

Grade Appeal Procedure

Course grades are assigned after thoughtful, careful consideration by faculty members based on their professional judgment of the student's mastery of the course's body of knowledge and within the course policies outlined in the syllabus.

On rare occasions, a student might believe that a grade assigned does not accurately reflect his/her mastery of the course work, and/or compliance with course policy. If such belief is seriously held by the student, the following procedure is available to challenge the grade assigned by the course instructor. The process must follow the sequence designated below and the student may terminate the challenge at any stage in the sequence.

1. The student must contact the course instructor to discuss the basis upon which the grade was determined. If the student decides to appeal, the student should inform the instructor in writing that he or she is appealing the assigned grade. The instructor has seven calendar days to render a decision in writing. If the instructor's explanation resolves the issue, the process ends; if an error in calculation or interpretation occurred, the instructor may remedy the error by submitting a change of grade form to the provost; if neither of these resolves the issue, the student may continue the appeal by presenting the appeal in writing to the division chair within seven calendar days after the faculty member has communicated a decision to the student.

2. The appeal of a course grade to the division chair comes only after communication between the student and faculty member has failed to resolve the disagreement. If the division chair is the course instructor, then step two is passed and step three is the next appeal level. Appeals must be in writing and must contain specific information detailing the basis for grade appeal and a statement regarding the communication with the instructor, including date, time (if applicable), and what the student believes would be a reasonable resolution to the appeal. The division chair will contact the student to clarify the issues, contact the faculty member, and make a decision. The decision first will be communicated to the faculty member, and if agreement is reached, the decision will be communicated to the student in writing. If there is a disagreement between the division chair and the faculty member, the appeal automatically goes to step three, appeal to the provost, and the student will be informed in writing to this effect. In either case, written notification to the student must occur within fourteen calendar days of the appeal to the division chair. In no case may the division chair attempt to change an assigned grade without the concurrence of the faculty member. Rather, the division chair's role should be that of a mediator attempting to determine whether actual fairness issues are involved in the case and attempting to resolve such issues.

Failing to resolve the challenge in a satisfactory manner at the level of the division chair, the student may appeal the grade to the provost. If the provost is also the course instructor, then an alternate division chair (not associated with the case) will take the place of the provost in step three. Such appeal must be lodged within seven calendar days of the written notice from the appropriate chair.

3. The appeal of a course grade to the provost, or an alternate division chair, if the provost is also the course instructor, comes only after communication with the appropriate chair fails to resolve the disagreement. Appeals must be in writing and contain information similar to that required in the division chair appeal. The provost or alternate division chair will communicate with the student and, then, communicate with the faculty member and division chair.

The provost or alternate division chair will render a decision on the appeal that will be final and be communicated in writing to the parties involved within fourteen calendar days of the appeal to the provost.

This appeal process applies to all divisions of the College and to all modes of instruction: undergraduate and graduate; face to face, hybrid, and online. When graduate students appeal a grade, the appropriate academic program director conducts step two and the process rather than the appropriate chair.

Time Limitations: In order to assure that the issues surrounding the appeal are fresh in all parties' minds, students must initiate the grade appeal by meeting with the faculty member who assigned the grade no later than two class weeks after the start of the subsequent academic term, semester, or cycle. In the case of an appeal of a grade assigned during the spring semester or summer school, the student may appeal the grade any time prior to the completion of two weeks of the fall semester. Appeals not initiated within the time frame specified above will not be considered.

Approved by Faculty Assembly 4/1/21