

Academic Appeals by Students

Original Implementation: August 31, 1981

Last Revision: July 29, 2014

This policy provides a formal process for students to appeal academic decisions. All relevant documentation under consideration at each step will be forwarded to the appropriate parties at the next procedural level. Any further appeal must be made within ten (10) business days from the conclusion of each step. Recommendations or decisions at each level are generally made within four weeks of receiving the appeal. The burden of proof rests with the student throughout the process.

A student may appeal a final grade if inappropriate criteria were used in determining the grade, the instructor did not adhere to stated procedures or grading standards, or other compelling reasons exist to change the grade. A student may not appeal due to general dissatisfaction with a final grade or disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment regarding the quality of the student's work.

It is important to distinguish grounds for grade appeal from questions about quality of instruction. Successful grade appeals must be based on evidence that the student performed at a level sufficient to warrant a different grade. It is important for students to bring to the instructor's and the department's attention perceived deficiencies in instruction, but these by themselves do not normally warrant a change in grade.

Aside from final grades, a student may appeal substantial and/or unjustified deviation from academic policies, procedures, and/or requirements.

These steps are to be followed when making an academic appeal:

1. Students must first appeal to the individual with whom they have an academic dispute. In the case of a final grade dispute, they must appeal to the instructor within thirty (30) calendar days after the first class day of the next long semester. Given extenuating circumstances, exceptions to this deadline may be granted by the academic unit head.
2. If the dispute is not resolved, the student may appeal to the academic unit head. The academic unit head then requests a written statement from the individuals involved in the dispute. The academic unit head provides both parties a written recommendation.
3. If the dispute remains unresolved after appeal to the academic unit head, either individual involved in the dispute may appeal in writing to the academic dean. The dean notifies both parties of the continuation of the appeal and provides a written recommendation. Prior to making a recommendation, the dean may refer the appeal to the college council. If the college council has no student members, the dean asks the president of the Student Government Association to recommend no more than two students from that college to be appointed as voting members. The college council reviews all documentation and submits its recommendation to the dean.
4. After a decision is made by the dean, either party may appeal in writing to the provost and

vice president for academic affairs. The dean's written recommendation in addition to all documentation is submitted to the provost and vice president for academic affairs. The college council may serve as an advisory body to the provost and vice president for academic affairs. The provost and vice president for academic affairs evaluates all documentation and any additional oral presentations.

5. The provost and vice president for academic affairs informs the student and all persons involved in the appeal process of the final decision.

Faculty members are responsible for the evaluation of student course work conducted in their class and, under normal circumstances, are the sole judge of the grades received by the students in their course.

Cross Reference: Faculty Handbook, Student Handbook and Activities Calendar

Responsible for Implementation: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Contact For Revision: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Forms: None

Board Committee Assignment: Academic and Student Affairs