

Procedure: 2.10A

Grade Appeal

Purpose

To assure students a fair and equitable process for the review of a grade the student feels does not reflect his/her performance according to the instructor's specified grading standards or system.

1. Within 30 days of receiving the final grade, the student must first make an appointment with the instructor to discuss the matter. The instructor and student will work together to come to a resolution. Please note it is anticipated that most grading concerns will be resolved at this level.
 - a. If the instructor is not available, the student should submit the Grade Appeal Form, along with sufficient evidence to the appropriate Academic Dean. The Academic Dean will notify the instructor of the grade appeal.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved through consultation with the instructor, the student should submit the Grade Appeal Form along with sufficient evidence, to the appropriate Academic Dean within ten (10) business days from the date of the student/instructor consultation. Copies of documentation and evidence upon which the student is basing the appeal must accompany any Grade Appeal.
3. The Academic Dean will facilitate one mediation session between the student and the instructor to come to an agreement on the final grade. This meeting will only occur during the traditional academic year. Such a meeting will not occur over the summer months.
 - a. Either the student or the instructor may choose to “opt out” of this step in the process. If that is the case, the grade appeal will move to Step 6.
 - b. Special consideration may be given to a student appealing a grade required for graduation or transfer to another institution of higher education if the faculty member is unavailable during the summer months. The Academic Dean may choose to employ an alternative process by moving directly to the Grade Appeal Committee.
4. If an agreement is reached during this mediation session, then both parties will sign the Grade Appeal Form. Each party will retain a copy for their records; a copy will be forwarded to the Academic Dean and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. If necessary, a grade change form will be initiated by the Academic Dean and forwarded to the Registrar. If an agreement is not reached, then the student moved to Step 6.
5. The student is required to provide sufficient evidence that the grade was awarded in error when submitting the Grade Appeal form. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Academic Dean, or their designees, will determine whether the preponderance of evidence standard (51%) for unfair grading has been met.
 - a. This includes but is not limited to copies of quizzes, tests, homework assignments, and other projects that counted toward the final course grade. Please note that these must be in the same condition as when submitted to the instructor for grading. The student is also required to provide a copy of the course syllabus received at the beginning of the course.

- b. The student is required to provide sufficient documentation of his/her performance that can be measured against the instructor's stated grading policy or system.
 - c. Without sufficient documentation, the appeal cannot go forward. (A grade appeal must be based upon more than a difference of opinion.)
6. If the Academic Dean deems the evidence is insufficient, the Academic Dean will communicate that decision to the student in writing within ten (10) business days.
 7. If the student has met the preponderance of evidence standard, the Academic Dean will either decide the outcome of the appeal, or if the Academic Dean feels a content expert is needed, the appeal will proceed to the Grade Appeal Committee.

Grade Appeal Committee

The Grade Appeal Committee will consist of five (5) members: three (3) standing faculty members; one (1) faculty member from the discipline in dispute or a closely related discipline, and a student. All members of this committee will be appropriately trained and will be FERPA compliant. One (1) of the standing faculty members will serve as Chair. The student member of the panel will serve for one year and will be selected by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The panel will provide a record and summary of the meeting.

The student appealing the grade and the instructor may attend the meeting of the Grade Appeal Committee. The student and instructor should speak for themselves and always maintain appropriate professional decorum.

The Grade Appeal Committee will review the evidence and render an opinion on the appeal, recording it on the Grade Appeal Form. All parties will sign, and each will retain a copy. If one or more parties is not present or did not sign the form, the panel chair will enter a notation on the form.

Within ten (10) business days of the panel meeting, the Chair of the Grade Appeal Committee will forward the opinion to the Vice President of Academic Affairs to review solely for procedural anomalies. If any questions arise, the case may be referred to the Grade Appeal Committee.

Once the Grade Appeal Committee has decided, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs has reviewed the grade appeal procedure solely for procedural anomalies, then this decision will be final and binding to all parties. The Vice President of Academic Affairs will inform the student, instructor, and the Academic Dean in writing of the outcome within ten (10) business days. If necessary, a grade change form will be initiated by the Academic Dean and forwarded to the Registrar.

Created: 04/20/2021