

**MONTREAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**  
**IN-MINISTRY YEAR**  
**APPEAL PROCEDURES**

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## **Appeal of a Failing Grade for Written Assignments**

Instructors will provide a complete list of assignments and criteria for evaluation at the outset of each course. Expectations for framing of written assignments will be provided in writing either at the outset of the course or at a point during the course which allows sufficient time for students' planning.

Instructors will grade written assignments in timely manner and will make the grade available to students.

In the event that an instructor finds it necessary to assign a failing grade for an assignment in an IMY course, he or she shall notify the student in writing as soon as possible following the completion of the assignment.

This notification shall include a rationale for the failing grade, and, at the discretion of the instructor, suggestions as to how the student might make up the failed assignment.

Should the student disagree with the correctness of the rationale given, he or she may request that the instructor review the failing grade. This request, which must precede any other reviews, will normally be made in person. The student will be prepared to present to the instructor rationale for a review of the grade. The instructor will communicate with the student within a week of the interview\* indicating whether or not a new grade has been assigned.

Students who are dissatisfied with the results of this review have the right to request that an outside evaluator review the grade for the assignment. This request shall be made in writing with the student providing justification as to why he/she believes that the assigned grade is unjustified. This request shall be given to the Administrative Office and copied to the instructor of the course within 48 hours of the receipt of the results of the review by the instructor.

In the instance of the receipt of such a request, the Administrative Officer of the Joint Board shall consult with the instructor and with the Principal of the student's college. In the event that the instructor is also the student's Principal or the Administrative Officer of the Joint Board, the Administrative Officer shall consult with two other colleagues, either Principals or Directors of Studies from the Joint Board, one of whom shall agree to perform the duties of the Administrative Officer in this matter, if the instructor occupies that position. Together they shall identify a colleague or instructor in a similar discipline of whom a request for review can be made. The Administrative Officer shall then contact and forward to the outside evaluator a copy of:

- i) the course syllabus and all additional guidelines or parameters for assignments;
- ii) the assignments for which a failing grade has been given.

The independent evaluator shall return the assignment within two weeks with a grade and comments to the Administrative Officer of the Joint Board, who will advise the student and the instructor of the results of the review. The grade given by the outside evaluator shall stand as the grade for the assignment. This grade may not be appealed.

\*All time frames for the review may need to be adjusted to accommodate the end of the year.

- adopted by Program Committee Oct. 7, 02; revised by Academic Council April 23, 03

## **Appeal Procedure for the Failure of the IMY**

Every student in the In-Ministry Year shall have the right to make an appeal to the Permanent Appeal Committee of the Academic Council of the Joint Board of Theological Colleges with respect to a decision to refuse or to defer the granting of either the Master of Divinity degree or the Diploma in Ministry.

There are two stages to the appeal process. They are outlined below as: (1) Request for Review and (2) Formal Appeal.

### **(1) REQUEST FOR REVIEW**

(A) The student may submit a written request for review to the Administrative Officer of the In-Ministry Year Programme (hereafter called, "The Administrative Officer") within twenty-four hours of receiving the written decision concerning either refusal or deferment of the degree or diploma.

(B) The Principals and Directors of (Pastoral) Studies shall meet to review the decision within forty-eight hours of receiving the request for review. The student may attend this review meeting, may make a statement and may ask questions.

(C) A written report of their decision--including its rationale--shall be delivered to the student within twenty-four hours of the review meeting.

(D) If the grievance is resolved by the review no further action is necessary. If the student remains dissatisfied, a formal appeal may be made.

### **(2) FORMAL APPEAL**

A written, formal appeal shall be made to the Administrative Officer within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the decision of the review. The Administrative Officer shall present this appeal to the Chairperson of the Appeal Committee who shall, immediately, call an appeal panel.

### **THE COMPOSITION OF THE APPEAL COMMITTEE**

The Appeal Committee shall consist of nine representatives appointed, three each, by the Boards or Senates of the three participating colleges. The appointments shall be made prior to November 1st of each year and the term of office shall be for one year.

Of the three representatives from each college:

(A) One shall be a member of the Board or Senate and shall serve as a core member sitting on every appeal panel. It is strongly recommended that this person be in an academic position.

(B) One shall be a recent graduate of the In-Ministry Year programme.

(C) One shall be a student in the In-Ministry Year programme. In the event that this student becomes an appellant, the college personnel shall make ad hoc arrangements for a student replacement.

Principals, Directors of (Pastoral) Studies, Adjunct Faculty and Instructors in the In-Ministry Year programme may not serve on the Appeal Committee.

## **THE APPEAL HEARING**

- (A) The hearing shall take place at least two days before the appellant's College Convocation.
- (B) The appeal shall be heard and a decision shall be rendered by a panel of five people to be chosen as follows: the three representatives who make up the core group of the Appeal Committee, plus the two other representatives on the Appeal Committee who are from the appellant's college. The chairperson shall be the core member from the appellant's college.
- (C) The appeal panel shall have access to all information and all parties involved in the decision to refuse or defer.
- (D) The Administrative Officer shall present to the Appeal Panel the reasons for the decision to refuse or defer the awarding of the M. Div degree or the Diploma In Ministry. The Director of (Pastoral) Studies of the appellant's college shall act as consultant.
- (E) The appellant may have an advisor. The advisor shall be a person familiar with the In-Ministry Year programme such as a faculty member of the McGill Faculty of Religious Studies, a field supervisor, a recent graduate, a member of the College Senate or Board, an adjunct faculty member or instructor in the In-Ministry Year, a student from one of the participating colleges or from the F.R.S. Principals and Directors of Pastoral Studies are not eligible to act as a student's advisor.
- (F) Both parties to the appeal shall be called at the same time and both shall leave at the same time. The Appeal Panel members will not be permitted access to one of the parties without the presence of the other.
- (G) The Appeal Panel members will be concerned solely with the fairness of the process employed. They will not, themselves, engage in an evaluation of the appellant's academic or field work.
- (H) The hearing will be conducted in camera. There will be no formal transcript of the hearing. The decision of the Appeal Panel along with a brief statement of the reasons for the decision will be communicated in writing to the student within four hours of the time the decision is made. This document will also be communicated to the Appellant's college and to the Academic Council of the Joint Board of Theological Colleges.
- (J) The decision of the appeal panel members is not subject to further appeal.

It is understood that any other appeals connected to the theological programme may be made to the Senate or Board of each College, or to the McGill Grievance Committee, as may be appropriate.

JUNE, 1988