

GRADE APPEAL POLICY

Overview:

When a student believes a final course grade has been assigned in error or in an arbitrary or capricious manner, he/she has the right to appeal the grade. The student should first attempt to resolve the matter with the primary course instructor. If the grade dispute is not resolved at this level, the student may initiate a formal written appeal to the department Chair. A final appeal can be made to the Dean of the College that oversees the appropriate department or, when a department Chair or Dean is the instructor involved in the appeal, to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Actions Permitted:

1. Students may only appeal the final course grade. Individual assignment grades (exams, quizzes, etc.) should be discussed and resolved with the Instructor throughout the semester.
2. All recognized appeals by students and instructors should be written and delivered to the appropriate individual (Instructor, Chair, or Dean) either electronically in email format to the appropriate individual's email address at the University, or by hard copy delivered personally to the appropriate individual. The individual appealing is responsible for assuring and establishing the delivery and receipt of a timely appeal.
3. No one may substitute personal judgment for that of the Instructor in regard to the quality of the student's work; therefore, the student must show evidence of any deviation from established procedure that adversely affects the student in the assignment of the letter grade for the course.
4. Decisions at the Chair level or higher can include either denial of the appeal or upholding the appeal, at which point the final course grade will be changed. The University does not have any liability for any impact to the student for the time period preceding any change to the final course grade in the University's Records & Registration Office.

Procedures and Timeline:

1. Students must first attempt to resolve the grading issue with the Instructor.
2. If the student decides to formally appeal the final grade, he/she must provide a written appeal, including the justification for the appeal, to the Instructor. If the Instructor is no longer employed by the University, the student must provide the written appeal directly to the Department Chair.

TIMELINE: The appeal must be submitted by the student to the Instructor (or Department Chair if applicable) in electronic email format to the individual's University email address, or by personal delivery of a hard copy of the written appeal within 1 week from the grade submission due date posted by the University's Records and Registration Office.

3. Instructor should notify the student upon receipt of the appeal, but the student is responsible for assuring the receipt of the appeal. If the Instructor cannot be contacted, the student should notify the department Chair of his/her appeal and request assistance in contacting the Instructor.
4. Instructors will e-mail or mail a written decision to the student within 1 week of receiving the appeal. If the Instructor fails to provide a decision within 1 week, the student should notify the department Chair to intervene in obtaining the decision or furthering the appeal.

TIMELINE: Within 1 week from receipt of the appeal

5. After receiving the Instructor's decision, the student may appeal the final grade, in writing, to the Department Chair. It is the student's responsibility to provide evidence to support the appeal. The Chair will investigate the appeal. The investigation will include discussing the matter with the Instructor and may include requesting the Instructor to support the accuracy and fairness of his/her grading. The student's written appeal constitutes authorization for the Chair to have access to the student's educational files and grades pertaining to the appeal.

TIMELINE: Within 1 week after receiving the Instructor's decision

6. The Chair will render a decision on the appeal and provide the decision to the student and the Instructor.

TIMELINE: Within 1 week from receipt of the appeal

7. If the Chair's decision is to deny the appeal, the student may appeal the grade, in writing, to the Dean. The student may also elect to meet with the Dean to present information directly related to the appeal.

TIMELINE: Within 1 week after receiving the Chair's decision

8. The Dean will provide a final decision to the student, Instructor, and Chair.

TIMELINE: Within 1 week from receipt of the appeal

9. If the Chair's decision is to grant the appeal, the Instructor may appeal, in writing, to the Dean. The Instructor may meet with the Dean to present information directly related to the appeal.

TIMELINE: Within 1 week after receiving the Chair's decision

10. The Dean will provide a final decision to all parties.

TIMELINE: Within 1 week from receipt of the Instructor's appeal

11. If the decision is to change a student's final grade, the change will be communicated to the University's Records and Registration Office.

Exceptions:

1. If the Department Chair is the Instructor involved in the appeal, the appeal goes directly to the Dean and then to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for the final decision.
2. If the Dean is the Instructor involved in the appeal, the appeal goes to the Chair and then to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for the final decision.
3. Timelines may be extended by the Chair or the Dean if necessary evidence or individuals are not available, or if the University determines that additional time is necessary to process the appeal. No exceptions or extensions of time will be granted for students to initiate a grade appeal.