A Journey Into Implementing One College Wide Appeal

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Front Range Community College
Campus Locations:

- Westminster
  - Brighton Center
- Longmont-BCC Campus
- Fort Collins
  - Loveland Center
- Online
- Several Dual Enrollment Locations
Demographics continued—

- Each campus has its own Student Affairs Dean, Instructional Dean(s) and VP
- FRCC has campus specific employees as well as college wide employees
- Approximately 23,000 total students college wide
- Largest community college in Colorado
- Part of the CCCS System
- Our mascot is a cute hairy wolf named Apollo
Appeals on the College Wide Appeal Form

You can use this form to submit appeals for the following:

- **Financial Aid**
  - You were notified you are ineligible for financial aid due to not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards

- **Academic Appeal**
  - Your graduation application was disapproved by the Office of the Registrar
  - You were academically dismissed from a program
  - You would like to initiate a formal appeal with the Dean of Instruction to change an end of semester final grade(s)

- **Academic Suspension**
  - You were notified you are on academic suspension due to your term and/or cumulative grade point average (GPA) being below 2.0

- **Administrative Withdrawal or Drop**
  - You are appealing for an administrative withdrawal or drop due to an extenuating circumstance(s). *If approved, there are no refunds or tuition credits to your account, only a grade change.*
Why combine processes?

• We are one college!
• Student satisfaction surveys indicated year after year appeal processes as being difficult to navigate
• Staff was frustrated helping students maneuver appeal processes
• Hard for students – Multiple appeals being submitted for the same reason to various areas and sometimes to multiple campuses
Where our journey began

The seed was planted....

• Previous attempts to combine processes - unsuccessful due to no platform
• 2015 Contracted with FORMSTACK - online form builder and data collection platform
• 2015 Strategic Plan 2020 Initiative- Streamlining processes and retention of students
• Summer 2017 Monica and Student Affairs Deans tasked with creating one process
• April 2018- First College Wide Appeal launched
• Spring 2019 – Updated College Wide Appeal launched with more integration
Preparation before launching CW Appeal:

• Website wording
• Learn back end processes for each appeal and deadline dates
• Who was reviewing appeals for decisions at each campus and who was *processing or preparing* appeals for review
• Agreed upon secure email addresses for receipt of appeals or shared docs
• Medical/Mental Health documentation- One standard form was created
• Identify student mis-understandings with our current processes
• Who had authority to make decisions and changes to processes or wording
Security of Student Data
Data Sharing Preparation:

• Reviewed NASFAA Financial Aid Data Sharing June 2017 publication with Cooley Higher Education

• Reviewed section 483(a)(3)(E) of the HEA that:
  • Restricts the use of the FAFSA data

• Reviewed FERPA regulations addressing protection and privacy for students

• Reviewed the Privacy Act
  • Governs the collection, maintenance and use of records maintained by federal agencies.

• Consulted with CCCS colleagues

• **HIPAA** (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996)
  Legislation that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information.

• Reviewed/referenced NASFAA Data Sharing Tree
Protection of Student Data:

1. The information being collected from the CW Appeal was not considered data restricted under 483(a)(3)(E) of the HEA. It contained no:

   • FAFSA data
   • Did not contain ISIR data
   • No EFC number was listed on the form
   • No award history was listed on the form

2. The information being shared on the CW Appeal Form was:

   • To other school officials determined to have a legitimate educational interest in the disclosed information 99.31(a)(1)
Let’s review the process:
What is a pre-processor?

Staff members preparing documents for appeal committee or Dean review

Ex: Administrative Staff or Work Study Students

Pre-processors may or may not be appeal committee members
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Appeal Information

Select the reason(s) you are appealing below. Each box selected is a separate appeal.

Financial Aid
☑ I have been notified I am ineligible for financial aid

Academic Appeal
☐ My graduation application was disapproved by the Office of the Registrar
☐ I have been academically dismissed from a program
☐ I would like to initiate a formal appeal with the Dean of Instruction to change an end of semester final grade(s)

Academic Suspension
☐ Appealing academic suspension due to term and/or cumulative grade point average (GPA) being below 2.0

Administrative Withdrawal or Drop Appeal
☐ Appealing for an administrative withdrawal or drop due to an extenuating circumstance that prevented me from completing my course(s).
Financial Aid Questions

Have you previously appealed with the FRCC Financial Aid Office?

- Yes, I have previously submitted a Financial Aid Appeal due to my academic status for this aid year
- No, this is my first Financial Aid Appeal

PLEASE NOTE

If you are appealing to financial aid for reinstatement of funding for the current term, this appeal MUST be received at least 2 weeks prior to the end of the term.
Select the reason you became ineligible for financial aid*

- My cumulative GPA is below a 2.0
- I have not successfully completed 67% or more of my cumulative attempted credits
- I withdrew and/or failed all of my courses during the current or previous term
- I failed to meet the conditions of a previously approved financial aid academic plan
- I would like to request funding for an additional degree or certificate
- I have attempted more than 150% of the total number of credit hours needed to complete my current degree and/or certificate program. I am requesting additional financial aid funding for more credits

Please submit with this appeal a DegreeCheck Worksheet (accessible through the eWOLF dashboard)

Upload your DegreeCheck worksheet here:

[Choose File] No file chosen

Did you upload a DegreeCheck worksheet?*

- Yes
- No...I will provide a DegreeCheck worksheet to the Financial Aid Office at a later date. I understand my application will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed until I submit all requested paperwork

List the number of credit hours and semesters still needed to complete your program of study at FRCC*

12

Save and Resume Later

Form secured by Formstack
Which support services did you use during the last semester you attended FRCC? (select all that apply) *

- [x] Tutoring
- [ ] Academic Support Center/Labs
- [ ] Career Services
- [ ] Disability Services
- [ ] Other: 

Check the primary reason(s) for submitting an appeal *

- [x] Medical/Mental Health
- [ ] Extended or unplanned military obligation
- [ ] Death of a close relative or friend
- [ ] Academic Challenges
- [ ] Institutional error
- [ ] Other: 

Ex: child care, work schedule, ill family member

Attach to this appeal, a complete and signed FRCC Medical/Mental Health Documentation Form.

For privacy reasons, do not submit doctor’s notes, medical charts etc. Only a complete and signed FRCC Medical/Mental Health Documentation Form will be accepted. Your appeal will be considered incomplete and may not be reviewed without the completed form.

If you cannot upload your Medical/Mental Health Form at this time, you can submit it to the Welcome Center Desk or drop it off at the Dean of Student Affairs office.

FRCC could request additional verification of patient status from the practitioner signing the form.
Supporting Documentation

It is **highly recommended** you provide supporting documentation with your appeal to avoid a delay in processing a decision. If you need more time to gather supporting documentation, you can *Save and Resume* this application (bottom center) and finish it later. If you cannot provide supporting documentation for your appeal, we encourage you to address why in your appeal statement.

Examples of supporting documentation could include *but are not limited to*:

- Child care receipts or letters from daycare providers
- Letters from employers
- Court documentation
- Any type of documentation or letters that support your reason for appealing.
- The FRCC Medical Documentation Form - **Only a complete and signed** FRCC Medical/Mental Health Documentation Form will be accepted if you are appealing due to a medical/mental health reason.

If you are uploading multiple pages of supporting documentation, please save them all as one document before uploading. This form does not allow single page uploads.

Please include your Student ID number on all supporting documentation

Choose File  No file chosen

Upload additional documentation, if needed

Choose File  No file chosen
Appeal Statements

Please address any circumstance(s) that may have impacted your academic success:

Please address what has changed or improved so you can be academically successful at FRCC in the future:

What goals are you trying to achieve while attending FRCC?
Please read and confirm your understanding of each item

- I understand if I am submitting this appeal for more than one reason, I will receive a separate decision for each appeal.
- I understand if my appeal is considered incomplete, no decision will be made.
- I understand it is my responsibility to check my student issued CCCS email account, accessible through eWOLF.
- I understand appeal decisions and all communication regarding my appeal will be sent to my student issued CCCS email account, accessible through eWOLF.
- I understand Front Range Community College must uphold federal laws including Title IX and VAWA. Any information supplied by me that applies may be reported to FRCC Human Resources, a Student Affairs Dean or Campus Security.
- I understand although information supplied in my appeal is confidential, if a Dean or the Appeals Committee deems it appropriate, a staff member may reach out to me to ensure my well-being.

Electronic Signature

I understand by electronically signing this document by typing my full name, that I acknowledge, agree and attest that the information provided by me is true and correct and I am freely intending to create and adopt as my own a legal binding electronic signature that carries the same legal effect and enforceability as my handwritten signature.

Type your name: *
Johnny Appleseed

Date/Time *
04  26  2019
Almost Done

Before submitting your appeal, you may verify the information you have provided by clicking on the previous button below.

If you need more time to gather supporting documentation for your appeal, you can Save and Resume this application (bottom center) and submit it later. If you submit your appeal and it is considered incomplete, no decision will be made until the committee receives requested documentation.

Save and Resume Later

Previous Submit Appeal

Form secured by Formstack
Hello Johnny,

FRCC has received your online submission.

Due to FERPA regulations, FRCC will only communicate with students through their student issued CCCS email account, accessible through eWOLF. Please check your student issued email for regular updates and requests.

For financial aid questions, please contact the Financial Aid Office. For all other questions, please contact us or stop by campus. Thank you.
Greetings!

A student has submitted a College Wide Appeal to your area for review.

College Wide Appeals are located on the secure appeal share drive and can be accessed using the unique ID number listed below.

Share drive information is only accessible by appeal pre-processors. A spreadsheet of all appeal pre-processors for each campus is located on the intranet College Wide Appeal team site.

499817555

JohnnyAppleseed

Apr 25, 2019 4:03 PM
Back end processing of appeals by FRCC

- Student submits the document through Formstack
- Department is notified student submitted an appeal via their secure email account
- FRCC Admin uploads all submitted appeals from Formstack into the FRCC secure share drive daily
- FRCC Admin makes notes on Spacmnt when an appeal is submitted along with listing the unique ID number contained within the notification email
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**Comments**: Received CW Appeal for Financial Aid and Academic Suspension - Unique ID # 491587876
Share drive:

- Pre-processors can access ALL submitted appeals by doing a search: **Control F**
- Pdf version of appeal and any supporting documentation uploaded with the appeal
- Appeals copied and processes into internal areas- BDM, spreadsheets, internal drives
- Appeal preparation and processing for committees happens as usual
- The secure appeal share drive is monitored for security, no documents are deleted
- The secure appeal share drive is used as Q/A backup folder
- The secure appeal share drive is only used as a repository for appeals
Additional ways FRCC protects student data:

• Emails never contain name and student (S) number in the same email
• Created secure department email addresses that only staff with legitimate educational interests in processing/reviewing appeals have access
• Never attach student supporting documents in an email not encrypted or sent to the department’s secure email address
• Use the secure share drive for sharing supporting documentation submitted with appeals
• We don’t ask appeal processors to sent PII information to direct personal work email address
• Make notes on SPACMNT when sharing documents/appeals with another appeal area
Future growth potential or ideas:

• Add additional (smaller) appeals onto CW Appeal Form

• Create a landing page on our website for all appeals

• Continue streamlining wording on docs and webpages

• Streamlining of appeal reviews between committees

• Continue to review data from appeal submissions to drive college decisions or process changes
Lessons Learned:

• Things usually take longer than expected
• When you think you have everyone's opinion-ask again
• Administrators or processors know more about appeal processing than the department chairs, directors or VP’s who handle appeal decisions
• Identify who has authority to make final decisions on wording, process changes etc. and how it effects other areas
• Pre-processors can be different than appeal committee members or they can be same person. –Create an identification chart and share it
• Be student centered. Strive for what is best for the student, not easier for internal processing
• Review wording. Simple is better.
Questions and Sharing