

FINAL GRADE APPEAL PROCESS

The responsibility for academic evaluations of students' rests with the faculty. If a student feels they have received a prejudiced or capricious final grade by an instructor, and they are unable to resolve the matter in an informal conference with the instructor or Department Head, a more formal process is provided except for those cases that arise where specialized policies and procedures shall apply at the department/program level.

To expedite this process the final grade appeal meetings can be conducted in person or via virtual meeting rooms. Students can elect in person meetings; however, this may delay proceedings and could result in delayed decision impacting admission, graduation or other unforeseen circumstances with timeframes.

Valid and current email addresses for any correspondence to be sent to in a timely manner is required.

Documents can be hard copy or electronic. Please note electronic documentation may facilitate adhering to timelines.

If this timeline is not adhered to, either by faculty or students, this may result in delayed decision impacting admission, graduation or other unforeseen circumstances with timeframes. All efforts from all parties involved should be made to limit unforeseen circumstances from occurring.

Extenuating circumstances may arise and will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the VPAA.

INFORMAL PROCESS

- 1) During the informal process, prior to filing a formal grade appeal the student must:
 - a) Discuss the grade with the instructor. If the issue is still unresolved, the instructor and/or student may find it necessary to consult with the Department Head.
 - b) If dissatisfied at this point, the student must next make an appointment with the Dean of the School in which the course is offered. The student must provide a statement of the problem(s) to this meeting.
 - c) The student will be required to provide a valid and current email to the instructor, Dean, and/or Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) and is responsible for checking and communicating via email. Email communication is the most effective and timely way to communicate.
 - d) The informal process should be completed **within five (5) business days** of the grade being officially posted.
 - e) Special Circumstances (Instructor of course):
 - i) If the Instructor is the department head, the appointment must be made with the Dean of the School in which the course is offered
 - ii) If the Instructor is the Dean, the appointment must be made with the VPAA

FORMAL PROCESS

- 1) Students may appeal a final grade through a formal procedure after the grade has been posted and the steps above have been taken. Students wishing to formally appeal a final course grade must adhere to the following steps:
 - a) If no satisfactory resolution results from the informal grade appeal the student may file a formal grade appeal to be considered by a Grade Appeal Board (GAB) appointed from the Academic Integrity Committee.
 - i) The GAB will consist of two faculty members, at least one of whom must be from the School in which the appeal is filed, and a student.
 - b) The student will file the appeal form with the Dean of the School in which the course is offered **within seven (7) business days** of the grade being officially posted.
 - i) Appeal forms are available in the Registrar's Office, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the School Dean's office.
 - c) The student will provide all necessary documentation when filing the Formal Grade Appeal to the Dean, including the following:
 - i) Valid and current email address for any correspondence to be sent to in a timely manner.
 - ii) Statement of the problem(s) discussed with the Dean, Department Head and/or instructor.
 - iii) Any records, documentation (such as medical records) or evidence supporting the grade appeal claim.
- 2) The formal process will require administration, faculty, grade appeal board to complete the following:
 1. The VPAA will be notified by the Dean (unless special circumstances apply i.e. Dean is the instructor) that the formal grade appeal form has been submitted.
 2. The VPAA will contact the student to review process.
 3. The department head and/or Dean will forward any documentation from their meeting(s) with the student directly to the VPAA.
 4. The VPAA can request any additional documentation if needed regarding the Formal Grade Appeal.
 5. The GAB will then review the grade appeal documentation within the scope of whether the request has met at least one of the following criteria:
 - i. The instructor failed to communicate to the class the method by which the grade would be determined.
 - ii. The method of calculating the grade was not followed by the instructor and communicated to the class.
 - iii. The calculation of the grade was incorrect.
 - iv. The student was not graded in the same manner as other members of the class.
 - v. The method of determining the grade was altered after the semester began, the new method was not communicated and/or

- applied uniformly.
- vi. Documentation was received of an extraordinary or extenuating circumstance beyond the control of the student filing the appeal.
6. The GAB will review written documentation submitted by the student and any documentation received from the Instructor.
 7. The GAB does not take into consideration approving or disapproving an Instructor's teaching methods or choice of assignments.
 8. At the conclusion of this review, the GAB will propose one of the following courses of action:
 - i. Render a judgment of upholding the posted grade; or
 - ii. Recommend an appeal hearing to review and render a decision.
 9. The GAB will have **three (3) business days** to render a decision or recommend an appeal hearing.
- b. If the GAB decides to hold a formal hearing; this must be held **within ten (10) business days of the formal grade appeal form being filed**.
1. the VPAA is responsible for notifying all concerned parties of the time, date, and place of the hearing.
 2. The GAB will hold a closed hearing with the student, the instructor, and any witnesses.
 3. Names of witnesses must be submitted to the VPAA at least **48 hours prior to the hearing**.
 4. Neither the student nor the instructor should discuss the appeal with the GAB members, opposing witnesses, or each other before the hearing.
- c. The GAB will submit its recommendation in writing **within three (3) business days** of the conclusion of the hearing to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee and to the VPAA. The Registrar's Office, the student, the appropriate Dean's office, and the instructor will be notified of the decision within **three (3) business days**.
- d. If the appeal results in a decision to change a grade, the VPAA is responsible for notifying the instructor to modify the grade. Once the grade change is submitted, the Registrar's Office, the student, and the appropriate Dean's office will be formally notified.
- e. All decisions of the VPAA in consideration of the GAB recommendations will be final. In all cases, the President and the Board of Regents of the University reserve the right to review, at their discretion, any decision of a hearing body for manifest error or inequity.

GRADE APPEAL FORM

Students must complete the first three steps in the informal grade appeal process (see #1-a,b,and c in the previous section) before requesting the formation of a hearing panel of the Committee on Academic Integrity. Students are further reminded that a hearing panel does not concern itself with approving or disapproving an instructor's teaching methods or choice of assignments. The primary questions to be answered are presented under #2-i through vi in the previous section.

The student should concentrate on these questions when determining what documents and/or witnesses to provide at the hearing. During their review, the hearing panel will review written documentation submitted by the student and the instructor. The Committee will have fifteen (15) regular class days to render a decision.

GRADE APPEAL INFORMATION

Student's Name: _____ SSN: _____

Course Title & Number: _____

Semester & Year of Course: _____

Instructor: _____ Grade Received: _____

Reason for grade appeal: _____

Name of witness(es) (must be submitted at least 48 hours before hearing to Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs):

Suggested Appeal Committee Members:

Instructor 1 (any instructor)

Instructor 2 (must be from outside the school
in which the grade appeal was filed)

Student Member (please list a phone number where each student can be contacted)

Phone Number _____

Phone Number _____

Date Grade Appeal was filed _____