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**MEMORANDUM**

ATTENTION Senate DATE March 16, 2023  
FROM Tom Nault PAGES 3  
Secretary, Senate Appeals Board  
RE: Senate Appeals Board Annual Report for 2022

The Senate Appeals 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

The SAB normally meets once a month but will convene more frequently when necessary. In 2022, the SAB met 12 times and reviewed a total of 46 student appeals.

**Number of Appeals by Year**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Approved	33	57	32	31	28	27	29
Denied	17	13	6	3	5	3	17
Cancelled (no further action by student)		0	2	0	1	0	0
Did not hear (no grounds for appeal)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tabled to the next year	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total Number of Appeals</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>46</b>

In 2022, there were a total of 46 students who appealed for 57 terms. This is a significant increase over the past four years, as case numbers had been decreasing since 2017. We will continue to monitor this trend. It could signify a larger proportion of students struggling with their academic studies and mental and physical health after the transition to in-person learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Of the total 46 student appeals in 2022, 34 applied for WEs on *medical grounds* and 10 applied under *compassionate grounds*. The SAB generally decides in favour of those applicants when there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that instructors offered no accommodations, extensions, or deferrals on exams/assignments.

**Students Appealed on the following grounds:**

	Appeals	Approved	Denied
Medical	34	23	11
Compassionate	10	3	7
Other	2	2	
Total appeals	46	28	18

**The following is a list of appeals by Faculty:**

Faculty of Arts	15	Faculty of Applied Science	10
Beedie School of Business	4	Faculty of Communication, Art, and Technology	3
Faculty of Education	1	Faculty of Environment	2
Faculty of Health Science	2	Faculty of Science	9

By department, Computing Science and Economics had the highest number of appeals, 7 and 5 respectively.

**Reasons for Appeal:**

To remedy required to withdraw (RTW) or academic probation status	13
To remove incomplete or failed courses	16
To retake a course beyond the normal five-repeat limit ( <b>or</b> to remove one or more repeated courses from a transcript)	10
Students with multiple terms of WE's	3
To resolve cases due to a procedural error or decisions made without jurisdiction	4
	46

The SAB observed that 10 cases, or roughly one quarter, were related to students who had reached the normal five-course repeat and where the department/program declined to grant them an opportunity to exceed the normal limit of five course repeat. The current SFU Calendar language on repeated courses omits critical information and, in turn, is inconsistent with the current university policy as specified by the Senate in 1982: *“That... the number of courses a student can duplicate in his/her degree program be limited to five; the limit of five duplications may be extended by the Faculty Dean. No course may be duplicated more than once except with the permission of the Department.”* [Minutes-19820111.pdf \(sfu.ca\)](#). The SAB questions if these cases would be more appropriately handled by the departments given their authority to grant a student more than five repeats. However, the SAB agreed to hear the students' appeals so as not to delay the decision and disadvantage a student.

**Current academic standing of the 46 students who appealed:**

Graduated or applied to graduate	8
In Good Academic Standing	28
On Academic Probation	5
Require to Withdraw	5
Total	46

**Procedure:**

Each appeal is initially screened to determine whether it meets the grounds for appeal as outlined in the terms of reference. All appeals are heard in-camera (written form only). Students are provided with extensions to allow time to provide either more information or clearer documentation. 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.

Dates of meetings in 2022:

January 20, February 17, March 17, April 21, May 19, June 23, July 21, August 23, September 22, October 12, November 9, and December 8.

**Current SAB Membership:**

Holly Hendrigan, Faculty Member, Chair  
Alexander Karaivanov, Faculty Member  
Kamal Masri, Faculty Member  
Reema Faris, Graduate Student  
Vacant, Undergraduate Student  
Tina Edmundson, Recording Secretary

Tom Nault, Secretary  
Shafik Bhalloo, Faculty Member  
Cathy D'Andrea, Faculty Member  
Vacant, Graduate Student (Alternate)  
Vacant, Undergraduate Student (Alternate)



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Holly Hendrigan, Faculty Member,  
Chair



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Tom Nault, Secretary, SAB