

STUDENT GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURES

PROCEDURES

A graduate or undergraduate student may appeal a grade by using the following procedures. Where mentioned, the words “college,” “program,” “dean,” and “department chair” or “program director” are the program, department or college in which the course being appealed is offered. All timelines refer to the first regular (15-week) semester after the semester or summer term in which the grade was awarded. A week consists of five business days or seven calendar days. Grade appeals are not processed during the summer sessions unless the dean determines a case warrants immediate review, such as those for students cleared for May graduation.

Graduating students completing final degree requirements should alert Enrollment Services (for undergraduates) or Graduate Programs as soon as course grades are posted, if they intend to file a grade appeal in the next regular semester. Assuming the student has satisfied all degree requirements, the degree itself will be placed on hold while the appeal is conducted. When the appeal is resolved or the dean makes a final decision, the student's degree will be awarded and backdated to the term when all requirements were satisfied. During the interim, students may request an official letter of degree completion for purposes of employment or graduate/professional school admissions.

The following timeframes represent University policy. In cases where programs have their own timeframes for making a grade appeal, the more restrictive policy will apply.

Grade Appeal Steps:

Step 1: Within 30 calendar days after the start of the following regular semester (excludes summer session), or sooner if possible, the student should discuss the concerns with the course instructor, stating the reasons for questioning the grade. If the instructor is a teaching assistant/associate and this interview does not resolve the difficulty, the student shall discuss the problem with the person in charge of the course.

Step 2: Within 30 calendar days after the start of the following regular semester (excludes summer session), or sooner if possible, the student shall go to the college dean's office to obtain any requisite forms and to review directions. Students must attest in writing that they have informed the instructor of their intention to file a grade appeal.

Step 3: Within 30 calendar days after the start of the following regular semester (excludes summer session), or sooner if possible, the student shall carefully formulate an appeal in writing, and submit it to the instructor with a copy to the department chair, or program director.

Step 4: Within two weeks from the date of receipt of the student's written statement, the instructor shall respond to the student in writing. The instructor should explain the grading procedures and how the grade in question was determined as well as other issues raised in the student's statement.

Step 5: If the instructor is not available or does not resolve the matter within the two-week period, the student shall, within one week thereafter, readdress and submit the written appeal to the department chair, or program director.

Step 6: The department chair or program director has two weeks to consider the student's written statement,

the instructor's written statement, and confer with each. The department chair or program director may not change the grade, but shall inform the instructor and the student in writing of their recommendation. If a grade change is recommended, the instructor may refuse to accept the recommendation. The instructor shall notify the department chair, or program director and the student in writing of their decision.

Step 7: If the department chair or program director does not act on or resolve this matter to the student's satisfaction within a two-week period, the student shall, within one week thereafter, readdress and submit the written appeal to the dean.

Step 8: The dean shall review the student's appeal and take appropriate action. If the basis of the appeal is the fundamental fairness of treatment of the student by the instructor, the dean should convene a committee to review the case. Valid reasons for convening an appeal committee include but are not limited to: a violation of University policy, a failure to follow published course policies, a lack of consistency within the student's course section, or a dispute over the factual accuracy of graded work. The following are NOT reasons that should be brought to a committee: a disagreement with published course policies, differences in classroom policies or grading schemes in different courses or between different sections of the same course, or a grade's impact on a student's academic progress, athletic eligibility, or eligibility for veteran's benefits.

Step 9: When appropriate, the dean shall convene a committee to review the case. The committee consists of five members. Faculty representatives include one from the department or program of the instructor concerned, and two from closely related programs, departments, or colleges. The Dean of Students shall nominate two student representatives. Student representatives shall be full-time upper-division undergraduate students for appeals by undergraduate students or full-time graduate students for appeals by graduate students. All student members must be in good academic standing in that college.

Within the structure provided by the dean, the committee shall design its own rules of operation and select a chair other than the faculty representative from the department or program concerned. The student and instructor shall represent themselves. The committee may, or may not

- meet separately with the student, the instructor, and the department chair or program director
- request each party to submit a brief written summary statement of the issues, and/or
- interview other persons who have relevant information.

If feasible, the committee should meet with the student and the instructor together in an attempt to resolve the difference. The committee shall consider all aspects of the case before making its recommendation. The committee shall make a written report with recommendations and provide copies to the student, the instructor, the department chair or program director, and the dean.

Step 10: The dean shall make a decision after full consideration of the committee's recommendation and within four weeks of receiving the student's appeal. The dean has the authority to change the grade to a different credit-bearing grade, which includes regular grades (A, B, C, D, E), alternative grades (S, P), or optional grades (P, F), depending on the course grading system and the system chosen by the student at registration. The registrar shall accept the dean's decision. The department chair or program director, the instructor, and the student shall be notified in writing of the dean's decision.

Step 11: If the dean, and if applicable the dean-appointed committee, do not act on or resolve this matter to the student's satisfaction within a one-week period, the student shall, during week 10 readdress and submit the

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written appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs has the authority to change the grade to a different credit-bearing grade, which includes regular grades (A, B, C, D, E), alternative grades (S, P), or optional grades (P, F), depending on the course grading system and the system chosen by the student at registration. The registrar shall accept the Vice President for Academic Affairs's decision. The dean, department chair or program director, the instructor, and the student shall be notified in writing of the Vice President of Academic Affairs's decision.

Grade Appeal Time Table

Prior to:	Complete steps:	Responsibility of:
30 calendar days after the start of the following regular semester	1,2, and 3	Student
Week 2	4	Instructor
Week 3	5	Student
Week 5	6	Department Chair or Program Director/Instructor
Week 6	7	Student
Week 10	8,9, and 10	Dean
Week 10	11	Vice President for Academic Affairs