

Procedure for Grade Appeal

A student has the right to express concern about his or her grade, keeping in mind that faculty members have sole responsibility for assigning grades. The right to appeal a grade assumes a corresponding responsibility on the part of the student to act in good faith. Students may not appeal a grade for an individual assignment or examination. Only the final course grade may be appealed, and the appeal (step 2 below) must be filed within the first 30 days of the official start of the following fall or spring semester. If the faculty member who assigned the grade is no longer at the college, the dean may refer the student to the chair or coordinator of the appropriate department.

Access the [Final Grade Appeal Form](#).

Appealing a Grade:

Students may appeal their grade for the following reasons:

1. The grade is based on an error in calculation.
2. The grade assigned did not follow the grading criteria stated on the course syllabus.
3. The grade for a writing intensive class is based on inadequate grading criteria.

The following are not legitimate reasons that warrant a change in grade:

1. The course was poorly designed or facilitated.
2. The course was too difficult.
3. This course required too much work.

In order to ensure a timely response, it is important to follow the timeline established on the Final Grade Appeal Form. If, at any point in time, the student does not adhere to the timeline, the right to a Grade Appeal may be forfeited.

After the student has followed the initial steps regarding the Grade Appeal Process (meeting and discussing with the instructor), if he/she does not like the outcome, he/she may proceed with the process. At this time, the student is responsible for organizing his/her argument in order to present it to the Panel. It is the student's responsibility and burden to show that the final grade reported was in error. To help with this process, it is recommended that the student work with an advocate. To see more information regarding advocates visit the [Grade Appeal Process Advocates](#) web page.

Grade Appeal Meeting:

It is important to note that all students have the right to appeal their grade. After the student has followed the process as outlined by the Final Grade Appeal Form, the VP of Academic Affairs will coordinate a panel of 3 faculty members. Students will be advised in writing (via email and letter) as well as a phone call from an administrative assistant with the date and time of the Grade

Appeal Meeting. The student must confirm the date and time. If confirmation does not occur, the student may forfeit his/her right to the meeting (which will result in not changing the final grade).

At the beginning of the meeting, the VP of Academic Affairs will allow all parties to introduce themselves. The following people are expected to be present: VP of Academic Affairs, student, faculty member of class, panel of 3 faculty members, advocates (for both the student and faculty member should they choose to have one) as well as an individual who is responsible for taking notes. If the student is not present and has not advised the VP of Academic Affairs of his/her absence, the meeting may continue on as scheduled. If the faculty member is not present and has not advised the VP of Academic Affairs of his/her absence, the meeting may continue on as scheduled. The VP of Academic Affairs will explain the outline of the meeting. After introductions, the student will be asked to present his/her appeal. After the student has completed his/her presentation, the Faculty Member will present. Once both parties have presented their cases (to last approximately 10 minutes each), the Panel will have the opportunity to ask follow up questions. After the Panel has asked all questions, each party (the student and Faculty Member) will have the opportunity to ask follow up questions regarding the opposing presentation. Once this has occurred, the VP of Academic Affairs will dismiss all but the Faculty Panel.

The Faculty Panel will have 2 business days to discuss and make a decision. During the meeting of the Faculty Panel, the members will evaluate all evidence presented. A simple majority is needed. The following are possible outcomes:

1. The panel believes, based on of everything presented, a grade change is warranted.
2. The panel believes, based on of everything presented, a grade change is not warranted.
3. The panel identifies work that can be completed in order to warrant a grade change (for example: write another paper, complete another test, etc). If the student declines this option, a grade change will not be warranted.

The Chairperson of the Faculty Panel will notify the VP of Academic Affairs of the panel's decision.

Follow up:

The VP of Academic Affairs will notify all the parties of the panel's decision in writing (via email and letter) as well as a phone call. If the student believes that procedure has not been followed, he/she may petition the President. If the President determines that procedure was not followed, he/she will refer the appeal back to the VP of Academic Affairs who will form a new Grade Appeal Panel (refer to Step 5 of the Grade Appeal Form). If the President determines that procedure was followed, the decision of the Panel stands. At this point, if the student continues to believe that procedure was not followed, he/she can petition the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will evaluate all documents and if procedure was followed, the decision of the Panel will stand. If not, the Board of Trustees will refer the appeal back to the VP of Academic Affairs who will form a new Grade Appeal Panel (refer to Step 5 of the Grade Appeal Panel Form). The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.