

Policy Title	Grade Appeal Process
Policy Number:	ACA 1.06
Department:	SCHS
Functional Area:	Academic Affairs
Contributing Department	
Approved by:	RHEI Leadership Team
Effective Date:	8/1/2025
Version:	1
Status:	Approved
Manual	To be entered by Compliance360 System administrators or N/A if not in C360
Section	ACA 1

I. Mission, Vision and Values

This policy reflects our commitment to human dignity, integrity, compassion, stewardship, and service by guiding decisions and actions that uphold respect for all individuals and promote excellence in our work.

This policy aligns with our mission of extending the compassionate ministry of Jesus by improving the health and well-being of our communities and providing good help to those in need, especially the poor, dying, and underserved by ensuring that our practices support ethical, effective, and accountable service across all areas of the organization.

II. Policy

It is the policy of Southside College of Health Sciences ("College" or "SCHS") that appropriate processes and procedures be followed in all matters pertaining to the rights of students.

III. Purpose

The process described below is applicable to student grade appeals.

IV. Scope

This policy applies to all students and faculty at Southside College of Health Sciences.

V. Definitions

Grade Appeal: a formal process through which a student can appeal through his/her course instructor and the college's administrative leadership the student's final grade in a course. A final course grade appeal must be based on at least one of the following claims:

- Capricious action on the part of the faculty member that affects the student's final grade; a capricious action is defined as one made on a whim or without justifiable reasons.
- Prejudicial treatment of the student by the faculty member with respect to the application of the course syllabus, thereby affecting the student's final grade; prejudicial treatment is defined as treating the student lodging the final grade appeal differently from other students in the course with respect to the instructor's application of the course syllabus.
- Erroneous judgment of the faculty, such as the correct answer for exam item(s). A claim of erroneous judgement means that the student can produce evidence (from textbooks, class notes provided directly from the faculty, or other valid materials) to substantiate that a different answer other than that keyed is a correct response.
- A documented error in calculating the student's final grade.
- Extenuating circumstance(s) that significantly impacted the student's performance and grade in a course.
- A grade appeal may be considered in the case of unforeseen extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances are defined as debilitating health problems (mental or physical), a family emergency (such as the death of an immediate family member), and unexpected financial difficulties (such as a partner/spouse losing their job) that has significant detrimental impact to a student during the semester. The following are not acceptable stand-alone reasons for petitioning:

- Poor performance in class/GPA protection
- Failure to attend/participate in class on a regular basis
- Failure to abide by withdrawal deadlines

Student: Anyone who is officially registered at the College during the academic semester or term in which the grade complaint arises.

Business Days: Defined as Monday through Friday when the College is not on break as stated in the published Academic Calendar.

VI. Policy Details

Initiation of a Grade Appeal:

A final grade appeal cannot be initiated until the final course grade is posted. All final grade appeals must be initiated no later than two (2) business days after the day final grades are due as published in the academic calendar. Grade appeals must be submitted electronically via the Final Grade Appeal Request form.

In the event that a final course grade results in academic dismissal and the student is appealing the final grade requesting to not be dismissed must go through the grade appeal process as defined in this policy.

Students are encouraged to contact their Success Advisor if assistance is needed in understanding this policy. In addition, the Advisor will assist students in determining the appropriate person with whom a student must file an appeal, and providing that person's contact information.

Grade appeals must be submitted according to the following order:

Level I	Level II
Program Chair/Coordinator/Director or Designee	Dean of Academic Affairs or Designee

Procedures:***Level I: Student and Program Chair/Coordinator/Director or Designee*****Student**

1. Submit the Level I section of the Final Grade Appeal Request form. On this form the student will provide (at the minimum):
 - a. The claim for the appeal as defined in Section IV of this policy.
 - b. A description of the circumstances related to the appeal.
 - c. The resolution that the student is seeking.
 - d. Evidence to support the claim (i.e. documents – doctor's note, assignment, obituary, copy of the grade book, attendance record, witness statements, etc.).
 - e. Meet with the Program Chair/Coordinator/Director or Designee to clearly state the case, clarify evidence, and confirm the solution be sought.
2. Prior to the meeting, the student may request to have a silent observer in the meeting. Both the student and Program Chair/Coordinator/Director or Designee must agree to the student's silent observer. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting, but all parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of their grade appeal at Level I, they may continue to Level II.

Program Chair/Coordinator/Director or Designee

1. The Program Chair/Coordinator/Director or Designee has a maximum of five (5) business days from the date the Final Grade Appeal Request form is submitted by the student to schedule a meeting with the student. The meeting may be conducted in person, virtually or by phone. The Program Chair may have a silent observer in attendance at the meeting. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting, but all parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.
2. The Program Chair/Coordinator/Director or Designee will fully investigate the appeal by consulting the faculty, advisor, or others as needed, verifying grading rationale, and ensuring adherence to syllabus and other related policies.
3. Within two (2) business days after meeting with the student, the Program Chair/Coordinator/Director or Designee sends a formal letter by email to the student communicate the decision reached and file the communication in the student information system (SIS). The faculty member and advisor must be copied on the email.

Level II (Final): Student and Dean of Academic Affairs**Student**

1. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome at Level I, within two (2) business days from the communication of the decision from the Program Chair/Coordinator/Director or Designee, the student may submit a Level II appeal by submitting the Level II Final Grade Appeal Request form.

2. On that form, the student must provide the decision letter from the Program Chair and may provide additional information not presented in Level I. This information will be added to the information provided for Level I.
3. Meet with the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction to clearly state the case, clarify evidence, and confirm the solution being sought. Prior to the meeting, the student may request to have a silent observer in the meeting. Both the student and Dean must agree to the student's silent observer. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting, but all parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.

Dean of Curriculum and Instruction

1. The Dean of Curriculum has a maximum of ten (10) business days from the date the Level II Final Grade Appeal Request form is submitted by the student to schedule a meeting with the student. The meeting may be conducted in person, virtually or by phone. The Dean of Curriculum may have a silent observer in attendance at the meeting. No attorneys or other advisors/counselors are allowed to be present to represent either party. No audio taping or other recording will be permitted during the meeting, but all parties are encouraged to make notes as they feel appropriate.
2. The Dean will fully investigate the appeal by consulting the faculty, advisor, Program Chair, or others as needed.
3. Within five (5) business days after the meeting, the Dean of Curriculum shall prepare a report of the disposition of the matter, immediately providing copies to the student, faculty, advisor, and Program Chair.
4. Level II outcome decisions are final. No further appeals can be made for that course in that semester or term.

NOTE: Course assignment/exam grades determined via the Academic Integrity Report and Review Procedure outlined in ADM 3.05 Student Conduct Rights and Responsibility policy may not be appealed through this policy.

Students who appeal a failing grade may be permitted to progress to the next course/term/semester pending a final decision in their case or may be permitted to go on a standard period of non-enrollment. **Those who progress to the next course/term/semester are responsible for any tuition and fees associated with such progression and may be at risk of financial loss should their appeal be unsuccessful. A period of non-enrollment will impact the student's anticipated date of graduation, even if successful on appeal.**

Final Disposition of Records

All materials and decisions related to the appeal will remain confidential and will be retained by the Dean of Academic Affairs for three years from the date of final decision, and not before the affected student graduates, at which time all materials will be destroyed, unless the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction directs otherwise.

External Complaints

In the event of a complaint about the College, as a last resort, students may contact the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools, Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs, Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic

Technology, State Council of Higher Education in Virginia, or the Virginia Board of Nursing or the appropriate agency from other states as listed below. Addresses of these agencies are listed below. In the event of a written complaint to one of these agencies or a “Standards” non-compliance issue, and subsequent notification to the College, immediate priority will be given to resolution of the deficiency in order to maintain accreditation. The Campus Director and Dean of Curriculum and Instruction is expected to respond to the agency in the time frame provided outlining the resolution/plan for resolution of the issue addressed.

Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES)

7777 Leesburg Pike, Suite 314 North
Falls Church, Virginia 22043
(703) 917-9503

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. (ACEN)

3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400
Atlanta, GA 30326
P: (404) 975-5000

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) Via the Joint Review Committee on Education in Diagnostic Medical Sonography (JRC-DMS)

9355 – 113th St. N, #7709
Seminole, FL 33775
P: (727) 2100-2350

Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT)

20 N. Wacker Drive Suite 2850
Chicago, IL, 60606-3182
P: (312) 704-5300

State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV)

(Note: Physical address change anticipated in 2026)

101 N. 14th Street
Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 225-2600
PPE@schev.edu
www.schev.edu

Virginia Board of Nursing

9960 Mayland Drive, #300
Henrico, VA 23233
(804) 367-4400

Students residing or located outside of Virginia may alternatively choose to contact their state’s education agency or board of nursing.

VII. Attachments

N/A

VIII. Related Policies and Procedures

ADM 1.05 Student Grievance Process
ADM 4.07 Establishing Principles of Excellence – Military

IX. Regulatory Notices

Nothing in this policy creates a contractual relationship between Southside College of Health Sciences (SCHS), a department owned and controlled by Bon Secours Mercy Health Petersburg, LLC (d/b/a Southside Medical Center), and any party. SCHS, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to amend, terminate or discontinue this policy at any time, with or without advance notice.

X. Version Control

Version	Effective Date	Next Review Date	Description	Supersedes, if applicable	Prepared By
1.0	5/19/2025		Initial Policy		CDDAA
2.0	8/1/2025	8/1/2028	Revisions based on JR Cert Requirements	1.0	Dean of Academic Affairs
1	8/1/2025	8/1/2028	Version Changed – BSH Template Adopted	1.0	CDDAA

This policy/procedure/guideline is not intended to establish a standard of clinical or non-clinical care or practice. Rather, this policy/procedure/guideline creates a general tool to help guide decision-making with the understanding that different action(s) may be necessary in response to the totality of the circumstances presented.

Sites revised 05/06/2025- Bon Secours Mercy Health adopts the above policy, procedure, policy & procedure, guideline, manual / reference guide / instructions, or principle / standard / guidance document for all Bon Secours Mercy Health entities including, but not limited to, facilities doing business as Mercy Health – St. Vincent Medical Center, St. Vincent – St. Charles Hospital, St. Vincent – St. Anne Hospital, Mercy Health – Perrysburg Medical Center, Mercy Health – Tiffin Hospital, Mercy Health – Willard Hospital, Mercy Health – Defiance Hospital, Mercy Health Allen Hospital LLC, Mercy Health - Lorain Hospital, Mercy Health St. Elizabeth Youngstown Hospital, Mercy Health St. Joseph Warren Hospital, Mercy Health - St. Elizabeth Boardman Hospital, Mercy Health - St. Rita's Medical Center, Mercy Health – Springfield Regional Medical Center, Mercy Health - Urbana Hospital, Mercy Health - Anderson Hospital, Mercy Health - Clermont Hospital, Mercy Health – Fairfield Hospital, Mercy Health - West Hospital, The Jewish Hospital – Mercy Health, Mercy Health – Kings Mills Hospital, LLC, Mercy Health - Lourdes Hospital LLC, Mercy Health – Marcum and Wallace Hospital, Chesapeake Hospital Corporation DBA Rappahannock General, Maryview Hospital, Bon Secours Richmond Community, Bon Secours Memorial Regional Medical Center, Bon Secours – St. Mary's Hospital, Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, Bon Secours St. Francis Medical Center, Bon Secours Mary Immaculate Hospital, Bon Secours - Southside Medical Center, Bon Secours Mercy Health Franklin, LLC, Southern Virginia Medical Center, and Bon Secours Harbour View Medical Center. This also may apply to Bon Secours Mercy Health Medical Group LLC and its medical group affiliates.