



Grade Appeal Policy

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide an equitable method for the resolution of a student grievance related to a final course grade. The procedures described in this policy are designed to ensure that grievances are handled in a timely and efficient manner.

B. Appeals of Assignment and Assessment Grades

If a student appeals a test, quiz, project, or homework grade during the academic semester, the course instructor is the first and most appropriate source of reassessment. The course instructor is the only person with complete contextual knowledge of the situation, both topically and from the class fairness/consistency viewpoint. While a faculty member may surely seek counsel from the Dean or colleagues regarding such an appeal, he or she retains the final decision as to the grade in question. The Dean will not regrade any assignment or assessment or require an instructor to change an assignment or assessment grade based on the appeal of a student.

C. Appeals of Class Attendance Records

If a student believes that the course instructor made an error in recording the student's class attendance, they should report the error to the instructor by email within a week of the class meeting for which the error was made. The instructor is to reply to the student's email within a week of receipt of such notification.

The course instructor has authority to determine what constitutes "absent" from a class. For example, a student found sleeping in class or surfing the internet in class may be marked absent. The Dean will not override an instructor's decision regarding attendance.

In specific circumstances, the Dean will categorize a student's absence from class as "excused." For further information about class attendance recording see the Dean's Instruction on Class Absences.

D. Grounds for a Final Course Grade Appeal

The only grounds for appealing a course grade is a student's reasonable belief that the course instructor assigned the final course grade based on one or more of following:

- The assignment of a grade based on a grade recording or course average calculation error.
- The assignment of a grade based on a substantial departure from the grading standard published in the instructor's course syllabus.
- The assignment of a grade based on more demanding standards than were applied to the other students enrolled in the same exact course.
- The assignment of grade based on something other than the student's performance in the course.

E. Final Course Grade Appeal Procedure

Students appealing a final course grade are to follow the steps listed below. Students requiring assistance in submitting their appeals should meet with the Director of Academic Services.

Step 1: The student must initiate the grade appeal process by the end of week two of the next full academic term.

The student is to meet with the faculty member who assigned the grade to present their concerns. The student is to prepare a written statement explaining the reasoning behind their appeal of the final course grade. This written statement is to be submitted to the instructor prior to or at the time of the meeting.

If an informal resolution cannot be reached between the student and the instructor, the student is to submit a formal written grade appeal to the instructor. The formal grade appeal should include a clear statement of the criteria for the grade appeal and include a copy of any relevant supporting material.

The instructor must respond in writing to the formal appeal within two weeks of its receipt.

If, after working directly with the course instructor, the student continues to believe that the grade assigned is unfair, or the instructor does not reply as required, the student may continue to the next step.

Step 2: The student must initiate step 2 in the grade appeal process by the end of week five of the next full academic term.

The student is to submit a letter of appeal to the Dean with copy to the Director of Academic Services and the course instructor. The letter of appeal must include the following:

- A clear statement of the case in detail and a description of the criteria for the grade appeal
- All information relating to Step 1 of the appeal.
- A copy of any relevant supporting material including an index explaining the materials' importance.

After reviewing the letter of appeal and the supporting documentation, the Dean may interview the student and/or the instructor about the details of the appeal.

The Dean may convene a faculty committee to review the case and return a recommendation. Ultimately, the Dean will make the final decision regarding the appeal.

The Dean will provide a written response to the student, with copy to the instructor, and the Director of Academic Services within two weeks of receipt of the letter of appeal. The Dean's final decision on the grade appeal may not be appealed.

All written records of relating to step 2 are to be maintained by the Dean's Office for a period of five years from the date of the Dean's final decision.

F. Timeliness of Appeals

If a student fails to meet the timelines established in this document, the appeal will be closed without further action. The timeline may be adjusted under the following conditions:

1. The delay was caused by circumstances beyond the student's control.
2. There is a written agreement signed by the student and the instructor waiving the time requirements.

G. Complaints Regarding Procedure

Complaints regarding improper procedure or timeliness of the Dean's actions are to be made to the Office of the President.