves the student's request, the dean then (1) notifies the student to go the Cashier's Office to pay the fee and (2) forwards a copy of the signed form to both department chairs.
7. The student proceeds to the Cashier's Office, pays the proficiency fee, and brings the receipt to the department housing the course.
8. The department housing the course schedules and administers the proficiency examination.
9. The chair of the department housing the course completes the "Report of Proficiency Examination" form, indicating the grade earned by the student.
10. Within 48 hours of the student's completion of the exam, the chair of the department housing the course submits the report to the Office of the Registrar for processing and provides a copy to the chair of the student's department.

NOTE: At NO TIME should a student handle the proficiency form after the initial request is made with the academic advisor.



Appendix H

OFFICE USE ONLY

Processed By: _____

Date: _____

Form #: _____

Request for Proficiency Examination

Virginia State University Office of the Registrar

To be completed by student	V- Number _____ Student's Name _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"> Last First Middle </div> Status: In-State _____ Out-of-State _____ Email _____ Department: _____ School: _____ Current Address: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"> Street City State Zip Code </div> Permanent Address: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"> Street City State Zip Code </div>
To be completed by Academic Advisor & DEPARTMENT CHAIRS	<p><i>The student named above has requested permission to take a Proficiency Examination in (Course Number) _____ (Descriptive Title of Course) _____. The student's record has been reviewed and by signature below, approval is given the student to seek permission from the department housing the course to take such an examination.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A student must register for a proficiency examination by the end of the EIGHTH week of the semester in which he/she plans to take the examination. The course fee must be paid in full PRIOR to administering. Proficiency examinations are not applicable to graduate and doctoral students. A syllabus must be attached. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> CRN Course Number Descriptive Title of Course Sem. Hours </div> Reason for Proficiency: _____ Approved by Student's Academic Advisor: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"> PRINT SIGNATURE DATE </div> Approved by Department Chair of Student/Advisor: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"> PRINT SIGNATURE DATE </div> Approved by Department Chair Housing Course: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"> PRINT SIGNATURE DATE </div>
SCHOOL DEAN	NOTE: Dean should contact student upon approval to direct student to proceed to Bursar's Office for payment of fees. Dean of School Housing Course: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"> PRINT SIGNATURE DATE </div>
BURSAR/CASHIER	Proficiency Fee \$ _____ Due (Based on one-half of current tuition cost per credit) Receipt No. _____ University Bursar: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"> PRINT SIGNATURE DATE </div>

Routing Instructions: Student ➡ Academic Advisor ➡ Department Chair(s) ➡ Dean ➡ Bursar /Cashier ➡ Registrar

Appendix I



OFFICE USE ONLY

Processed By: _____

Date: _____

Form#: _____

Report of Proficiency Examination

Virginia State University

Office of the Registrar

To be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar after proficiency exam has been administered. At NO time should a student handle this form. Attach the signed "Request for Proficiency Exam" form and a copy of the completed exam to this form.

Student Information	V- Number _____ Student's Name _____				
	Last		First	Middle	
	Status: In-State _____ Out-of-State _____		Email _____		
	Department: _____		School: _____		
	Current Address: _____				
Department Administering Exam	Street		City	State	Zip Code
	Permanent Address: _____				
	Street		City	State	Zip Code
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A student must register for a proficiency examination by the eighth week of the semester in which he/she plans to take the examination. • The course fee must be paid in full PRIOR to administering. • Proficiency examinations are not applicable to graduate and doctoral students. • STUDENT MUST PRESENT RECEIPT OF PAYMENT BEFORE SITTING FOR THE EXAM. 				
	CRN	Course Number	Descriptive Title of Course	Grade	Sem. Hrs.
	Receipt of payment verified by: _____				
	Print Name		Signature	Date	
	Comments: _____				

	Examined by: _____				
PRINT		SIGNATURE	DATE EXAM ADMINISTERED		

Copies will go to the chair of the department administering the exam, the chair of the department housing the course, the dean of the school housing the course, and the Office of the Registrar. After processing, Registrar's Office shall provide student with written notification of the outcome.

