

Appeals and Petitions Committee Suggestions for Student Letters

Students who have fallen into academic difficulties bring a variety of stories to the Appeals Committee in their attempt to convince those members that it would be a reasonable decision to overturn existing university policy and to make an exception on their behalf.

Students who are contemplating asking for such special consideration should carefully consider the wording of their request.

Members of the Appeals Committee are drawn from both the faculty and pertinent staff areas, professionals interested in seeing evidence of the likelihood of a student's future success. Statements unlikely to present you as a good risk include such remarks as:

- 1) Professor X didn't like me.
- 2) Someone else is responsible for my problems
- 3) The instructor/advisor didn't explain the catalog, the syllabus, etc.

If you have been the victim of any unfairness, contact the Student Affairs Counselor to help you identify the proper means to address such grievances.

A student wishing to have a college policy overturned should focus on the following sorts of information:

- 1) What has changed in your life that makes success more likely now? (Be specific) Are the circumstances you say contributed to your present problems extenuating (not under your control) such as an unexpected surgery, accident, loss of a close relative? Can you document those circumstances? (Doctor's note, traffic ticket, etc.)
- 2) Has some time passed so that you may be more mature?
- 3) Do you accept personal responsibility for this problem?
- 4) What is your action plan to correct your problems
- 5) Can you provide evidence of any other successes you have had that might support your request (courses from another school, dependable transportation if that was an issue? Be specific.)
- 6) Has there been a change in your attitude to one more focused on academic goals? Provide evidence.
- 7) Are you willing to meet with the Committee to discuss your request? (This is generally helpful.)

The Committee wants to know what YOU are going to make changes. Tell them clearly and honestly.