



Policy Title:

Student Appeals Policy and Procedure

Policy Identifier:

A3.14h

Prepared by: PA Program Faculty	Creation Date: 01/01/2026
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Category: Student Rights and Conduct Policies	

ARC-PA Standards

A3.14h

Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled in the USC SOMC PA Program who wish to appeal program-level decisions relating to academic progression, dismissal, deceleration, remediation, or other adverse actions.

Policy Statement

The USC SOMC PA Program is committed to providing fair, transparent, and consistent processes by which students may appeal decisions that adversely affect their enrollment, progression, or standing in the program. This appeals policy complements the program's other policies (e.g., remediation, probation, deceleration, dismissal) and the broader university appeal processes.

Reason for Policy

To ensure compliance with both institutional policy and accreditation standard A3.14h by establishing clear procedures for appeal, review, and resolution of student decisions in the PA Program. This policy is rooted in the university's published appeal procedures for academic and non-academic decisions.

Definitions

- **Appeal:** A formal written request by a student for review of a program decision affecting their academic or professional status.
- **Appellant:** The student submitting the appeal.
- **Respondent:** The individual, committee, or office whose decision is being appealed.
- **Review Committee:** The body designated by the program (or by the university) to review the appeal.
- **Grounds for Appeal:** Valid bases for appeal, including procedural error, new evidence unavailable at the time of decision, or inequitable application of policy. According to



university policy, appeals based solely on disagreement with a grade are not sufficient.

Procedures

1. Initiation of Appeal

- The student must submit a written appeal within 5 business days of notification of the decision.
- The appeal should include:
 - Student name and USC ID
 - Date of the original decision
 - Specific decision being appealed
 - Statement of grounds for appeal (one or more of: procedural error, new evidence, inequitable application)
 - Supporting documentation attached

2. Review at Program Level

- Upon receipt, the Program Director acknowledges receipt to the student within 5 business days.
- A Review Committee (e.g., the Student Progress and Promotions Committee or a designated appeals committee) is convened within 15 business days to review the appeal.
- The student may be invited to meet with the committee or submit additional documentation.
- The committee may recommend: uphold original decision, modify decision, or reverse decision.
- The Program Director issues a written decision to the student, specifying rationale and next steps.

3. University-Level Appeal

- If the student is not satisfied with the program-level decision, they may pursue an appeal beyond the program only after exhausting all internal program processes.
- Appeals must be submitted in the following order, consistent with program-specific procedures:
 1. Assistant Dean of Clinical Graduate Programs
 2. The Graduate School
 3. The Provost (final level of appeal)
- The student must initiate each level of appeal within 5 business days of receiving the prior decision.
- In accordance with the [USC Student Grievance Policy](#), appeals at the university level must be based on reviewable grounds, such as procedural error, new evidence, or inequitable application of policy, and not solely on disagreement with the original decision.
- The decision rendered by the Provost is final and binding.
- Additional information regarding university-level appeal procedures for graduate students, including PA students, is available on the [USC Graduate School](#) website.

Professionalism and Confidentiality

- All appeal processes shall be administered confidentially and with respect for the rights of



all parties.

- Retaliation against a student for filing an appeal is prohibited and may itself be subject to discipline.
- The program will maintain appeal records consistent with institutional record-keeping policies.

Contacts

Program Director
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History

Date of Change	Change
01/01/2026	Policy drafted into new template.