

Education Department
DUE PROCESS POLICY AND PROCEDURES
Approved October 20, 2010

Students in the Education Program at SMSU are afforded due process rights related specifically to the Teacher Education Program. Student appeals include, but are not limited to, programmatic issues, sub-committee decisions and/or field experience related issues. Grade appeals and other issues normally covered by university-wide policies will continue to be handled through the institutional process. Refer to the SMSU Catalog / Student Handbook for the grade appeal process and other student issues not specific to the Teacher Education Program.

Appeals – Field Experience Issues

Director of Placement and Licensure

A student's first contact regarding a field experience decision should be with the Director. The Director will keep written notes of the meeting and other communications. In many instances, the Director of Placement and Licensure reaches decisions relating to field experiences after consulting with the Field Experience Coordinator.

Field Experience Issues Committee

If a student wishes to appeal a decision made by the Director of Placement and Licensure relating to a field experience issue, the formal appeal is made to the Chair of the Education Department. The Field Experience Issues Committee is made up of the Chair of the Education Department, the Director of Placement and Licensure, and the Field Experience Coordinator. The professor of record for the class that the field experience is tied to will also be included.

Requests must be made in writing, must state the reasons for petitioning to the Field Experience Issues Committee, and must be received within *10 working days* of the student being notified of the initial decision. The written appeal must state the reason(s) for the review and provide factual information substantiating one of the following:

- Procedures not followed,
- Regulations not applied correctly,
- Information not known or available at the time of the original hearing which could alter the outcome, or
- Action not appropriate.

The written appeal to the Field Experience Issues Committee must also include:

- A copy of the original decision and any documentation relating to the Director of Placement and Licensure decision.
- Any other documentation the student thinks would enhance his/her position with this appeal.

The Committee will respond in writing within *10 working days*. During that time, the student's placement will remain on hold until the issue can be resolved.

Education Department

If the decision reached by the Field Experience Issues Committee is not satisfactory to the student, he/she may appeal to the Education Department on the Marshall campus. A hearing will be scheduled to occur within *15 working days* after the formal appeal is filed (based on the SMSU Academic Calendar).

Student Rights

- The student has the right to appear at the hearing.
- The student may bring and/or use expert resource persons, e.g. college faculty and staff or other appropriate professionals, to support the appeal.

Required Documentation

- Original appeal letter and supporting documentation submitted to the Field Experience Issues Committee
- The decision rendered by the Field Experience Issues Committee.

Hearing steps

- Student and/or expert witness(es) present evidence.
- Faculty members ask questions and review relevant data with student present.
- Student and expert witnesses (if present) are excused from the hearing.
- Faculty members deliberate and take action.
- The decision of the Education Department is communicated in writing to the student, the academic advisor, Director of Placement and Licensure, the professor for the course the field experience is tied to, and/or other individuals impacted by the decision rendered.

Dean: College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies

If a student is not satisfied with the decision of the SMSU Education Department, an appeal may be filed with the Dean of the College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies or his/her designated representative. This appeal must be filed within seven (7) days of notification of the Education Department's decision. The Dean will review all associated documentation, decisions rendered by the previous individuals/committees, and other evidence pertinent to this case. The Dean's decision will be relayed back to the Education Department Chairperson, who will be responsible for communicating to the student and other related parties. The decision of the Dean is final.

Appeals - Non-Field Experience Issues

Appeals not related to field experiences follow the established due process policies and procedures of Southwest Minnesota State University.

Appeals related to recommendation for licensure

Appeals related to recommendation for licensure from Southwest Minnesota State University's Teacher Education Program should be brought initially to a committee composed of the Director of Placement and Licensure, the Chair of the Education Department, and the Dean of Business, Education, and Professional Studies. If the appeal is not resolved at this level, the Board of Teaching, at the request of a postsecondary student preparing for teacher licensure or a licensed graduate of a teacher preparation program, shall assist in resolving a dispute between the person and a postsecondary institution providing a teacher preparation program when the dispute involves an institution's recommendation for licensure affecting the person or person's credentials. At the board's discretion, assistance may include the application of chapter 14. This appeals process is in accordance with MN Statute 122A.09 subd. 4(c).