

## **GRADUATE ADDENDUM**

The preceding chapters also relate to the graduate program and graduate faculty; the information delineated in this section of the Faculty Handbook relates primarily to the organizational structure and governance of the graduate program. Academic regulations exclusive to the graduate program and omitted from this Handbook are compiled in the current issue of the Arkansas Tech University Graduate Catalog.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAM**

### **I. Administration of the Graduate Program**

The graduate program is administered by the Dean of Graduate School, who is directly responsible to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Policies governing the graduate program are developed by the Graduate Council; matters pertaining to the graduate teacher education program are reviewed and approved by the Teacher Education Council before being presented to the Graduate Council. Policies are then approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, President of the University, and Board of Trustees.

### **II. Philosophy of the Graduate Program**

Arkansas Tech University holds to the principle that graduate-level scholarship should be based on highly developed habits of critical judgment, independent thinking, creative initiative, and disciplined inquiry. Successful completion of the graduate program signifies that the student has acquired the research skills of an independent scholar, with expertise in a particular field of study.

The student admitted to graduate study at Arkansas Tech University should not expect to acquire these skills and to achieve this expertise through classroom and laboratory instruction alone; rather, the student should expect to draw upon independent resources to collect, organize, and synthesize research data and information in order to achieve scholarly expertise in the chosen field of study. Graduate study, then, aids the student to acquire the skills needed to identify important problems, to establish modes of inquiry, to formulate proposed solutions, and to communicate the interpretation of scholarly and research analysis.

### **III. Statement of Purpose and Goals of the Graduate Program**

Purpose:

The purpose of the master's degree programs at Arkansas Tech University is to provide graduate education opportunities in professional education and in the liberal arts to anyone who seeks, and who is eligible for admission. The University has a particular interest in meeting the professional growth and advancement needs of certified teachers in the service region.

Goals:

The following goals are set forth for the University's graduate program:

- A. To attract quality students well matched to the educational programs and social objectives of the University. These efforts will be without regard to age, race, religion, sex, or ethnic background.
- B. To provide graduate curricula that ensures that the student acquires an understanding of:  
(1) research and the manner by which research is conducted, and (2) the subject matter, bibliography, theory, and methodology of the field.

- C. To develop an approach to learning and intellectual work which involves familiarity with research and problem-solving methods, the ability to synthesize knowledge from many sources, the capacity for self-directed learning, and a commitment to lifelong learning.
- D. To assure that high intellectual standards are maintained, that students acquire both general and specialized knowledge, and that they are prepared for advanced scholarly study.
- E. To encourage altruism by working toward a respect for diverse cultures, a commitment to world peace, a consciousness of the important moral issues of the time, and a concern for the welfare of mankind in general.
- F. To provide opportunities for the graduate program to enhance the University's contribution by: (1) improving quality of instruction in the University's service area; (2) serving as a center for collecting and disseminating current instructional strategies and techniques; (3) offering consultative services to schools and individual teachers for strengthening existing curricular offerings, implementing innovative programs, and research activities; and (4) providing educational experiences that improve professional competencies of in-service teachers.

#### **IV. Dean of Graduate School - Job Description**

The Dean of Graduate School:

- A. Shall be appointed by the President of the University upon recommendation by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- B. Shall be directly responsible to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- C. Shall have university-wide responsibilities to foster and facilitate interdisciplinary and interschool graduate programs and shall serve as permanent chairperson of the Graduate Council.
- D. Shall perform a major role in both academic and budgetary planning and in institutional organization as these functions relate to the graduate program.
- E. Shall be a member of, or be represented on, councils or committees whose actions have an impact on graduate education.
- F. Shall play a significant role in the important academic personnel decisions which are made within the institution as they relate to graduate education.
- G. Shall have joint responsibility with the Graduate Council for granting graduate faculty status.
- H. Shall be responsible for:
  - 1. admitting applicants to graduate student status;
  - 2. reviewing academic progress;

3. awarding fellowships and assistantships for graduate students;
  4. supervising research for masters' degrees;
  5. certifying the completion of degree requirements and recommending granting of graduate degrees;
  6. overseeing the adequacy of student services and promoting the welfare of graduate students.
- I. Shall be accessible to graduate students for discussion and resolution of problems.
  - J. Shall, along with the Graduate Council, review periodically all of the institution's graduate programs for quality, effectiveness, and consonance with institutional goals and resources.
  - K. Shall evaluate proposed new graduate programs in terms of faculty strength, manpower needs for program graduates, adequacy of institutional resources, and compatibility with existing graduate programs and with the academic plan of the institution.
  - L. Shall, along with the Graduate Council, participate in decisions regarding program initiation, consolidation, or termination.
  - M. Shall be associated actively with the University's organized research effort, and therefore, shall be a member of the University's committees whose actions are significant to the research mission of the institution.
  - N. Shall interact closely with other university officials and with legal counsel in complying with laws and regulations affecting graduate education, in developing institutional responses to proposed legislation and regulations which affect graduate education and research, and in reviewing statements in the graduate school catalogs and bulletins about purposes, goals, content, and requirements of graduate programs.
  - O. Shall be the institutional representative to national and regional bodies which deal with graduate education.
  - P. Shall submit a yearly report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs on the status of the graduate program.
  - Q. Shall promote the graduate program and maintain good relations with service area education professionals; i.e., superintendents, principals, and teachers.

The job description of the Dean of Graduate School has been developed in accordance with guidelines contained in the booklet, The Organization and Administration of Graduate Schools in the U.S., which is published by the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States.

## V. The Graduate Council

### A. Purpose:

The Graduate Council shall be the body responsible for determining policy and establishing standards, criteria, regulations, and procedures for graduate study in accordance with policies of the Board of Trustees.

### B. Responsibilities of the Graduate Council:

It is the responsibility of the Graduate Council to review all proposals for graduate degree programs and courses and, at its option, existing programs; to establish and review the criteria for membership on the graduate faculty; to establish the minimum admission standards and the standards for continuation of graduate students; to act upon petitions and appeals from the decision of the Dean of Graduate School; to consider any other matters relevant to the graduate program; and to authorize, recommend, or instruct the Dean of Graduate School to take appropriate actions to effect the results of its decisions.

### C. Membership Qualifications:

Faculty membership on the Graduate Council shall be limited to full and associate members of the graduate faculty. Student membership shall be limited to those graduate students who have been admitted to candidacy for the master's degree. All Council members shall have full voting rights.

### D. Membership Composition:

The Graduate Council shall be composed as follows:

1. Each school will have one representative. Any school offering a graduate degree will have an additional representative. A school offering five or more graduate programs will have an additional representative. No school will have more than three representatives.
2. One graduate student appointed by the Dean of Graduate School;
3. The Registrar, who shall serve as secretary of the Graduate Council;
4. The Dean of Graduate School, who shall serve as chairperson of the Graduate Council.

### E. Elections:

Faculty: Only those members eligible to serve on the Council are eligible to vote in its election.

Each school shall, at the time all University standing committee members are elected each year, elect the number of faculty members to fill vacant seats or expired terms allotted to that school. No department in any school shall contribute more than one member to the Council.

F. Term of Office:

All elected members of the Graduate Council shall hold office for three calendar years from August 1 following their election, with the following exceptions:

1. Student membership shall be for a one-year term only.
2. Faculty membership shall be vacated on the date that any member terminates his/her faculty appointment.
3. Faculty membership shall be terminated when a member begins a leave of absence for a period of one regular semester or longer, but shall not be terminated when a leave of absence is granted for a summer term.
4. Membership shall be terminated from the date a member submits his or her resignation from the Council to the chairperson.
5. An elected faculty member of the Graduate Council may succeed himself/herself in office for as many terms as elected.
6. If, for any reason, faculty membership is terminated, a special election shall be held to complete the unexpired term in the school wherein the vacancy occurs. If, for any reason, a student membership is vacated, the chairperson of the Graduate Council shall appoint another qualified student. A graduate student who is appointed to complete an unexpired term is eligible for reappointment.
7. The term of the Registrar, who shall serve as secretary of the Graduate Council, is unlimited.
8. The term of the Dean of Graduate School, who shall serve as chairperson of the Graduate Council, is unlimited.

G. Meetings:

There shall be one meeting of the Graduate Council each month of the fall and spring semesters (except May and December) and one meeting during each of the two terms of the summer sessions. The agenda for each regular and special meeting shall be prepared and distributed to each member of the Graduate Council no later than one week prior to each meeting. The time and place of each regular meeting, however, shall be announced to the entire graduate faculty no later than one full week prior to each meeting.

Special meetings of the Graduate Council shall be called by the chairperson of the Council in the following manner:

1. Upon the initiative of the chairperson of the Council.
2. Upon petition of three or more members of the Council.
3. Upon request of the Vice President for Academic Affairs or the President of the University.

#### H. Quorum:

The presence of a majority of the total membership of the Graduate Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business.

#### I. Committees:

The Dean of Graduate School shall establish standing committees and such ad hoc committees as are deemed necessary for the operation of the graduate program.

These committees shall be composed of members selected from the total graduate faculty. Chairpersons of all committees, however, shall be members of the Graduate Council.

Standing committees shall be appointed at the first meeting of the Graduate Council each academic year and shall serve one calendar year.

Ad hoc committees shall serve until their final reports are presented and they are dismissed by the Council.

All reports of committees shall be presented to the Council in writing and may also be presented orally if requested by the Council.

#### J. Officers:

Officers of the Graduate Council shall be the chairperson, the vice chairperson, the secretary, and such other officers as the Council deems necessary.

Chairperson: The Dean of Graduate School shall serve as permanent chairperson of the Graduate Council.

Vice Chairperson: The vice chairperson shall be a member elected at the last regular meeting of each academic year, shall take office at the beginning of the following year, shall serve for a one-year term, and shall be eligible to succeed himself/herself.

Secretary: The Registrar shall serve as secretary of the Graduate Council and as a voting member.

#### K. Duties:

The chairperson of the Graduate Council shall call meetings of the Council, shall preside at all meetings of the Council, shall appoint members to ad hoc committees, shall report to the Council all communications from the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and shall transmit to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and to all graduate faculty members the published minutes of each meeting of the Council or any other published communications as the Council shall direct.

The vice chairperson of the Graduate Council shall call and preside at all meetings of the Council in the absence of the chairperson, or shall preside over the meetings when the chairperson shall vacate the chair and call on him/her to preside.

The secretary shall record the proceedings of Council meetings and perform such other duties as prescribed by the Council.

Duties of other officers designated by the Council shall be determined by vote of the Council.

L. Amendments:

This plan of organization for the Graduate Council shall be amended by a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the Graduate Council.

An amendment adopted shall become effective one month after its adoption unless:

1. held in abeyance for action by the Board of Trustees;
2. disapproved by the President of the University;
3. disapproved by the Board of Trustee.

M. Recommendations for Implementing Changes in the Graduate Council:

1. It is recommended that as a result of the reorganization of the University, if the appointed member of the Council is in a different school from that which he/she was appointed, the term of office automatically terminates. Presently elected members who will be in a different school will represent that school.
2. In those instances where there is a greater number of present members than required under the reorganized structure, positions becoming vacant will not be filled.
3. In schools where representation under the reorganization is less than required, the vacancies shall be filled by election and/or appointment.

## **VI. The Graduate Faculty**

The Graduate Faculty is composed of three categories:

**Full Members:** Tenured faculty who are members of departments that offer the masters degree and who meet the standards for appointment to Full Member status are eligible for appointment to the Graduate Faculty Full Membership.

**Associate Members:** Non-tenured faculty from departments that offer the masters degree and tenured and non-tenured faculty from departments that offer required support courses for a masters degree program and who meet the standards for appointment to Associate Member status are eligible for appointment to the Graduate Faculty Associate Membership.

**Temporary Members:** Part-time faculty and regular faculty not yet eligible for the status above may be appointed to the Temporary Graduate Faculty.

A. Graduate Faculty Full Membership:

1. Membership Requirements
  - a. Tenure on the Arkansas Tech University faculty

- b. The doctorate or other terminal degree in the appropriate field or discipline **or** having a reputation for expertise in the field sufficient to stand in lieu of the degree
- c. Tangible evidence of productive scholarship as normally defined within the discipline concerned, i.e., presentation of papers and other research, publications, and other creative products
- d. Actual involvement in the departmental graduate program including either the teaching of graduate courses, advising of graduate students, or serving on thesis committees as a representative of the major department
- e. Recommendation by the Department Head to the Graduate Council via the Dean of the School and Dean of Graduate School

2. Responsibilities

- a. To teach graduate level courses
- b. To serve as chair for graduate student thesis committees
- c. To advise and direct research for graduate students
- d. To serve as graduate advisors
- e. To serve on standing and special committees of the Graduate Council

B. Graduate Faculty Associate Membership:

1. Membership Requirements

- a. The doctorate or other terminal degree in the appropriate field or discipline **or** having a reputation for expertise in the field sufficient to stand in lieu of the degree
- b. To be actually involved in the departmental graduate program including either the teaching of graduate level courses, advising of graduate students, or serving on thesis committees as a representative of the major or support department
- c. To be recommended to the Graduate Council by the Department Head via the Dean of the School and Dean of Graduate School

2. Review

Review of the qualifications of the associate member for possible advancement to full membership shall be made by the head of the department with optional assistance of the full members in the department. When an advancement appears to be warranted, the Department Head shall so recommend to the Graduate Council via the Dean of the School and Dean of Graduate School and shall include a rationale for the recommendation based on the stated criteria for the higher membership classification.

### 3. Responsibilities

- a. To teach graduate level courses
- b. To serve as a chair of graduate student thesis committees or a member of such committees
- c. To advise and direct research for graduate students
- d. To serve on standing and special committees of the Graduate Council

### C. Graduate Faculty Temporary Membership:

#### 1. Membership Requirements

- a. To be a member of the adjunct faculty teaching only on a part-time basis
- b. To hold the doctorate or sufficient expertise in the course to stand in lieu of the degree
- c. To be approved by the Dean of Graduate School at the request in writing from the head of department in which the course(s) is being taught via the Dean of the School. Appointment is for one year only.

#### 2. Responsibilities

To teach assigned graduate course(s)

### D. Procedures for Nomination to the Graduate Faculty:

Faculty members are nominated for inclusion on the graduate faculty by department heads according to established criteria of the Graduate Council. The nomination should be made on the form provided for this purpose, "Nomination for Membership on the Graduate Faculty and Request for Approval to Teach Classes for Graduate Credit." Nominations are received by the Dean of Graduate School and kept on file. The Dean of Graduate School makes periodic reporting to the Graduate Council of current membership in each category.

### E. Appeals:

In cases in which any party involved in deliberation related to graduate faculty status feels that an improper decision has been made, he/she may appeal that decision to the Graduate Council.

## **VII. Procedures for Approval of Graduate Curricular Matters**

- A. Graduate curricular matters originating in an academic department are approved by the Department Head and School Dean, and are then forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA).
- B. The proposal is reviewed by the VPAA and Registrar and concerns are noted (if any). If the proposal is considered to be acceptable, the VPAA forwards the proposal to the

chairperson of the Teacher Education Council. If the proposal is not related to the teacher education program, it is routed directly to the chairperson of the Graduate Council.

- C. The Teacher Education Council reviews the proposal and forwards it, with a recommendation, to the Graduate Council via the VPAA. If the proposal is not acceptable to the Teacher Education Council, prior to forwarding to the Graduate Council, the Teacher Education Council may refer it back to the Dean of the School for more information or for revision by the originating department.
- D. Upon receipt of the proposal, the Graduate Council reviews it and makes a recommendation as to approval or disapproval. If the Graduate Council recommends approval of the curricular change, the proposal is forwarded to the VPAA. If the Council disapproves the proposal, it is returned to the originating department via the Dean of the school. The proposal can be revised and re-submitted, but must, again, be submitted through the Teacher Education Council. Actions of the Graduate Council are recorded in Council meeting minutes which are distributed to all graduate faculty members and appropriate administrative officials.
- E. The VPAA is responsible for implementing the new proposal if approved.
- F. The process described above is to be applied to all graduate curricular matters. When 4000-5000 level courses are being considered, two separate proposals will need to be submitted--the 4000-level course will be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Senate, and its 5000-level counterpart will be reviewed by the Graduate Council after the Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Senate have taken action on the 4000-level proposal.

### **VIII \*Graduate Student Academic Conduct Policies**

A university exists for the purpose of educating students and granting degrees to all students who complete graduation requirements. Therefore, Arkansas Tech University requires certain standards of academic integrity and conduct from all students. Arkansas Tech University expects an academic atmosphere to be maintained in all classes. This atmosphere is created by both the professor and the class to enable all students enrolled to reach their academic potential. Students are expected to attend class, conduct themselves in a non-disruptive manner in class, and refrain from cheating, plagiarism, or other unfair and dishonest practices. Students should also realize that the classroom is under the control of the professor who will give students a statement of his or her classroom policies in a syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

Academic offenses involving dishonesty and misconduct are defined in the Definitions section. These definitions are not all inclusive, and conduct not expressly set forth in the definitions may also be considered academic dishonesty or academic misconduct.

\*Added 8/1/04

## A. Definitions

**Academic Dishonesty.** Academic dishonesty refers to the various categories of cheating and plagiarism in the classroom.

1. Cheating on an examination, quiz, or homework assignment involves any of several categories of dishonest activity. Examples of this are: a) copying from the examination or quiz of another student, b) bringing into the classroom notes, messages, or crib sheets in any format which gives the student extra help on the exam or quiz, and which were not approved by the instructor of the class; c) obtaining advance copies of exams or quizzes by any means; d) hiring a substitute to take an exam or bribing any other individual to obtain exam or quiz questions; e) buying term papers from the Internet or any other source, and f) using the same paper to fulfill requirements in several classes without the consent of the professors teaching those classes.
2. Plagiarism is stealing the ideas or writing of another person and using them as one's own. This includes not only passages, but also sentences and phrases that are incorporated in the student's written work without acknowledgement to the true author. Any paper written by cutting and pasting from the Internet or any other source is plagiarized. Slight modifications in wording do not change the fact that the sentence or phrase is plagiarized. Acknowledgment of the source of ideas must be made through a recognized footnoting or citation format. Plagiarism includes recasting the phrase or passage in the student's own words of another's ideas that are not considered common knowledge. Acknowledgment of source must be made in this case as well.

**Academic Misconduct.** Academic misconduct concerns the student's classroom behavior. This includes the manner of interacting with the professor and other students in the class. For example, students may disrupt the learning environment in a classroom through inappropriate behavior, such as, talking to students, unnecessary interruptions, attempting to monopolize the professor's attention, or being chronically late to class. Misconduct also covers verbal or nonverbal harassment and/or threats in relation to classes. Student behavior should not infringe on the rights of other students or faculty during a class.

## B. Graduate Academic Appeals Committee

### Composition of Committee

1. The Graduate Academic Appeals Committee is an official committee of Arkansas Tech University and will be formed each year as a pool of qualified faculty and students to hear student academic honesty and misconduct appeals. At the beginning of fall term, the Graduate Dean will appoint one graduate faculty member from each school; the program director will appoint one graduate student from each school. The faculty on the committee will elect a Chair.
2. These faculty and students will form a pool of 15, from which a subset can be drawn to serve on a subcommittee hearing a specific case.
3. When a student appeal of a decision concerning academic dishonesty or academic misconduct is filed with the Chair of the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee, the Chair shall select a three-person sub-committee from the pool of 15 composed in the following manner: one faculty member from the school in which the department involved in the appeal is located, one faculty member from the school in which the student is enrolled as a major, and one student.

### **C. Procedure for Charges of Academic Dishonesty**

Since charges of academic dishonesty may have serious consequences, a professor who suspects a student of any category of academic dishonesty must have facts and/or evidence to support the charge.

1. The professor will meet with the student and present him or her with a written outline of the alleged academic dishonesty and the evidence supporting the charge. Penalties for various levels of academic dishonesty vary from giving an 'F' on a particular quiz or exam, to giving an 'F' on a term paper or other written work, or giving the student an 'F' or 'W' for the course. The professor may also have different penalties for particular cases of academic dishonesty.
2. The professor will notify his or her program director (or Graduate Dean if the professor is a program director) of the charge, evidence and penalty.
3. If the student accused of academic dishonesty denies the charge or disagrees with the evidence presented by the professor, the student should make an appointment with the relevant program director (or Graduate Dean if the professor is a program director; in which case, skip steps 4 and 5). The student may remain in class during the appeal process.
4. If the student is still dissatisfied after meeting with the program director, he or she should make an appointment with the Graduate Dean who will seek resolution of the problem.
5. If a resolution is not found, the Graduate Dean will refer the student to the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee.
6. The student should then submit a written appeal to the Chair of the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee.
7. If the Academic Appeals Sub-Committee determines that academic dishonesty has occurred, it will confirm the recommendation of the professor concerning the penalty. Such a decision will be given both to the Chair of the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee and the Graduate Dean. The student will be notified of the Sub-Committee's decision by the Chair of the Sub-Committee that sat for the appeal. The Chair shall also notify the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the decision. The Vice President will review the case and forward the outcome to the Registrar after the three-day appeal period.
8. The student shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Academic Appeals Sub-Committee by filing a Notice of Appeal with the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs within three working days of receiving notification of the sub-committee's decision of the Chair of the Sub-Committee. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs will be final.
9. If the Academic Appeals Sub-Committee determines that academic dishonesty has not occurred or evidence is insufficient, the sub-committee will forward all pertinent information to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President will confer with the Graduate Dean, program director, and professor to facilitate the return of the student to class without penalty. The program director will notify the student of the decision.

#### **D. Procedure for Charges of Academic Misconduct**

1. The professor of a class being disrupted by academic misconduct will speak with the disruptive student. Proper behavior and possible consequences for not modifying the behavior will be discussed with the student. Extreme incidents of academic misconduct, in which the student becomes verbally or physically abusive in class will be dealt with immediately by asking the student to leave the class. If the student refuses to leave, Campus Security personnel will be called to remove the student, and the Dean of Students will also be informed of the behavior.
2. If the student ignores the professor's requests to discuss the behavior, it is considered that the student received an official warning that his or her classroom conduct is inappropriate. If the student continues the disruptive behavior the professor will warn the student a second time to cease the behavior.
3. If the student has refused to respond or has ignored the professor's first and second warning, the student will be suspended on an interim basis from the class where the warnings were given. Within 24 hours of the interim suspension a notification will be sent to the Chair of the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee by the program director.
4. The Graduate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee will be appointed, and a hearing conducted by the Graduate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee will be conducted within three working days after the date of the notification of interim suspension.
5. On the same date that the notification of suspension is sent to the Chair, the student will be advised by the program director that he or she has the right to submit a written statement to the Graduate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee addressing the alleged incident of academic misconduct. The student's written statement as well as the professor's written statement shall be delivered to the Chair of the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee at least 24 hours prior to the hearing.
6. The Graduate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee will consider the written statements of the professor and the student involved in the incident of academic misconduct. The program director will also provide a statement that the warning procedure has been followed and that the student has been suspended on an interim basis from attending the particular class pending the decision of the Graduate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee has the right to pursue further information from the professor, program director and student.
7. If the Graduate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee determines that academic misconduct has occurred, it will confirm the recommendation of the professor concerning the penalty. Such a decision will be given both to the Chair of the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee and the Graduate Dean. The student will be notified of the Sub-Committee's decision by the Chair of the Sub-Committee that sat for the appeal. The Chair shall also notify the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the decision. The Vice President will review the case and forward the outcome to the Registrar after the three-day appeal period.
8. The student shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Graduate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee by filing a Notice of Appeal with the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs within three working days of receiving notification of the sub-committee's decision from the Chair of the Sub-Committee. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs will be final.
9. If the Graduate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee determines that academic misconduct has not occurred or evidence is insufficient, the Sub-Committee will forward all pertinent

information to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President will confer with the Graduate Dean, program director, and professor to determine the course of action to be followed and the status of the student in regards to the class in question. The program director will notify the student of the decision.

## **E. Student Rights**

If a student feels unfairly treated in regard to grades, grading, or treatment by the professor or other students within the classroom, the student should address these concerns in the following manner.

### **Informal Process**

1. Make an appointment to speak with the professor of the class to discuss the problem. Students must begin with the professor of the class, as many problems can be worked out satisfactorily with a simple discussion.
2. If the student is still dissatisfied after discussing his or her problem with the professor of the class, an appointment should be made with the director of the program in which the course is taught. The program director will seek satisfactory resolution of the problem with both the student and professor.
3. If the student is still dissatisfied, an appointment should be made with the Graduate Dean. The dean will again seek resolution, and failing satisfactory resolution, will point out to the student the appropriate appeals process for the student's complaint.

### **Formal Process**

1. If the student complaint involves an assigned grade, the student will follow the Appeal of Academic Grade procedure as outlined in the Student Handbook.
2. If the student wishes to pursue an appeal based on a grade associated with a charge of academic dishonesty further than the Graduate Dean, the student may file an appeal within three working days according to the outlined procedure for the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee.
3. Final appeals, whether informal or formal, will be passed by the Graduate Dean to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for final decision, if necessary.