

The Little Guide

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Introduction

The Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities is a great resource for finding out exactly where you stand as a student at UBC. That being said, it is a daunting 42-page document that most of us will never have to read through. To help you zero in on exactly what you need to know, the Ombuds Office has prepared this Little Guide. The Little Guide contains brief overviews of each section, as well as a glossary of words that are typically used in the academic world.

Our hope with the Little Guide is that students will become more comfortable and familiar with the different regulations that govern our school and thus our academic environment. Should you feel the need for further explanation, or if you are just so confused by your situation that you'd like some help, the Ombuds Office is here. We'll be happy to help you through the Guide, as well as answer any questions that you might have. Our job is to help you navigate the administration (both student and academic) so that you can reach your goal, whatever it may be.

The AMS Ombuds Office can be found in room 249F of the Student Union Building. You can also contact us by phone at 604.822.4846 or by email at assist@ams.ubc.ca.

Section 2: Academic Standing Issues

Section 2.1—Change of Registration for Undergrad Programs: Add/Drop Procedures

If you have questions about how to add or drop a class and what that means in terms of fees, tuition and transcripts, then you should start looking here.

Section 2.2—Review of Assigned Standing

This section goes through the steps to take to approach your professor or your faculty if you receive a low mark that you don't feel you deserve.

Section 2.3—Academic Concession

The concept of "Academic Concession" covers a lot of different things. Being sick, injured or depressed are the well known reasons for getting an academic concession. However, the policy is in place for all "extenuating circumstances" (meaning any situations that were out of your control or had a large impact on you) that affect your schoolwork. Typically an academic concession is in the form of an extension of a due date or alternative test date.

Section 2.4—Deferrals

Similar to an Academic Concession, a deferral simply refers to moving the due date or examination date to a later period in time, sometimes even after a term has ended. For example, a deferred exam means an exam written after or outside of the exam period.

Section 2.5.1—Examination Clashes and Hardships

The exam period can be really stressful, so UBC has a policy in place to help out when you get an unlucky exam schedule. An exam clash happens when you have two exams at the same time. An exam hardship is when you have 3 exams in a 24-hour period. This section tells you who to talk to and how to deal with either problem.

Section 2.5.2—Viewing Final Examinations

You are allowed to see your final exam once it has been marked. Remember that this is not a chance to fight about your mark; however, if you do have an issue with your grade, please see section 2.8.

Section 2.5.3—Supplemental Examinations

Supplemental exams are specific to certain faculties. They are essentially a “make-up” exam, or a second chance to do better than the first time you wrote the exam. Please speak to your department to find out if they have supplemental exams and what their rules are.

Section 2.6—Issues Pertaining to Graduate Students in Thesis-Based Programs

Any graduate issues such as registration and student-supervisor conflicts are discussed in this section.

Sections 2.7 – 2.9— Appeals

These sections all deal with appeals. The best way to find out how to appeal a decision is to ask the department or person whose decision you’re appealing. As awkward as that might sound, they’re going to find out about the appeal no matter what. This way you don’t spend time trying to figure out whom to speak to, but instead spend valuable time preparing your appeal.

Section 2.10—Senate Committee on Student Appeals on Academic Standing

For anyone going in front of the Senate Committee on Student Appeals on Academic Standing, this section outlines the deadlines, the required documents, how the meeting will go and how best to prepare. The Ombuds Office strongly recommends giving this section a read through before going in front of the committee.

Section 2.11—Accessing Your File

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* you can access your files at the University. This section tells you who to ask for this information.

Section 3: Student Discipline

Section 3.1—UBC Policy

There are many types of academic misconduct that require some form of student academic discipline. Things like plagiarism, cheating and academic dovetailing are included in this category. UBC’s student discipline procedures also cover non-academic offences.

Section 3.2—Faculty Level

This section deals with the initial process of an academic misconduct being recognized and dealt with by a faculty member.

Section 3.3—The President’s Advisory Committee on Student Discipline (PACSD)

Like the Senate, the PACSD is complicated and in many ways intimidating if you don’t know how it works. This section takes you through the process and lists everything you’ll need to prepare for your PACSD meeting.

Sections 3.4 – 3.6

So you’ve been found guilty of committing an academic offense. What now? Sections 3.4-3.6 point out your options after the PACSD has made a decision. Whether you want to appeal the PACSD’s verdict, have their ruling erased from your transcript or simply want to re-register for classes after your mandated suspension, these sections will help you figure out who to talk to and when.

Section 4: Student Finances

If you have any questions at all about finances, this is the section to read. There is information about your tuition and what you have to pay, what happens when you're late paying a university bill or fine, and how to appeal library and parking fines.

Section 5: Other University Policies

Section 5.1—Religious Holidays

UBC policy allows for students to miss classes for religious holidays. If you need to observe a holy day when you also have an exam or project due, this section will show you what steps to take.

Section 5.2—Academic Position of Students in the Event of a Strike

Just what the title says. In the event of a strike, read this section to learn your rights and responsibilities as a student.

Section 5.3—Academic Accommodation for Student with Disabilities

This section thoroughly explains who qualifies as being a student with disabilities at UBC, how to identify yourself to the school, and the many different programs and services available for your use. Also included in this section are ways to make alternate arrangements when your disability affects your academic work. Information on UBC's Disability Resource Centre (DRC), as well as how to appeal a DRC decision can also be found here.

Section 5.4—Discrimination and Harassment

If you're wondering what counts as discrimination and harassment under UBC guidelines, as well as what your rights are as a student, then this section will answer your questions. It also outlines how to file a complaint and available resources for students.

Section 6: Responsibilities as a UBC Student

This section outlines what the university expects out of you as a representative of UBC. It goes through the various regulations on alcohol, internet use and postering/signage that UBC enforces. It would be smart to go through this section and familiarize yourself with these important but little-known regulations.

Section 7: Related Resources

There are a number of resources mentioned in the guide. This section lists each one alphabetically with updated contact information. If you're not sure who to contact first, come by the Ombuds office and we'll help you figure it out!

Glossary

When you encounter problems or issues in your academic life you will notice that there is a whole new set of vocabulary that everyone is using. It is important to be aware of the meaning of many of these different terms. Here is a list of some of the most commonly used terms that students encounter. It is not exhaustive, so if you have any questions feel free to contact the Ombuds Office with any questions.

Academic Concession: Faculties will usually grant academic concessions when extenuating circumstances beyond your control directly affect your ability to meet your academic obligations.

Academic Dovetailing: Academic dovetailing occurs when you hand in the same paper for credit in two separate courses without permission from your professors.

Academic Misconduct: Academic misconduct is the term that UBC uses to describe “offenses” that students commit. Common academic offences include cheating, plagiarism, academic dovetailing, and inappropriate collaboration.

Academic Standing: Academic Standing refers to your status as a student according to UBC. For example, are you on academic probation? Or are you a part-time or full-time student?

Cheating: Cheating occurs where you use unauthorized means to write an exam or falsify material for which you will receive academic credit.

Deferral: A deferral is a form of academic concession which allows you to submit course work after the scheduled deadline.

Discrimination: UBC policy defines discrimination as the intentional or unintentional treatment of an individual or a group in a manner that imposes burdens, obligations, or disadvantages on that individual or group without a *bona fide* and reasonable justification for doing so.

Extension: An additional period of time given to a student so that they can meet an academic obligation.

Extenuating Circumstances: Extenuating circumstances are often defined as an event or action that interfered with or prevented you from your academic studies.

Harassment: Harassment (including sexual harassment) is defined as conduct or comment that is intimidating, threatening, demeaning, or abusive and may be accompanied by direct or implied threats to grade(s), status, job, or physical safety. Harassment has the impact of creating a work, study, or living environment that is hostile and limits individuals in their pursuit of education, research, or work goals.

Inappropriate Collaboration: Inappropriate collaboration occurs when students work together beyond what the course policy permits.

Plagiarism: *Intentional plagiarism* occurs when you deliberately use another person’s wording or ideas without acknowledging that person as the author. *Reckless plagiarism* occurs where you do not properly cite academic sources due to your own neglect or ignorance.

Supplemental Exams: A supplemental exam is a “second chance” for you to pass a course which you attempted but failed.

Withdrawal: Academic withdrawal is when you drop a class after the add/drop dates set by the UBC Registrar’s office. A “W” is marked on your transcript, though a withdrawal does not affect your GPA.

All information contained within this guide is subject to change without prior notice. Please check with the Ombuds Office if you have any questions.

Written by Alexis Paton for the Ombuds Office 2008