



4.1.15P

Volume 4, Academic Affairs

Chapter 1, Academic Practices

Section 15, Grade Appeals

Approval Authority: Board of Regents

Responsible Executive: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Responsible Office(s): Departments

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Grade Appeals

Policy Statement

Evaluation of individual assignments resulting in a final course grade is the responsibility of the faculty. The faculty member is responsible for establishing and communicating clearly defined standards for assigning grades, and maintaining accurate records to support those grades. Students are responsible for reading and understanding grading practices as specified in the course syllabus.

In the event that a student decides to contest a final course grade, this Grade Appeals Policy establishes a clear, fair process by which it can be challenged. A grade appeal shall be confined to charges of unfair action toward an individual student and may not involve a challenge of an instructor's grading standard. Further, the grade appeal considers whether a grade was determined in a fair and appropriate manner; it does not attempt to grade or re-grade individual assignments. It is incumbent on the student to substantiate the claim that his or her final grade represents unfair treatment. In the absence of compelling reasons, such as clerical/computational error, prejudice, or arbitrariness, the grade assigned by the instructor of record is to be considered final.

This process cannot be used for students appealing a grade of F or FX assigned due to academic dishonesty. Further this process cannot be used for allegations covered under Policy 1.4.1, Non-Discrimination and Harassment.

Entities Affected by the Policy

- Colleges
- Departments
- Faculty
- Students

Procedures

If a student wishes to appeal a course grade, the procedure below ~~shall~~ ~~should~~ be followed: If any step in the process is skipped, the appeal will be referred back to the skipped step.

1. The student will consult with the instructor in an effort to ~~seeking~~ a satisfactory explanation.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the explanation from the instructor, the student may appeal the course grade in writing to the Department Chair/Unit Head, after consulting with the instructor, the student believes that a grievance exists, the student may present a complaint in writing outlining the basis of the grievance to the department chair within 30 calendar days after the beginning of the next semester, exclusive of summer session.
 - a. The written appeal shall include the basis for the appeal and any supporting documentation, including evidence that Step 1 was completed. The Department Chair/Unit Head shall provide a copy of the appeal and supporting documents to the instructor of the course.

- b. The instructor shall provide a written response to the appeal, with any supporting documents, to the Department Chair/Unit Head within 10 calendar days. A copy of the instructor's response shall be made available to the student.
 - c. The Department Chair/Unit Head shall consider the written appeal and may meet with the parties before rendering a decision, matter in consultation with the instructor and the student and exercise influence towards mediation.
 - d. The Department Chair/Unit Head shall provide a written decision, with copies to both parties, within 10 calendar days of receipt of the instructor's response.
 - e. If the Department Chair/Unit Head is the instructor for the course, the appeal will skip Step 2 and be submitted to the Chair of the department's Academic Practices Committee.
3. If the ~~matter grievance~~ remains unsettled, the ~~Department Chair/Unit Head~~ shall as soon as practicable refer the matter to the departmental ~~committee on Academic Practices Committee~~. The Committee is composed of the department chair, two faculty members from of the department and one student.
 - a. The members of the Committee are elected by a majority vote of the department faculty no later than September 10 of the year in which the Committee will operate.
 - b. ~~thereof (with one faculty alternate member shall be elected~~ to serve in the event that one of the regular members is the person against whom the complaint has been lodged, ~~), and one student member~~
 - c. The student member and a student alternate, who shall serve if the member is not available or if there is a conflict of interest, shall be selected by a procedure determined by the department, chosen by the department chair. All members of the committee shall have voting privileges. In cases where the department has an insufficient number of faculty members to make the above procedure workable, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and the dean of the college in which the course is offered shall appoint an appropriate committee.
 4. Meetings of the ~~departmental Academic Practices Committee~~ shall be scheduled at a mutually agreed-upon time, when all relevant parties can reasonably be expected to participate. A student who has agreed to a time for a meeting of the ~~departmental Academic Practices Committee~~ and who does not appear at that meeting may forfeit the right to present evidence beyond that furnished in the original letter of appeal.
 5. After considering the evidence and any rebuttals submitted by the student and/or the instructor, the committee shall make a decision ~~that which~~ shall be binding. All parties shall be informed of this decision within ten ~~calendar working~~ days after the Committee meets with the parties.
 6. Appeals from the committee's decision may be made on procedural grounds only and must be made within 20 calendar days following notification of the departmental committee decision. Such an appeal should be made to the dean of the college in which the course is offered and, if necessary, then to the Provost ~~and Vice President for Academic Affairs~~. The Provost's decision is final.
 7. If the grade appeal process results in a change in the final course grade, the faculty member is responsible for submitting a Change of Grade form to the Registrar.

All parties involved in the grade appeal process shall respect confidentiality throughout the process and shall adhere to all requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Definitions

Calendar Day

Throughout this document calendar day shall be interpreted to mean no later than the specified number of calendar days following the day of notification. If the final calendar day occurs on a weekend or holiday, the due date shall be on the first day on which University administrative offices are open. The time for response may be extended upon agreement by both parties.

Responsibilities

- College Dean** The Dean is responsible for reviewing appeals upon an allegation of violation of procedural grounds of this policy.

- Department Academic Practices Committee** The Academic Practices Committee is responsible for
 - reviewing all materials for the appeal and rendering a decision.
 - notifying the student and the instructor of the decision.

- Department Chair/Unit Head** The Department Chair/Unit Head is responsible for
 - providing a copy of the appeal and supporting materials of a grade appeal to the instructor.
 - making the instructor response and supporting materials available to the student.
 - reviewing all materials for the appeal and rendering a decision.
 - notifying the student and the instructor of the decision.

- Instructor** The course instructor is responsible for
 - establishing and communicating clearly defined standards for assigning grades, and maintaining accurate records to support those grades.
 - responding to students' queries regarding final course grades.
 - providing a response to a grade appeal and supporting documents or other materials as requested.
 - submitting a Change of Grade form to the Registrar if the appeal results in a grade change.

- Provost** The Provost is responsible for reviewing appeals upon an allegation of violation of procedural grounds of this policy.

- Student** The student is responsible for
 - reading and understanding the grading practices as specified in the course syllabus.
 - consulting with the instructor when a question arises regarding course grades.
 - providing a written appeal and supporting documents or other materials as requested.

Interpreting Authority

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Policy Adoption Review and Approval

Policy Revisions

<u>Date</u>	<u>Entity</u>	<u>Action</u>
July 24, 1992	Board of Regents	Adopted
March 2, 1992	Faculty Senate	Approved

Policy Issued

<u>Date</u>	<u>Entity</u>	<u>Action</u>
July 30, 1987	Board of Regents	Adopted*

*As part of the Faculty/Staff Handbook