



## **Academic Policies & Procedures Committee**

**GRADE APPEAL POLICY, approved by Faculty Council June 16, 2015**

### **GRADE APPEAL CRITERIA**

**A student may appeal a final course grade only for one or more of the following reasons:**

- A. The faculty member violated a specific University rule or policy pertaining to grading, including refusal to discuss a grade with the student;
- B. The faculty member did not provide stated grading criteria and a grading scale, did not follow the stated criteria or grading scale, or applied either of them inconsistently;
- C. A clerical or administrative error was made in the process of recording or reporting the grade, and the faculty member has not corrected it;
- D. The faculty member did not report any grade for the individual student;
- E. The grade reflects discriminatory, biased, abusive, exploitive, or otherwise improper conduct toward the individual student.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

For the purpose of this procedure, “days” means academic/business days, not calendar days. Dates when classes are not in session will not count toward the timeline. “Term” means fall, spring, or summer academic terms.

#### **First Level: Appeal to the Faculty Member**

A student who wishes to appeal a grade for any of the criteria (A. through E., above) must first notify the instructor of record by email that he or she wishes to appeal, and discuss the reason(s) for questioning the final grade.

The deadline for a student to take the complaint to the faculty member is close of business on the 10<sup>th</sup> business day of the semester following the final grade being appealed.

A student having a verbal discussion of an appeal related to A. through E. above must follow up with an email to the instructor summarizing the basis of the appeal.

In most cases, the discussion between the student and the instructor should suffice to resolve the issue.

The instructor must respond in writing to the student, copying the Department Chair or Program Director, within 5 business days of the student’s email concerning the disputed grade.

## **Second Level: Appeal to the Department Chair/Program Director**

If the student's concerns remain unresolved after discussion with the instructor, or if the instructor does not respond, the student may submit a written Grade Appeal Form according to the following process. The Grade Appeal Form must be submitted within 10 business days of the response from the instructor.

- A. Completion** of the Grade Appeal Form, to include:
  - 1) the criterion for the appeal (see A. through E of the Grade Appeal Criteria above),
  - 2) the grounds for challenging the original grade,
  - 3) a description of the remedy sought, and,
  - 4) full documentation of the informal efforts to resolve the matter taken to date.
  
- B. Submission** of the completed Grade Appeal Form to the
  - 1) Chair or Program Director responsible for the degree program, and
  - 2) Instructor of record.
  
- C. Departmental Review** (within 20 business days of Grade Appeal Form submission)  
Upon receiving a Grade Appeal Form, the Department Chair or Program Director will review the appeal documents, including the instructor's response to the student, within the department or program.

The Chair or Program Director will determine the outcome of the appeal and communicate it to the student and the instructor. The departmental review process, terminating with notification from the Chair or Program Director, is to be completed within 20 business days of Grade Appeal Form submission.

Departmental review may be governed to an extent by accreditation requirements applicable to the program.

## **Third Level: Appeal to Academic Affairs Grade Appeal Committee** (within 10 business days of departmental determination)

If the departmental review process does not result in resolution of the student's concerns, the student has 10 business days after receiving the determination to direct the Grade Appeal Form and all associated communications to the Grade Appeal Committee, a standing committee that provides a higher level of appeal beyond the department. The Grade Appeal Committee will deliver a decision within 20 business days of Grade Appeal Form and documentation submission to them. The decision of the Grade Appeal Committee is final.

### **COMMONLY-CITED EXCEPTION**

If the instructor of record is also serving as Chair or Program Director, the student, after an unsuccessful attempt at resolution with the faculty member, may direct the Grade Appeal Form to the Grade Appeal Committee.