



GRADE APPEALS PROCEDURE

Board Bylaw:
Policy Number: 6.0601
Subject Area: Instruction
Approved Date: 10 /21/2010

Students are responsible for reading the Grade Appeal policy and procedures and for complying with all procedures and established deadlines. Students may not use this appeal process for final grades assigned for academic dishonesty and academic integrity violations.

Grounds for Appeal:

The purpose of the grade appeal procedure is to allow students to appeal a final course grade under the following circumstances. An appeal will be limited to review of the process by which the grade was reached and not the judgment of the faculty member. The student has **grounds for appealing a final grade** if:

- A mathematical error in calculation of the grade or clerical error in recording of the grade remains uncorrected.
- A substantial departure from accepted academic norms occurred, demonstrating that the person responsible did not actually exercise professional judgment.
- A grade assignment was based on factors unrelated to academic performance or quality of work in the course.
- A grade assignment for a particular student was a result of requirements that were more demanding than those applied to other students in the same course.
- A grade assignment was a result of a substantial departure from the faculty member's criteria established in the course syllabus or the assignment sheet.

Calculation of Time Periods:

For the purpose of this policy and procedure, the term "days" will refer to any business day the College is open.

Appeal Process:

Informal Resolution, or Step 1, allows the student and instructor the opportunity to clarify and resolve the student's concern at the most immediate level in an informal setting.

- Before initiating a formal grade appeal, a student who believes that a semester grade was improperly assigned must contact the faculty member no later than ten (10) days from the date the final grade is due.
- The student must meet with the instructor to review the criteria and calculations used to assign the final course grade. The goal of the meeting should be to reach a mutual understanding and correct any errors.
- If the conference does not result in a mutually agreeable resolution, or if the faculty member is unavailable, the student must request an informal review of the grade in writing to the instructor's dean no later than ten (10) days from meeting with the faculty member or from learning of the faculty member's unavailability, if the student wishes to continue the appeal process. The dean will serve as an intermediary, reviewing any information the student presents and discussing the issue with the instructor as part of the informal resolution phase.
- If the grading issue is still not resolved after informally meeting with the instructor or dean, then the student may request a formal review of the grade in writing no later than thirty (30) days from the date the grade is due. The student then enters the Formal Grade Appeal Request, or Step 2.

Formal Grade Appeal Request allows for independent review of the student's appeal.

- The student must submit a request for a Formal Grade Appeal utilizing the Student Grade Appeal Request Form. The form must be received by the Registrar no later than thirty (30) days from the date the grade is due.
- The student must indicate that he or she has attempted informal resolution prior to proceeding to the request for Formal Grade Appeal, or be directed to complete the informal resolution phase before the Student Grade Appeal Request Form will be accepted.
- The student must describe specifically and completely the grounds for appealing the final grade and provide supporting documents with the Student Grade Appeal Request Form. The student must include relevant graded materials supporting the request for Formal Grade Appeal.

Review by Registrar, or Step 3, entails a determination by the Registrar of whether there are grounds for a final grade appeal to go forward.

Grade Appeal Committee Hearing Review, or Step 4, is convened:

- To provide due process for the student and faculty in consideration of the grade appeal;

- To include a fair and unbiased fact-finding meeting;
- To determine if the grounds for the grade appeal are supported by facts and documentation;
- To determine if a recommendation for reevaluation of the student's grade is warranted; and
- To submit the committee's recommendation to Vice President, Instructional Services.

Composition of Committee:

The Grade Appeal Committee will consist of the following members:

One (1) Instructional Services dean or associate dean

- Represents an academic area other than the area under appeal

Three (3) full-time faculty members (must not be the faculty member whose grade is under appeal consideration)

- One (1) from Arts and Science
- One (1) from Career and Tech
- One (1) from Nursing or Allied Health
- (At least one of the faculty should be in the same department or related field)

One (1) student peer – appointed by Vice President, Student Services

Registrar

- Facilitates the process and implements procedures, but is a non-voting member of the committee

The committee members will serve on the committee for (2) two-year terms. Committee members selected will hold no bias toward the student or instructor involved nor have any other interest in the appeal.

Hearing Procedure:

The Grade Appeal Committee will be convened by the Registrar within thirty (30) days of receipt of a Student Grade Appeal Request form. Committee members, the student and faculty member whose grade is under appeal will be notified of the date, place and time of the Grade Appeal Review Hearing by the Registrar.

During the hearing, the student and faculty member will have the opportunity to provide documentation concerning the grade appeal. The student and faculty member must be advised of his or her right to be accompanied by an individual (who may be an attorney, but may not participate in the hearing except as an advisor).

Considerations:

- The committee hearing shall be confidential.
- All relevant records and pertinent information will be made available to all parties.
- The student will be able to discontinue the process at any point.
- No reprisals will be taken against any student who elects to pursue a grade appeal.

The committee will hear from the student and faculty member separately, with the option to hear from them together, and then request that the student and faculty member leave the hearing. The committee will review the evidence and documentation provided, determine if grounds for an appeal have been established and then discuss the appeal. At the conclusion of the discussion, the committee will make a recommendation to deny or uphold the grade appeal within five (5) days of the hearing. If additional information is needed from either student or faculty member, the discussion will be tabled and the Registrar will contact the student or faculty member to obtain the information.

The Registrar will record the findings of the Grade Appeal Committee and make a written report of the Grade Appeal Committee's recommendation to the Vice President, Instructional Services.

Vice President, Instructional Services Final Determination:

The Vice President, Instructional Services will make the final determination, or Step 5, on whether to accept the recommendation from the Grade Appeal Committee to either allow a grade to be reevaluated or to uphold the student's grade.

The standard for the Vice President, Instructional Services making such determination shall be whether the Grade Appeal Committee's recommendation is reasonable, given the information presented by both parties.

If there is evidence that the Grade Appeal procedures were not followed correctly the Vice President, Instructional Services may have a finding that differs from the recommendation of the committee.

The Vice President, Instructional Services will notify the Registrar within ten (10) days of reaching a determination. The Registrar will notify in writing both the student and instructor of the final decision, within ten (10) days of receiving such decision. If the grade stands, no further action is taken. If the final decision is to reevaluate the grade, the Vice President, Instructional Services will take the necessary steps to

pursue a course of action and to effectuate any resulting changes.

Replaces Grade Appeals Procedure IA-15P; 5.92
Approved October 21, 2010; July 23, 2018