



STUDENT APPEALS

I. **Policy Statement**

This policy establishes California Northstate University's College of Medicine's (CNUCOM) standards for the student appeals process.

II. **Purpose**

The purpose of the policy is to provide guidelines for the appeals process for medical students at CNUCOM, ensuring students are afforded standardized due process procedures and opportunities. Students are informed of this policy during Orientation and M2 Refresher Orientation.

III. **Scope/Coverage**

This policy applies to all CNUCOM medical students and instances when a student appeals a decision, status, or outcome.

IV. **Policy Procedure & Definitions**

a. **Definitions**

i. **CNUCOM Faculty Advisor**

1. Students have the right to select a CNUCOM faculty advisor not directly involved in the matter to advise them throughout the appeal process and accompany them in hearings or proceedings. Advisors may not email or submit documentation/forms on behalf of the student. Advisors may speak on the student's behalf during proceedings only when the student is present, requested by the student, and when approved by the facilitator of the proceedings. Advisors may not hold an administrative title such as a director, department chair, dean, or academic counselor. Adherence to all timelines, requirements and policies stated in course syllabi and the CNUCOM Handbooks.

ii. **Appeal**

1. A request by a student for reconsideration of an outcome or decision with the aim of a more favorable and representative outcome. Appeals pertain to the following categories: course grades, course narratives, academic disciplinary actions, and professionalism or ethical disciplinary actions.

iii. Adverse Action

1. Some but not all appeals involve the student's rejection of an adverse status assigned to or an adverse action taken against the student by the college. An adverse action or status refers to an outcome or status assignment which negatively impacts the student's formal standing and their ability to progress or continue in the medical program. Such actions are often the result of substandard academic performance relative to the expectations in the Academic Progression Policy (4100) or professional misconduct as specified in the Ethics and Professionalism Policy (4006).
Examples include administrative withdrawal, dismissal, school-initiated leave of absence, academic probation, course repetition, and academic year repetition.

V. Procedure

a. Appeals

- i. If a student perceives injustice in the assignment of an adverse action or status, they may file an appeal to request modification to the original decision. Students must submit all appeals to the Office of Student Affairs (OSA). The office serves as a liaison between the student and the appeal decision-making bodies, directing the appeal case from student initiation to an appeal outcome. OSA ensures timely completion of all procedural steps, the application of appropriate protocol, and maintenance of a historical record of the appeal. During the appeal period and if applicable, the student is responsible for timely payment of any school fees and maintaining satisfactory academic progress.
- ii. **Student Representation**
 1. Students are afforded the opportunity to be present and represent themselves during all levels of appeal.
- iii. **Documentation Transparency**
 1. Students may view any forms, academic history, and/or data utilized by the appeal decision-making body via written request to the Office of Student Affairs.

iv. Universal Consideration of Appeals

1. All appeals filed by a student to the OSA within ten (10) business days of the original decision will be subjected to a complete and impartial review process as outlined in this policy to render an outcome by the appropriate decision-making body. This ensures equal consideration and an equivocal process for all appeals without discrimination or bias against the nature or content of the appeal. No student shall be penalized for filing an appeal.

v. Appeal Submission

1. Student must submit a completed Appeal Form and any accompanying documentation to OSA within ten (10) business days after the student is informed of the outcome, status, or decision that is being appealed.
 - a. *Students may elect a CNUCOM faculty advisor of their choice to accompany and support the student throughout the appeals process by indicating this individual on the Appeal form. Students may contact the Office of Academic and Career Advising (OACA) for assistance in identifying a faculty advisor.*
 - b. *Students may also indicate on the Appeal Form if they wish to appear before the body rendering a decision on the appeal.*

vi. Investigation and Appeal Triage

Upon receipt of the completed appeals form, the OSA will have five (5) business days to accomplish the following:

1. Conduct a review of the documentation to ensure thoroughness and adequate completion of the form.
2. If indicated, ensure there is no conflict of interest with the student's selected CNUCOM faculty advisor.
3. Make requests for additional documentation or clarification from the student or administration.
4. Meet with the student if further details are necessitated or at the request of the student.
5. Send the completed appeals form and supporting documentation to the appropriate decisionmaking body. Notify the student of case transmittal and of any updates to the documentation being utilized.

vii. Selection of the Appeal Decision Making Body

The appeal case is transmitted by the OSA to a specific

decision-making body, dependent upon the appeal type and level (see Table 1).

Table 1: Appeal Levels and Categories

Appeal Type	Applicable Standards	Pre-Appeal Decision Making Body	Level 1 (First Appeal)	Level 2 (Second Appeal)
Grade/Narrative	Grading Policy (4401)	Course Director or Clerkship Director	Student Promotion Committee	College Dean
Academic Progression and Promotion	Academic Progression Policy (4100)	Student Promotion Committee	Office of Medical Education	College Dean
Professionalism	Ethics and Professionalism (4006)	Student Promotion Committee	Office of Medical Education	College Dean

viii. Appeal Decision Making

Upon receipt of the appeal form and associated documentation from the OSA, the appeal decision making body will have ten (10) business days to render an outcome and notify the student in writing; they may uphold the appeal, reject it, or reduce the severity of the original outcome.

1. If the student previously indicated a desire to appear before the decision-making body, the decision-making body of the appeal is responsible for coordinating the student’s appearance before a decision is rendered.
2. After a decision is rendered, the decision-making body will transmit the outcome to the student and OSA in writing on the Appeals Form

including providing a written explanation for the rationale of the appeal outcome in the appeals form.

ix. Appeal Outcome

Upon receipt of the appeal outcome, the student must submit the appeal form with the appropriate section completed and signed to OSA within five (5) business days, indicating one of the following:

1. Acknowledgement and acceptance of the resolution.
2. Rejection of the resolution and appeal to the subsequent level as described in “Table 1: Appeal Levels and Categories.” Subsequent appeals follow the same procedure as the initial appeal, except modification to the appeal decision-making body.
3. No further action may be taken after the final level of appeal has been exhausted. In the absence of student response within five (5) business days, the appeal outcome will be accepted and applied.

Approval Record: Approved: Student Promotions Committee 12/19/2024

Reviewed: FEC 12/13/2024 Reviewed: SA&W 12/9/2024

*Approval Process: OSA (Policy Owner) ↻ Review OME + SA&W Committee -- >
Approval SPC*