



## Academic Records Appeal Form

An Academic Records Appeal is a request from a student (enrolled or non-enrolled) to change a part of their academic record at Tarleton State University as a result of extenuating circumstance. This could be an appeal to have a class removed permanently from the academic record, a class to be dropped or a semester of classes to be withdrawn after the semester is completed, or any other changes to a students' academic record.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

University ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Appeal:  Individual Class (include term) \_\_\_\_\_  Entire Term \_\_\_\_\_  
(ex. Fall 2014 ENGL 2309) (ex. Fall 2014)

**You *must* include the following information for your appeal:**

- 1. A statement which includes your specific record change request; the nature of the event which occurred (when it began, how long it lasted, the effect this had on your classes, etc.); why the proper procedure was not followed in the time frame of the class(es).**
- 2. Supporting documents for extenuating circumstance.**
- 3. The Academic Records Appeal Form (page 1) and Acknowledgement Form (page 8) completed and signed by you.**

An appeal to have academic records updated or changed will only be considered up to two years (24 months) after the record was placed on the student's academic record. It is the student's responsibility to review their records and start the appeal process within this time frame. Appeal decisions could have financial obligation to the student.

I declare all the above information provided is true and correct and I understand, if the above or attached information is found to be falsified in any way, the Appeal Board may choose to overturn any decision previously made. I understand the decision made by the Appeal Board is final.

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Registrar Use

Appeal Board Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Term Appeal Filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Decision:  Approved  Denied

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## **Academic Records Appeal GUIDELINES**

### **What is an Academic Records Appeal?**

An Academic Records Appeal is a request from a student (enrolled or non-enrolled) to change a part of their academic records at Tarleton State University as a result of an extenuating circumstance. This could be an appeal to have a class removed permanently from the academic record, a class to be dropped or to be withdrawn from a semester after that semester is completed, or any other changes to a student's academic record.

### **Who approves an Academic Records Appeal?**

The student should first contact the Registrar's Office at Tarleton State University to ask about the status of his/her records. If, through research and by following current policies and procedures, the record cannot be changed, a student will be allowed to appeal.

### **When can an Academic Records Appeal be made?**

An appeal to have academic records updated or changed will only be considered up to two years (24 months) after the record was placed on the student's academic record. It is up to the student to review their records and start the appeal process within this time frame.

### **Who is on the Academic Records Appeal Committee?**

The committee will change membership regularly but will attempt to include:

1. Financial Aid Employee
2. Business Services Employee
3. Faculty Member
4. Registrar's Office Employee
5. Housing Employee

### **When is the Academic Records Appeal due?**

The Academic Records committee will meet once a month or as needed.

### **How will I find out about the decision of the committee?**

An email will be sent to the address provided on the appeal form within one calendar week of the committee's decision.

### **If my Academic Records Appeal is denied, can I appeal the decision?**

No. Decisions made by the committee concerning Academic Records Appeals are final.

### **How is a grade appeal different from an Academic Records Appeal?**

An appeal to get a grade changed is handled through the student's major department. See the Tarleton website at <http://www.tarleton.edu/success/studentresources/Academic-Appeals.html> for more information. Grade appeals should always start with the instructor of the course.

An Academic Records appeal has less to do with the grade itself but could include the fact that the student failed a class but doesn't believe that he/she should have been enrolled in the class in the first place. It could also deal with a lost drop/withdraw form or miscommunication between the student and a Tarleton State University employee. This is not an exhaustive list but just a few examples of what the Academic Records Appeal could be used for.

No appeals will be considered for "No one told me" or "I was waiting on someone to call me back" reasons. It is always up to the student to take care of their own records and get the information they need in order to take care of their academic records.

### **When should I present an Academic Records Appeal?**

Students should present an appeal as soon as possible after the event occurs. For the reasons explained above, it substantially weakens a student's case if the student waits until after grades are in or until the grade has become unavoidable before presenting a petition for a withdrawal. ***Academic Records Appeals will not be considered more than two years (24 months) after the record in question has been placed on the student's account.***

For practical purposes, it also becomes much more difficult or impossible to obtain the necessary information from the instructors/employees if a student does not present the petition during the semester in question or as soon as possible afterwards. It can become impossible to find the instructors or obtain the necessary documentation even for legitimate cases if a student has allowed more than a semester or two to go by before attempting to present an appeal.

## **What should be included in my appeal?**

The student must present in writing an account of what happened and what the student wants changed. The account should include information about:

- 1) What record(s) the student wants changed (i.e. term, year, class, grade, etc.) and what the student is requesting be done to their record.
- 2) The nature of the severe event that occurred, when it began, how long it lasted and the effect this had on the student's classes.
- 3) Why the proper procedure was not followed in the time frame of the class(es) in question.
- 4) Supporting documentation for the extenuating circumstance (the reason for the appeal—see page 5 of this document for more information).
- 5) The Academic Records Appeal form completed and signed by the student.
- 6) Signed acknowledgement of having read this document located on page 8.

## **Where do I send my Appeal?**

Your Academic Records appeal should be sent to the Registrar's Office. You may mail the appeal to:

Tarleton State University  
Registrar's Office  
Box T-0620  
Stephenville, TX 76402

You may also email it to [Registrar@tarleton.edu](mailto:Registrar@tarleton.edu) or you may fax it to: (254) 968-9389

Any incomplete appeals will not be considered.

## **Under what circumstances will an Academic Records Appeal be approved?**

According to the Academic Records Appeal Policy, requests for changes to academic records can be approved "only on the basis of extenuating circumstances such as serious personal illness or relocation due to employment."

The two examples mentioned are not the only ones that are possible, and even serious personal illness or job relocation might not suffice if they occurred before the final drop/withdraw date and the student failed to take advantage of the opportunity to drop/withdraw from their classes while attending Tarleton State University.

There are three criteria that are used in deciding what will count as such "extenuating circumstances":

- Beyond the student's control
- Unforeseeable
- Severe

### **What counts as “beyond the student’s control”?**

Neither serious illness nor job transfers are normally chosen by the student. However, deciding that one needs to work more hours, deciding to move to different living conditions, or deciding to work a different, better-paying shift or to take a better paying job would not normally count as beyond the student’s control. If a student who is working full-time to support her/his family and going to school part-time can show that she/he was given a shift change and had to accept this change or be fired, this would count. If a student is offered a promotion that comes with more or different hours and decides to accept it even though this will make it difficult to pass classes that semester, that would normally not be regarded as something beyond the student’s control.

### **What does it mean to say that the event must be “unforeseeable”?**

Even severe difficulties beyond the student’s control will not count as grounds for a late withdrawal unless they could not have reasonably been foreseen and handled through the normal processes before the final drop/withdrawal deadline. If the student knew of the difficulties before the drop date and decided to stay in classes anyway, the academic records appeal policy is not designed to reverse this decision (or failure to make a decision).

Since unforeseeable circumstances need to be shown to be the reason why a student did not pass the class, drop a class, or withdraw from the University, the student should normally be able to demonstrate that he/she was attending regularly and making good academic progress in the class until the intervening event occurred and the student should be able to show that the event took place after the drop/withdrawal date.

### **What defines unforeseeable criterion and recurring or chronic difficulties?**

Some chronic illnesses such as diabetes or depression or some serious and recurring family obligations or financial circumstances can present severe impediments to a student’s success. During the first semester in which a student finds himself/herself confronted with these circumstances and is trying to learn to cope with them, it may happen that the drop date has passed and a late withdrawal is necessary before the student has become completely aware of what is happening and what effect this will have on the student’s classes. However, after that first semester, the student’s decision to enroll and stay enrolled in classes will be respected regardless of the outcome. Students in these circumstances will not be allowed an academic records appeal if it turns out that these were not good decisions. Academic record appeals for classes in those semesters are not acceptable substitutes for careful and realistic planning with the help of trained professionals.

### **What counts as “severe”?**

The policy explicitly cites “serious” personal illness and uses job relocation or mandatory shift change and not just a change in employment circumstances as extenuating circumstances. Anything severe enough to warrant a drop or withdrawal should normally be so severe as to be a complete hindrance to completing the semester at all. Several weeks of hospitalization following a car accident would count; having the flu for a week would not.

Whatever would be severe enough to count as severe should normally prevent the student from completing any of his/her classes. Therefore, it is important for a student to petition for a withdrawal as soon as it becomes clear what has happened and not wait until grades have been awarded. If a student keeps going to some classes and taking exams then this is in itself an indication that the student did not consider it severe enough to withdraw until the grade in the class became apparent. In the same context if a student were to continue to live in the dormitories and using the Dining Hall but did not turn in the paperwork to withdraw from their courses then the reason might not be considered “severe”. There may be circumstances where a withdrawal would still be permitted but this would certainly weaken the case for the severity of the event.

This also means that whatever is severe enough to justify a late withdrawal in any class should normally prevent students from continuing their studies at all and should normally affect all of a student’s classes. Hence it will be unusual for a petition for a withdrawal for a single class or for only some of the classes, but not others, to be successful. Under some circumstances, this may be justified. For instance if a student sustains a physical injury, that student would be allowed to withdraw from the physical activities classes without being forced to drop other academic classes. If a student misses the entire month of November due to illness and was doing well in all of her classes until then, there might be a case where the student could be allowed to continue the classes where most of the work consisted in reading outside of class that the student was able to complete at home while withdrawing from all of the workshop classes where regular attendance was essential for success in the class. In any case, requests for anything other than a withdrawal from all classes must contain additional clear documentation of the reasons why the event affected the one class or the one group of classes differently from the others.

### **How do I document the extenuating circumstances?**

It depends on the kind of event. For illnesses, medical documentation (with a clear date on when it occurred) from a physician or a hospital would normally be expected. For personal circumstances, confirmation from a professional counselor would normally be appropriate. The important thing is the documentation needs to be able to show that the student’s recollection of events as stated in the petition is accurate. For these purposes, a wide range of things can suffice and if there are any questions, one can best discuss that issue with the representative of the college.

### **Does an Academic Record Appeal have an effect on my fees or financial aid?**

Not automatically but quite possibly. Many of the same circumstances that justify a late withdrawal or drop may be grounds for fee reduction or an extension of student financial aid but these questions are addressed by different offices because there are different issues involved with each of them.

Business Services is charged with calculating and collecting student fees. They will not normally consider a petition for tuition reimbursement unless a student has been dropped but just because a student is dropped does not mean fees are automatically reduced or forgiven.

The Financial Aid Office determines whether the student or an external agency such as the federal government will pay whatever fees are owed. There are some cases where federal financial aid will cover the fees even if a student has failed the course. There are other cases where a student is liable for the fees and must repay the aid even if the student has been dropped. It is highly likely if the student's appeal is approved and the class(es) are dropped and the student received financial aid for those classes, the student will have to pay the funds back. Students should address questions about financial aid directly to the Financial Aid Office.

### **If I am on suspension, will an Academic Records Appeal take me off suspension?**

In some cases, yes – depending on the effect it has on a student's GPA. However, it is still important that a student successfully address the problems that led to the drop/withdrawal before the student attempts to return to school. There are also cases where a drop/withdrawal cannot be granted but the student can appeal to be allowed to take some classes. Those may be granted if the student can show the problems have now been successfully addressed and resolved and the student now has a realistic plan for academic success.

### **What if my petition is not successful?**

The repeat policy at Tarleton State University allows a student to repeat a course at TSU and replace the previous grade if the student has taken the course before. This means that a student should be able to make up for a semester that did not go well without any long-term negative effects on academic status or GPA if this is the first time there have been problems. The important thing is for students to assess their problems honestly and make sure they have addressed them adequately before they attempt to begin the next semester. Here again, what is crucial is that students address problems early and take advantage of the many support opportunities at Tarleton State University.

# Academic Records Appeal Acknowledgement Form

(To be submitted with the appeal)

I have read in its entirety the Academic Records Appeal Guidelines Document and understand there could be financial obligations if my appeal is approved. I further understand that the decision of the Academic Records Appeal is final and may not be appealed further.

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Signature

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Date