Purpose
The purpose of the Student Academic Appeal Committee (SAAC) is to review students' academic appeal regarding admission, retention, disenrollment, dismissal and other academic matters such as grade appeal. Fairness to all participants in the academic appeal process is a primary responsibility of the committee. It is important to note that SAAC may only recommend a change be made in an appeal case. The final disposition of any status or grade change resides in the hands of the program chair or course instructor(s). Cases coming to this committee do so at the written request of a SEHD student or applicant. Appeals may originate from students in any program in the SEHD. Admission appeal may also originate from individuals who have applied to SEHD programs.

Committee Composition
The committee is composed of one member from each SEHD Program. This member is elected by the program. If a member is unable to attend a meeting the program may appoint a substitute. Membership on the SAAC is for three years with staggered terms. Members may be reelected and serve on the committee for a total of six years or two full terms. Each year a committee chair is elected from the members of the SAAC. The chair directs regular SAAC meetings, advises students and faculty on SAAC policies and procedures and schedules the committee for appeal hearings.

Content of Student Academic Appeals
SAAC hears appeals which directly relate to academic issues. These issues include:

- Admission into a SEHD program (e.g. licensure, endorsement, masters or doctoral program).
- Dismissal from a SEHD program (e.g. licensure, endorsement, masters or doctoral program).
- Probationary assignment in a SEHD program.
- Grade appeals and problems related to course grades.
- Problems related to comprehensive examinations or activities and qualifying examinations or activities.

SAAC does not hear appeals for which other avenues of appeal exist such as:

- Sexual harassment or molestation --University of Colorado at Denver Sexual Harassment Committee.
- Financial concerns--Bursar's Office or Financial Aid.
- Student conduct--Student Code of Conduct.

The Student Academic Appeals Committee focuses on whether basic standards of fairness and procedures have been applied in regard to the academic issues it reviews. When appeals are reviewed by the committee, only materials directly relevant to these issues will be considered. The student and the faculty member or members should keep files of personal materials related to appeals. An official file of all materials will be kept by the SEHD (see "Retention of Academic Appeals Materials" below).
Faculty Participants in Student Academic Appeals
Faculty participants in the academic appeal process are those faculty members who have been part of the decision making process the student is appealing. Examples of participants include:

- a course instructor or instructors in the case of a grade appeal.
- a Program Area (with the program chair as the contact person) in the case of an appeal related to program decisions such as admissions, retention or dismissal.
- a program team (with the program chair as the contact person) in the case of decisions related to programs such as teacher education or the doctoral program.

Student Participants in the Student Academic Appeals Process include

- A student who has a grievance or concern that is eligible for the SAAC to review
- One selected person to accompany the grievant to Appeal Level 3.

Academic Appeal Procedures

Appeal Level One--Initial Decision
1. The first step in an appeal is for the student to meet with the faculty member or members who made the decision the student is appealing. Issues pertaining to the student's grade or performance, evaluation criteria for decision making or differences of opinion that exist should be discussed in an attempt to work through the disagreement. The student may ask for the assistance of the University of Colorado at Denver Ombuds in discussing issues with a faculty member or members.

Appeal Level Two--Student Academic Appeals Committee Review
2. If the issue remains unresolved and a student wishes to appeal further, a written request must be submitted to the Chair of the SEHD Student Academic Appeals Committee with copies to the Dean of the SEHD and the Program Chair of the course or program in question.
3. The written appeal will be in the form of a letter submitted by the student to the SAAC describing the complaint in detail. The letter should answer these questions:

- **What is being appealed?** Clearly provide the course number and title for a grade appeal or the specific program for admission, retention or dismissal appeal.

- **What are your specific objections to the decision that was made?** Refer to specific assignments and activities on the course syllabus in relation to a grade appeal. For other types of appeals, refer to specific program or SEHD policies and procedures.

- **What is the rationale for your objections?** Provide a narrative which clearly indicates why you believe the decision was not appropriate. Clearly refer to the available materials (e.g. syllabi, policies and procedures documents) in providing your rationale. Focus specifically on your individual case and appeal refraining from reference to other student or faculty.

- **What changes do you want? What are your specific reasons for believing you deserve this change to be made?** For a grade appeal indicate the grade you would like to have and the evidence for receiving that grade. For other decisions clearly indicate what you believe would be a fair resolution to the decision.
4. This letter should be submitted within one semester following the occurrence of the academic issue which is being appealed (e.g. grades, admission, retention, other academic problem.) Deadlines for receipt of letters are as follows:
   - For problems which occurred in a Spring term, letters must be received by September 15th of the same year.
   - For problems which occurred in a Summer term, letters must be received by December 15th of the same year.
   - For problems which occurred in a Fall term, letters must be received by April 15th of the following year.
5. The SAAC chair will review appeal letters and request further information if necessary as required by the policies and procedures established in this document.
6. Once deemed complete, the student's written appeal request (containing all required information) will be reviewed by the SAAC at their next regularly scheduled meeting. (A schedule of meetings is available in the Office of Academic Affairs.)
7. The faculty member or members named in the student’s appeal will be notified of the student’s appeal and provided with a copy of the student’s appeal letter. The faculty member or members will respond to the appeal in a written statement to the SAAC. Additionally, all parties involved in the appeal will receive copies of all submitted documentation (i.e. letters, course syllabi, email correspondence) pertaining to this case.
8. When students and faculty member/members are asked for written responses by the SAAC they will be given a three week time limit for responses to be returned. If students or faculty member/members fail to provide requested information in writing the SAAC will make a decision based on the available evidence.
9. The SAAC will make a decision based on the written statements. Written conclusions of the SAAC will be provided to the student and faculty member/members. If deemed appropriate, a formal appeal hearing will be scheduled for the next regular meeting time of the SAAC. Only the SAAC may schedule a formal appeal hearing.

**Appeal Level Three--Student Academic Appeals Committee Formal Hearing**

10. At the appeal hearing, the student and the faculty member/members each have the opportunity to make a twenty minute (maximum) oral presentation.
11. The SAAC may request further information or ask questions regarding the appeal.
12. The student and faculty member/members may bring one advocate to the appeal hearing. This individual may listen, take notes and advise the student but may not present to the committee.
13. The SAAC will review all information and normally reach a decision within 10 working days after the appeal hearing (not including any school or national holidays in which UCDHSC is closed). Neither the student nor the faculty member or members involved in the appeal will be present during these deliberations or consulted by the SAAC during these deliberations.
14. The student and faculty member or members will be notified by letter of the concluding recommendations of the SAAC. A copy of this decision will be forwarded to the Dean of the SEHD.

**Appeal Level Four--Dean, School of Education**

15. The student or faculty member’s next level of appeal is the Dean of the SEHD.
Appeal Level Five--University of Colorado at Denver and HSC, Graduate School

16. Students may submit appeal to one further level--The Graduate School of the University of Colorado at Denver and HSC. “The Graduate School recognizes that under some rare and extenuating circumstances a student may wish to appeal one or more of these Rules [SEHD appeal procedures].” Complete procedures for appealing at this level are available in the *Graduate Rules of the Graduate School of the University of Colorado at Denver and HSC* (Revised, 1999) pp. 50-51.

Summary Chart of Appeal Processes and Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels and Steps</th>
<th>Student Process &amp; Procedures</th>
<th>Faculty Process and Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level One: Initial Decision</strong>&lt;br&gt;Step 1</td>
<td>Student attempts to resolve conflict with faculty member/members.</td>
<td>Faculty member/members attempt to resolve conflict with student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level Two: SAAC Review</strong>&lt;br&gt;Steps 2-4</td>
<td>Student files written appeal and answers all required questions by deadlines given.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steps 5-6</strong></td>
<td>Student responds to requests for further information if asked.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 7</strong></td>
<td>Faculty member/members respond to student’s appeal in writing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 8</strong></td>
<td>Three week time limit on responses is followed.</td>
<td>Three week time limit on responses is followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 9</strong></td>
<td>Decision of SAAC is forwarded to student.</td>
<td>Decision of SAAC is forwarded to faculty member/members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level Three: Formal Hearing</strong>&lt;br&gt;Steps 10-14</td>
<td>Student participates in formal hearing if scheduled by SAAC.</td>
<td>Faculty member/members participate in formal hearing if scheduled by SAAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level Four: SEHD Dean’s Review</strong>&lt;br&gt;Step 15</td>
<td>Student may appeal SAAC decision to the Dean.</td>
<td>Faculty member/members may appeal decision to the Dean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level Five: UCDHSC Graduate School Review</strong>&lt;br&gt;Step 16</td>
<td>Student may appeal Dean’s decision to the UCDHSC Graduate School under “rare and extenuating circumstances”.</td>
<td>Faculty member/members may appeal Dean’s decision to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SAAC Composition for formal appeal hearings:

- The SEHD’s Associate Dean of Academic Affairs serves as the non-voting committee convener during the formal appeal hearing.
- A majority of voting members or their appointed substitutes must be present for the formal appeal hearing.
- The student, the faculty member/members and the SAAC may have one non-voting representative at the appeal hearing. This representative may listen and advise but not participate in the presentations to the committee.
- Both the involved faculty member/members and the student may be present during the entire appeal hearing.
School of Education and Human Development (SEHD)
Student Academic Appeals Committee

• If the elected SAAC member has extensive knowledge of the case or the student (e.g., is a member of the decision team which is being appealed, is the student’s advisor) the Program will appoint a substitute to serve at the appeal hearing.
• Appeal hearings may be video or audio taped only if all parties at the hearing agree to this procedure. Requests for video or audio taping are in writing and are addressed to the SAAC committee chair and must be received at least one week before a hearing is scheduled. The chair will contact participants for a yes or no vote. All participants will be notified at least 48 hours prior to the hearing of the outcome.

Retention of Academic Appeal Materials

SEHD responsibilities
All materials related to an academic appeal including written statements from students and faculty, written decisions by the SAAC and requests for materials from the UCDHSC Graduate School will be housed in a secure confidential file in the Student Services Office. This official file will be maintained under the name of the student originating the appeal. The official file will be retained for at least three years.

Student responsibilities
The student is responsible for keeping copies of all written materials submitted to both the faculty member and members and those submitted to the SAAC. It would be appropriate for the student to keep records of times, dates, content of conversations and suggested solutions discussed during the process of trying to resolve the problem.

Faculty responsibilities
The faculty member or members should keep copies of all written materials related to student appeal. This would include student letters, responses and course or program documents related to the appeal. It would also be appropriate for the faculty member/members to keep records of times, dates, content of conversations and suggested solutions discussed during the process of trying to resolve the problem with a student.