13.99.99.R0.05 Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation

Reviewed October 7, 2026
Next Scheduled Review: October 7, 2031

Procedure Summary

The final grades awarded by instructors are their expert judgment concerning student performance. Students challenging a final grade must show that the instructor's judgment was unfair based on: some basis other than performance; standards different from those applied to other students in the same course section; or a substantial, unreasonable, and/or unannounced departure from previously articulated standards or the syllabus. Students may not use this process to appeal grades for individual assignments.

This procedure outlines the final grade appeal process to be initiated by students challenging their final grades. The procedures for Directors and Associate Directors apply to schools that do not have the Dean and/or Department Head reporting structure. This procedure does not cover grievances related to illegal discrimination. (See University Rule *08.01.01.R2 Civil Rights Compliance*)

Procedures and Responsibilities

1 INSTRUCTOR

1.1 Students who believe their final grade to be unfair must first discuss the matter with the instructor. The student must contact the instructor within 10 business days following the beginning of the next regular semester, following the semester in which the disputed grade was earned. If the next semester is a summer term and the instructor is not available, the student may wait and contact the instructor within 10 business days following the beginning of the Fall semester.

1.2 If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of this meeting, the student shall file a *Student Concern Form* with the Department Head within 10 business days following the meeting with the instructor. The appeal must state the basis for the appeal based on the definition of unfair academic evaluation. The student must demonstrate through documentation (e.g., course syllabus, graded homework) that the instructor:

1.2.1 Assessed on a basis other than performance; or

1.2.2 Used standards different from those applied to other students in the same course section; or

1.2.3 Made a substantial, unreasonable, and/or unannounced departure from previously articulated standards or the syllabus.

1.3 In all levels of this process, it is the students' responsibility to demonstrate evidence of unfair academic evaluation.

2 DEPARTMENT HEAD

2.1 The Department Head must notify the instructor of the appeal, the alleged unfair evaluation, and the presence of any documentation within 10 business days of the filing of the appeal.

2.2 The Department Head will examine the student's appeal to determine if the student has established a case of unfair academic evaluation as described in section 1.2. If the student has not established such a case, the Department Head will so inform the student and the instructor within 10 business days of notifying the instructor of the appeal.

2.3 If the case has merit based on the criteria in section 1.2, the Department Head will secure, from all parties, written statements and other such information as deemed helpful and will issue findings and remedies, if any. The Department Head will issue a decision in writing to the student and the instructor within 20 business days of the filing of the appeal.

2.4 The student may submit a written appeal of the Department Head's decision (with respect to findings and remedies) to the Dean of the College in which the course is offered within 10 business days of the decision.

2.5 The written request should be accompanied by all relevant evidence and supporting documents.

3 DEAN OF THE COLLEGE

3.1 If the student's appeal of the Department Head's decision, with regard to their findings and/or remedies, has merit, the Dean of the College will appoint a committee consisting of three faculty members from the same college: two from the department in which the complaint originated and one member chosen from another department in the college. The faculty member from the different department will serve as chair of the committee and the instructor of record for the appealed grade may not serve on the committee.

3.2 The chair, after receiving all materials, will set the time, date, and place for the committee to meet and discuss the allegations and supporting evidence. Only evidence that was presented with the written appeal will be considered. It is the duty of the chair to rule on procedural matters and the admissibility of evidence.

3.3 A formal letter of the committee's findings will be sent to the Dean of the College within 30 business days of the date of the appeal. The letter shall contain a summary of the facts of the case, the hearing, and the recommendation of the committee.

3.4 The Dean of the College shall render a decision and notify the student, the instructor, and the department head involved in the appeal. The decision of the Dean of the College shall be final.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Policy *13.02 Student Rights and Obligations*

University Rule *08.01.01.R2 Civil Rights Compliance*

Appendix

Student Concern Form

Revision History

Approved September 1, 1996
Revised December 15, 1999
Revised February 8, 2007
Revised May 30, 2011
Revised January 19, 2016
Reviewed March 23, 2021
Revised November 7, 2024 (University Name Update)

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