

Procedure for Graduate Student Academic Requests for Relief

Governing Policy:	Requests for Relief from Academic Decisions
Subsections:	Introduction ; Requests for Relief Submission Process ; Appeals to SRBA
Officer(s) Responsible for Procedures:	Provost & Vice-President (Academic)
Effective Date:	September 1, 2025
Supersedes:	(NEW)

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

The University Senate has delegated to the Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) the right to waive certain academic regulations for graduate students. The Vice-Provost's rulings in academic matters are final unless overturned or modified on appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA).

To learn more about the request for relief and appeals process, students may contact the Office of the Ombudsperson.

Students may submit a request for relief from an academic decision or ruling to their graduate programs and, if unsuccessful, to the Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies).

A decision or ruling remains in effect unless overturned or modified by the individual or body hearing a request for relief of that decision or ruling.

Throughout this document, the word "Vice-Provost" means "Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) or designate".

University, for the purposes of this procedure, means Western and its Affiliated University Colleges.

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2.0 REQUEST FOR RELIEF SUBMISSION PROCESS

Note: All requests for relief must be supported by evidence. A detailed description of the evidence supporting the request (including any supporting documentation) must be presented, in writing, as part of the request for relief.

2.1 Submitting a Request for Relief at the Course/Program Level

- 1) If the request for relief relates to a specific course, a student must first attempt to resolve the matter informally with the course instructor. If the instructor is not available or if the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student has a right to submit a request for relief to the individual(s) or body designated to hear such requests at the graduate-program level. Students should contact their graduate program to obtain information on the program's request for relief process. A request for relief must be filed **within four (4) weeks of the issuance of the mark or ruling**.
- 2) For all other requests, a student must initiate the request for relief with the individual(s) or body designated to hear appeals at the graduate-program level. Students should contact their graduate program to obtain information on the program's request for relief process. A request for relief must be filed **within four (4) weeks of the issuance of the mark or ruling**. The deadline for filing a request for relief may be extended at the discretion of the individual(s) or body designated to hear appeals at the graduate-program level.
- 3) In no circumstances shall the original decision maker(s) whose decision or ruling is under appeal hear a request for relief of that decision or ruling at the program level.
- 4) In addition to any other information required by individual graduate programs, requests for relief submitted by students should include the following information:
 - a) the matter being appealed
 - b) the grounds for the request
 - c) a clear, detailed explanation of the facts supporting the grounds
 - d) all supporting documentation
 - e) the desired outcome or remedy

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- 5) The designated decision maker shall issue a written decision (“program decision”). In considering a request for relief, the designated decision maker shall review the materials submitted by the student and the program and may obtain such further information as they deem relevant to the request. The decision maker may give the student a reasonable opportunity to meet with them and may meet with such other individuals as they deem necessary.

2.2 Submitting a Request for Relief at the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS) Level

A student may submit a request for relief from the program decision to the Vice-Provost. A request for relief application together with all required documentation, including a copy of the previous decision, must be filed with the Vice-Provost **within four (4) weeks of the issuance of the program decision**. Students may contact the SGPS Office for more information.

The deadline for filing a request for relief may be extended at the discretion of the Vice-Provost.

In considering a request for relief, the Vice-Provost shall review the materials submitted by the student and the program and may obtain such further information as the Vice-Provost deems relevant to the request. The Vice-Provost shall give the student a reasonable opportunity to meet with them and may meet with such other individuals as they deem necessary.

The Vice-Provost shall issue a written decision, with reasons.

3.0 APPEALS TO SRBA

A student may have a right of appeal to SRBA **within six (6) weeks of the date of the Vice-Provost’s decision**.

The decision of the Vice-Provost or designate remains in full force and effect unless and until overturned or modified by SRBA.

See the *Senate Review Board Academic Appeals* policy and *Procedure for Senate Review Board Academic Appeals* for further information.