



OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR
Student Services

3200 Maggie Benston Centre TEL 778.782.3108 students.sfu.ca
8888 University Drive, FAX 778.782.5732
Burnaby, BC
Canada V5A 1S6

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate DATE May 19, 2020
FROM Rummana Khan Hemani PAGES 2
Secretary, Senate Appeals Board
RE: Senate Appeals Board Annual Report for 2019

The Senate Appeal Board (SAB) hears appeals from students on matters involving the application of academic policies and requirements relating but not limited to:

- withdrawal under extenuating circumstances
- admission or re-admission to the University, where special circumstances are present

SAB meets at least once a month and occasionally more frequently when there is sufficient business to warrant a meeting. In 2019, SAB met 10 times reviewing a total of 35 student appeal cases.

In June 2014, the terms of reference for SAB were revised to address, in part, the marked increase in appeals over the previous 5-6 years. A time limit for appeal was introduced, and clearer guidelines regarding grounds for appeal and documentation requirements were implemented. These revisions to the terms of reference led to a reduced number of appeals in both 2015 and 2016. The number of appeals, however, increased again in 2017 primarily because of an unusual surge of requests for retroactive withdrawals under extenuating circumstances.

In 2018 and 2019, the number of appeals declined significantly. At the same time, a higher proportion of appeals was approved. These statistics are a direct result of further revisions to the SAB procedures, most notably more guidance for students from both the appeals coordinator and the Ombudsperson prior to submitting the application. These changes have led to fewer applications overall; fewer applications with insufficient evidence; and more applications with stronger documentation and, in some cases, more persuasive explanations that have led to approvals on compassionate grounds.

Paul Garfinkel, Faculty Member, Chair

Rummana Khan Hemani, Secretary, SAB

Dates of meetings in 2019: January 31, March 4, March 28, May 6, July 8, September 26, October 24, November 21, and December 12.

Current SAB Membership:

Paul Garfinkel, Faculty Member, Chair
Veselin Jungic, Faculty Member
Cathy D'Andrea, Faculty Member
Gord Myers, Faculty Member
Alexandra Wesolek, Graduate Student
Vacant, Graduate Student (Alternate)

Rummana Khan Hemani, Secretary
Shauna Jones, Faculty Member (Alternate)
Aliya Khan, Undergraduate Student
Vacant, Undergraduate Student (Alternate)
Tina Edmundson, Recording Secretary

Procedure:

Each appeal is initially screened to determine whether or not it meets the grounds for appeal as outlined in the terms of reference. All appeals are heard in-camera (written form only). In rare cases, if the SAB is unable to make a decision because of insufficient information, students may be asked to appear in person if they have indicated their willingness to do so on the application. The case then proceeds to an in-person hearing, at which time the student may present further evidence and answer questions. These hearings typically last 15 – 20 minutes.

Summary of Appeal Decisions 2019:

	Withdrawal Under Extenuating Circumstances	Appeals for Admission Re-admission	Total
Approved	31	0	31
Denied	3	0	3
Cancelled (no further action by student)	0	0	0
Did not hear (no grounds for appeal)	0	0	0
Tabled to the next year	1	0	1
Total Appeals:		0	35

Summary of Appeal Decisions, 2008-2018:

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Approved	27	22	30	39	31	45	53	35	33	57	32
Denied	4	15	19	16	26	18	24	21	17	13	6
Cancelled (no further action by student)	0	0	2	2	1	9	3	0		0	2
Did not hear (no grounds for appeal)	4	3	1	0	0	1	3	3	1	0	0
Tabled to the next year	6	0	1	2	0	6	5	0	0	2	0
	41	40	53	59	58	79	88	59	51	72	40