

Academic Petitions Committee

1. MANDATE

On behalf of the Lassonde School of Engineering Faculty Council and in alignment with the York University Undergraduate Calendar, the Committee shall be responsible for the development and oversight of the academic petitions process, including review and decisions of academic petitions and appeals for students of the Lassonde School of Engineering.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

A sub-committee of the Lassonde Committee on Evaluations and Academic Standards (CEAS), the Academic Petitions Committee shall be responsible for:

2.1. Adhering to the Guidelines for the [Consideration of Petitions/Appeals by Faculty Committees](#) as codified in the Academic Calendar, taking into consideration Senate's "General Considerations for Granting Specific Petitions (v2013)"

2.2. General oversight of the academic petition process.

2.2.1. The Committee as a whole will meet regularly to review policies, procedures, and guidelines relating to the processing and decision making of academic petitions and appeals

2.2.2. The Committee shall report on business/activity to CEAS on a biannual basis and identify trends in petition activity that may be of interest to CEAS and could impact policy/procedures that CEAS may wish to address. The Committee may also make recommendations or requests for action to be taken by CEAS to address issues related to policy as they arise

2.2.3. The Committee shall make recommendations on policy matters and procedures relating to student academic petitions and appeals.

2.2.4. Members will attend regular training on procedural fairness and decision making

2.3. Institute and oversee a panel system for the hearing of petitions and appeals.

a) Three panels comprised each of two full-time faculty members and one student representative. Ad hoc or alternate student representatives may include students from other Lassonde student communities (e.g., Lassonde peer mentors, members of the Lassonde Squad)

b) A decision will not be ratified until there are three votes recorded per academic petition or appeal

c) Each panel of the Committee shall meet at least once monthly. Meeting frequency and length is subject to change during peak seasons

d) Academic petitions and appeals shall be made available for review by the Committee Secretary at least 3 business days prior to the panel meeting via e-mail and/or document-sharing web site. The Secretary shall present each case during the meetings and shall be available for question and answer throughout the review process

2.4. Receive and act upon student academic petitions. A petition is a written request, made by a student, to be exempt from or have waived a Lassonde School of Engineering rule or regulation.

a) Committee Petitions:

i. Petitions reviewed via the panel system are referred to as Committee (Level 2) files

ii. All petitions to waive a one-year withdrawal or two-year debarment, to alter the repeated course legislation, or to waive Honours Standing, shall be referred to the panel system/committee directly

b) Administrative Petitions:

i. Petitions eligible for review by the Assistant Dean Students are referred to as Administrative (Level 1) files

ii. The Assistant Dean Students shall review Administrative (level 1) petitions, which includes, but is not limited to, the following petition types:

- Drop course(s) past the published deadline where the course has been taken in the first 3 terms of the student's study at York University
- Add course(s) past the published deadline(s)
- Course overload
- Exemption from the deadline to submit a request for a grade reappraisal
- Deferred Standing or Extension of Deferred Standing

Lassonde Faculty Council Academic Petitions Committee Rules, Policies & Procedures

- Degree requirements waived or altered (i.e. General Education/Non-Science/Complementary Studies); In the event a student submits a petition requesting an alteration or waiver of degree requirements specific to their program core, stream, major, minor, or elective course requirements, the matter shall be referred via the Assistant Dean Students to the relevant Undergraduate Program Director. Other parties to the decision may include the Vice Dean, if/as applicable. These decisions may not be appealed to the panel system/Committee.
- iii. Petitions denied at the administrative level shall be referred to the panel system/Committee automatically via the Committee Secretary (with the exception of petitions to waive/alter degree requirements)
- c) Committee members shall provide to the Committee Secretary an adequate rationale per petition decision

2.5. Receive and act upon student appeals to academic petition decisions. An appeal is a written request, made by a student, for re-consideration of a previously denied petition

- a) All appeals shall be referred to the panel system/Committee directly
- b) A denied petition may be appealed once at the Faculty level. For example, if a petition denied by Panel 1 is appealed the appeal will be eligible for review by Panel 2. If the appeal is denied by Panel 2 it would not go to Panel 3; the student may appeal to the Senate Appeals Committee (SAC)
- c) Appeals are only heard on the following grounds:
 - i. New evidence: evidence that, through no fault of the student, could not reasonably have been shared in the initial petition(s) (as a guide, events or performance subsequent to the decisions of the Academic Petitions Committee are not to be construed as new evidence):
 - ii. Evidence of procedural irregularity in the previous consideration of the petition by the Academic Petitions Committee. This may include actions taken by the Lassonde School of Engineering, its officers, committees or members with respect to the case which would violate or nullify any of the following:
 - Normal and written procedures of the School
 - Recognized custom of the School
 - The principles of natural justice and fairness
- d) Committee members shall provide to the Committee Secretary an adequate rational per appeal decision

2.6. Maintain records and periodically review/analyze

3. EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY

The Committee recognizes the importance of cultivating a culture of fairness, equity, diversity and inclusion. The Committee ensures that these essential principles are integrated into the School's/Committee's policies, programs, operations and practices.

4. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

4.1. Membership

The membership of the Academic Petition Committee shall be as follows:

| Title | # of Members | # of Votes |
|---|--------------|------------|
| Ex Officio Membership | | |
| Academic Services Coordinator and Secretary to the Committee (non-voting) | 1 | 0 |
| Assistant Dean Students | 1 | 1 |
| Membership | | |
| 3 Students | 3 | 3 |
| 6 Full-time faculty members | 6 | 6 |
| TOTAL | 11 | 10 |

4.2. Period of Appointments

Ex-Officio Members:

- Ex Officio members shall hold their position for the duration of their appointment in that role.

Lassonde Faculty Council Academic Petitions Committee Rules, Policies & Procedures

Faculty Members:

- Faculty members will be elected at-large for a two-year rolling cycle. Each year, one-half of the membership turns over and will be replaced on a rotational basis by other faculty members.

Students:

- The undergraduate students elected and/or appointed as members will serve for one-year, renewable.

4.3. Elections/Nominations

Chair:

- The Chair of the Committee is selected by the voting members of the Committee for a two-year term

Students:

- Student vacancies are filled via a centralized process which will be managed by the Executive Committee. The election process is conducted by the respective student body of the Lassonde undergraduate student government.

Faculty Members:

- Faculty members at large shall be elected through the process managed by the Executive Committee of Council and will include a call for nominees to committees.
- Should an elected member resign from the committee, a by-election shall be held to fill the vacancy.

4.4. Representation by Proxy

- Provisions have been made for members to designate a substitute.
- In the case of the absence or illness of the Chair, the committee may appoint one of the members of the committee to act as Chair pro tempore and for such period the member so appointed shall act as, and have all the powers of, the Chair.

4.5. Resignation/Dismissal of Members

- Should an elected member resign from the committee, the Chair will endeavor to find a replacement. In the event a replacement cannot be found, a call will go out from the Executive Committee to solicit a replacement from Faculty Council.
- Any member may be dismissed for any of the following reasons: 1) missing three (3) consecutive meetings (except in cases of illness or other weighty grounds); and/or 2) for other cause for which the committee finds to be just.

5. MEETINGS & PROTOCOLS

5.1. Meetings and Protocols

- Meetings are open to members of the Lassonde community, subject to the availability of space
- When the committee considers matters relating to specific individuals or to other matters where confidentiality must be observed, the committee may, in the notice for a meeting, declare part of a meeting to be closed or in camera.
- When the committee meets in camera, only committee members may be present.
- The Lassonde Faculty Council has adopted "[York University Rules of Senate](#)" to guide and inform its governance structure and operations.
- This committee shall make its decisions based on a simple majority of those members present and voting at a duly constituted meeting
- Committee members will notify the Chair/Secretary if they will be absent from a meeting.
- The Committee shall take no summer hiatus. Meetings to review petition and appeal files shall continue throughout the Summer session
- The Secretary shall present each case during meetings to review Committee (level 2) files and Administrative (level 1) files and shall be available for question and answer throughout the review process

5.2. Chair

- The Chair of the Academic Petition Committee is responsible for providing leadership to the committee in pursuit of its mandate. The Chair presides at all committee meetings, acts as the official spokesperson for the committee, and ensures that the committee operates in conformity with the rules enacted by Faculty Council and Senate.

Lassonde Faculty Council Academic Petitions Committee Rules, Policies & Procedures

- The role of the Chair must be filled by a full-time faculty member and shall include:
- Working with the Committee Secretary to ensure meeting agendas are set and followed
- Oversight of guidelines for granting/denying petitions, ensuring fairness and consistency across panels
- Meeting with the Committee Secretary to discuss trends/issues that may require the attention of other Committees of council/Faculty leadership.
- Reports to Senate on an annual basis

5.3. Quorum

- Quorum shall exist when at least half of the voting members of the Committee, the majority of whom are full-time faculty members, are present.

5.4. Timing and Frequency of Meetings

- The Committee as a whole shall meet biannually, once at the beginning of the Fall term and once at the beginning of the Winter term.
- The Assistant Dean Students shall review Administrative (level 1) petitions at least once weekly. Meeting frequency and length will be subject to change during peak seasons
- Each panel of the Committee shall meet at least once monthly. Meeting frequency and length is subject to change during peak seasons

5.5. Standing Orders

- The conduct of the business of the meeting shall be subject to the "[York University Rules of Senate](#)"

5.6. Agenda, Administration, and Minutes

- The administration of the committee shall be taken up by the Secretary to the Committee.
- All records of the meetings, including the minutes, shall be retained in accordance with the Common Records Schedule (CRS) for Faculty Councils ([ADG15](#)) and Faculty Council Committees ([ADG17](#)) under York University's Information, Privacy and Copyright Office.
- The Secretary to the Committee shall be responsible for ensuring correspondence and decisions made by the Committee are available to relevant people or bodies, including the membership of sub-committees and secretaries of relevant Faculty Councils.

5.7. Voting

- All members of the committee are voting members unless specifically indicated otherwise. Ex officio and elected/appointed members have the same voting rights.
- Votes may be cast in person or by e-vote
 - Pursuant to the discretion of the Chair, members may be permitted to vote by means of an electronic communication (e-vote) which enables the votes to be gathered in a manner that permits their subsequent verification

6. REPORTING

- The Committee shall report on business/activity to CEAS biannually
- The Committee shall provide a report of its activities to Faculty Council on an annual basis.
- On behalf of the Committee, the Chair shall report on petition and appeal activity to Senate annually

7. DOCUMENT CONTROL

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| Version Number | Academic Petitions Committee V.1 |
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