

BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC RELIEF

April, 2004

These guidelines explain the procedures a student needs to go through to seek academic relief. It tells the student who to contact, what forms to fill out, and what deadlines are in place. There are four kinds of academic relief that a student can seek at Brescia University College:

1. **For marks:** A student can ask that marks in individual courses be reconsidered. The section below on "Academic Relief for Marks" explains how this procedure is carried out at Brescia University College. For a course taken elsewhere, students should follow the procedures of the College or Faculty offering the course.

2. **For Dean's Waiver:** A student registered at Brescia University College who has been required to withdraw from her program can apply to the Academic Dean to have the progression requirements waived, if she thinks there were extenuating factors, such as circumstances beyond her control or medical and compassionate grounds. The section below on "Applying for a Dean's Waiver" explains the situations in which a student can seek academic relief and the grounds on which such relief can be based.

3. **For readmission/admission:** A student who has been denied admission or readmission to Brescia University College can ask that the decision be reconsidered. The process is explained on page 4 of these guidelines.

4. **For special petitions and requests:** Students can appeal to the Academic Dean to have specific Senate regulations and program requirements waived. These requests should be in writing and should outline the reasons why a particular exemption is requested. See page 4 of these guidelines for more information.

Note: All university regulations outlined in the *Academic Information* section of the UWO Academic Calendar apply to Brescia students; students should be aware of the regulations and requirements.

Students with questions about their academic programs and about academic relief are encouraged to consult with the Academic Counsellor. Appointments can be made by telephoning 858-51551 or by visiting the Administration Office, Room 11, St. James Building.

Students may also wish to consult the Ombudsperson's Office in UCC for advice about requests for academic relief. Several useful handouts are available there for students considering their options.

Are there further steps available to a student who has exhausted the procedures outlined in these guidelines?

The Deans' rulings in academic matters are final unless overturned or modified on appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA). Students are urged to consult the UWO Calendar section on Academic Rights & Responsibilities or <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/appeals.pdf>

ACADEMIC RELIEF FOR MARKS

Note: *These guidelines apply to courses taken at Brescia University College. For courses taken elsewhere, the student should follow the procedures of the College or Faculty offering the course. The steps to be followed are very similar at other Colleges and Faculties, but there are slight variations.*

Students requesting academic relief in specific courses offered at Brescia University College should follow these steps:

1. Course instructor

The first step is to consult informally with the professor. The professor will be able to explain the course grading scheme and can provide information on specific marks assigned to different assignments in the course. Students are allowed to see their final examination papers; these papers are kept for 8 months after the end of the course. *The student should consult with the professor as soon as possible after a mark is received.*

Faculty have office hours during the school year and can be consulted at these times. Students can also phone or send an e-mail to the professor to make appointments for other times. It may be more difficult to meet with a professor after classes end, but the Registrar's Office and/or Department Chair can help put a student in contact with the professor.

2. Department Chair

If the student is not satisfied with the response received, a written appeal can be made to the Department Chair. (In the case of a Family Studies or Women's Studies course at Brescia University College, the written appeal can go directly to the Academic Dean [see below]). The letter to the Department Chair should summarize briefly the grounds on which the student thinks the mark(s) earned was not justified. *The written appeal to a department chair must be made by the following dates:*

January marks:	January 31
April/May marks:	June 30

On receipt of a letter requesting academic relief, the Chair will immediately send a copy to the professor, who will respond in writing within a week.

If the student has argued that a mark received on an essay or other written material was unwarranted, the Chair may arrange to have the work re-read by another instructor who is knowledgeable about the topic; some departments (e.g., Human Ecology) arrange for *two* instructors to re-read an essay. In the re-reading process, every effort will be made to ensure the anonymity of the student requesting academic relief. Wherever possible, the re-reader(s) will submit a mark within one week. The Chair will then determine whether the mark on that assignment should stay the same or be adjusted upward or downward.

The Chair will notify the student in writing of the result of the deliberation, usually within three weeks of receipt of the student's letter.

3. Academic Dean

If the student is not satisfied with the response received from the Department Chair, a further request for academic relief can be made to the Academic Dean. The request must be in written form (not by e-mail) and

should explain clearly the nature of the appeal and the responses received from the professor and from the Department Chair. Copies of supporting documentation (for example doctors' notes) should accompany the letter, as well as copies of letters to and from the professor and the Department Chair. If information is available that was not submitted to the professor or Department Chair at earlier stages of the appeal process, it should be noted when submitted to the Dean. The Dean will review the information provided and make a decision, normally within two weeks. The decision and brief reasons for it will be communicated to the student in writing.

Are there further steps available for a student seeking academic relief from marks in a course or on specific assignments?

Generally not. Usually the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA) will **not** hear appeals of decisions relating to individual course grades. SRBA **may** grant leave to appeal if a student is dissatisfied with general marking practices or alleges that there has been bias or failure to follow procedural requirements at the "decision-making level".

APPLYING FOR A DEAN'S WAIVER

A student who does not satisfy the minimum *Progression Requirements* for continuation of study at UWO and is not eligible for probation or who has exceeded the maximum number of failed courses, 6.0 full or equivalent courses, will be **Required to Withdraw** from the University for a minimum of twelve months.

Brescia University College students can apply to the Academic Dean for relief from the progression requirements outlined in the UWO Academic Calendar (pages 28-29). This relief will be granted only if there were exceptional circumstances that affected a student's academic performance adversely; waivers are usually granted only on medical or compassionate grounds.

Brescia students who think that there are extenuating circumstances may seek a Dean's Waiver. The *Formal Petition for Dean's Waiver* form is available in the Administration Office, Room 11 of the St. James Building. The petition must be filled out completely with supporting documentation provided. It must be turned in to the Academic Dean by June 30 of the year in which a student has been required to withdraw.

It is important that the student specify the events or situations that resulted in poor academic performance, explain why those events or situations were beyond her control, and demonstrate that those conditions would **not** continue to hamper academic performance if the student were granted a Dean's Waiver.

Upon receipt of the petition, the Dean's Office will solicit information from each of the student's professors about her academic performance in the previous year. Professors are asked to give a breakdown of the student's marks, to comment on the student's attendance record, and to provide any other relevant information. Once this information is provided, the petition will be considered by the Academic Dean and by the Registrar.

If the request is granted, the student will be notified in writing, usually within three weeks of filing the petition.

Are there further steps available for a student seeking a Dean's waiver?

Generally not; the Dean's decision is usually final. The Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA) **may** grant leave to appeal, but will consider only the evidence that was available to the Dean. Refer to <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>

APPEALING A READMISSION/ADMISSION DECISION

Admission decisions can be appealed by

1. women whose application to be admitted to Brescia University College has been denied; and
2. former Brescia University College students who have been required to withdraw from the College and whose application for readmission has been refused.

Those who intend to appeal a readmission or admission decision should fill out the *Admissions Committee: Formal Statement of Appeal* form, available at the Administration Office, Room 11. An appeal should be based on academic, medical, or compassionate grounds. On the form, applicants are asked to cite the extenuating circumstances which contributed most significantly to their academic difficulty and to provide supporting documentation. Applicants should outline the reasons why they think they will be successful in future academic studies, as well as their degree and program objectives.

Upon receipt of the petition, the Academic Dean and the Registrar will meet and review it. If the request for admission/readmission is granted, the student will be notified in writing, usually within two weeks of filing the petition.

The results of this appeal will be sent to the student in writing, usually within three weeks of the date on which the petition was filed.

Are there further steps available to a student appealing an admission decision?

No. The Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA) does not hear admissions appeals.

SPECIAL PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Brescia students can appeal to the Academic Dean at the College to have Senate regulations and program requirements waived. These requests should be in writing and should explain clearly the reasons why a particular exemption or action is needed and the grounds on which it is requested. For further information, students should consult with the Registrar or the Academic Counsellor.

Brescia students taking courses at UWO or one of the other affiliated colleges who face unusual circumstances and who request relief on compassionate or medical grounds from course requirements may wish to discuss the situation with the Academic Dean.