St. John’s University

Academic Fairness Procedure

The Academic Fairness Procedure is the procedure to be used by students to resolve certain types of complaints of an academic nature. After action by the University Senate on Apr. 28, 1978, the resolution which follows was adopted by the Board of Trustees on May 17, 1978.

Resolution

There shall be a formalized academic fairness procedure established by the Faculty Council of each school or college of the University. Before a student can utilize the formalized academic fairness procedure, the student must first have attempted to resolve the complaint informally with the faculty member involved and then, if necessary, in schools or colleges with departments or divisions, with the chair of the department or division, and then, if necessary, with the Dean. The sole purpose of the academic fairness procedure is to redress student academic grievances relative to academic matters. The academic fairness procedure shall seek both: To assure an objective, impartial hearing of alleged student academic grievances and a timely response thereto; To assure that the good name and reputation of the faculty member are not unjustly or frivolously impugned. In any hearing of alleged grievances, the burden of proof shall be on the student lodging the complaint. The academic fairness procedure shall provide an appropriate academic remedy of any injustice judged to have been done to the student lodging the complaint. Each Faculty Council has adopted a formalized academic fairness procedure.
College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

Academic Fairness Procedure

When a student has an academic complaint or grievance he/she is to try and resolve it with the faculty member involved. If unsuccessful, he/she goes to the Department Chairman and if still unresolved, the Dean. Should the student still be dissatisfied he/she may submit a formal complaint or grievance to the Academic Fairness Committee. The Chairperson of the Academic Fairness Committee will decide if the complaint warrants a hearing. There is no appeal with regards to this decision.

If a hearing is granted, three members of the nine member committee will preside. The committee is appointed by the Faculty Council of the College and each member serves a one year term. A faculty member against whom a grievance has been filed will be informed in writing of the grievance by the committee chairperson in sufficient detail and time to give him/her an opportunity to prepare for the meeting. The faculty member may be assisted by an advisor of his/her choice. The faculty member will have an opportunity to present evidence, witnesses, and to hear and question adverse witnesses.

All matters on which a recommendation may be based must be introduced as evidence at the proceedings and the recommendations will be based solely on such material. The committee will reach its recommendation within 15 school days based on a fair preponderance of credible evidence. A notice of the recommendation will be sent to the student, faculty member and others involved in the informal procedure.

It must be stressed that the recommendation is only persuasive in nature. At no time can a faculty member be forced to change a grade. The whole procedure is geared to show a faculty members when his/her peers agree or disagree on particular academic actions that have been challenged by his/her students.