



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 August 2025
FROM Tom Nault PAGES 3
Secretary, Senate Appeals Board
RE: Senate Appeals Board Annual Report for 2024

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 (“**WE**”)
- admission or re-admission to the University, where special circumstances are present

SAB normally meets once a month but will convene more frequently when necessary. In 2024, SAB met 11 times and reviewed a total of 59 student appeals.

Number of Appeals by Year

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Approved	57	32	31	28	27	29	30	30
Denied	13	6	3	5	3	17	25	29
Cancelled (no further action by student)	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Did not hear (no grounds for appeal)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tabled to the next year	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
Total Number of Appeals	72	40	35	34	30	46	57	59

In 2024, there were a total of 59 students who appealed for 68 terms. This is a slight increase over the past year. The number of cases has increased incrementally since 2021, whereas case numbers had been decreasing from 2017 to 2021. We will continue to monitor this trend. The large increase between 2021 to 2023 could be attributed to 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.

Also of particular note was one student who appealed for WEs for courses that were taken more than 5 years ago. SAB reviewed the documentation provided by the student and determined that the student provided relevant supporting documentation to support the WE request so it waived the five-year deadline. As such, SAB approved for the Manger, Student Academic Appeals to assume authority to adjudicate the appeal.

Students appealed on the following grounds:

The decision was made by someone without authority	0
Denial of natural justice, such as: a bias on the part of the decision maker or failure to consider information or special circumstance	22
A procedural error	3
New evidence that would have affected the original decision	51
Total Grounds for Appeal	76

A large number of students identified more than one ground for appeal. 51 of the 59 students who appealed submitted their appeal noting that they had new evidence for review.

Of the total 59 student appeals in 2024, 43 applied for WEs on *medical grounds* and 13 applied under *compassionate grounds*. 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 applied for WEs on the basis of the following:

	Appeals	Approved	Denied
Medical	43	22	21
Compassionate	13	6	7
Other	3	2	1
Total Appeals	59	30	29

The following is a list of appeals by Faculty:

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	25
Beedie School of Business	6
Faculty of Education	2
Faculty of Health Science	3
Faculty of Applied Sciences	9
Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology	2
Faculty of Environment	1
Faculty of Science	11
Total Appeals	59

Reasons for Appeal:

To remedy Required to Withdraw (RTW) or academic probation status	20
To remove incomplete or failed courses	29
To retake a course beyond the normal five-repeat limit (or to remove one or more repeated courses from a transcript)	4
Student with multiple terms of WEs	4
To resolve cases due to a procedural error or decisions made without jurisdiction	2
Total Appeals	59

Current academic standing of the students who appealed:

Graduated or applied to graduate	1
In Good Academic Standing	31
On Academic Probation	14
Require to Withdraw	13
Total	59

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 2024:

January 30, March 5, April 2, April 30, May 29, July 29, August 22, September 26, November 6, November 29 and December 18.

SAB Membership:

Tom Nault, Secretary
Alexander Karaivanov, Faculty Member
Shafik Bhalloo, Faculty Member
Kamal Masri, Faculty Member (Term ended May 31, 2024)
Michael Everton, Faculty Member (Joined July 2024)
Reema Faris, Graduate Student (Term ended May 31, 2024)
Sikandra Ali, Graduate Student (Joined September 2024)
Mussaab Manzer, Undergraduate Student
Shafik Bhalloo, Faculty Member
Cathy D'Andrea, Faculty Member (Alternate)
Vacant, Undergraduate Student (Alternate)



Tom Nault, Secretary, SAB