

## Grading Appeals Policies

1. A student who considers a grade to have been determined improperly may, within two weeks, of the beginning of the next semester (not including summer terms), confer with the instructor.
2. Should step one not produce mutually satisfactory results, the student will contact the department chair to obtain a grade appeals form which will be presented to the departmental faculty committee with a copy to the instructor. This will take place within two weeks of the conference with the instructor (within four weeks of the beginning of the next semester, not including summer terms). The department chair then will refer the student to a standing departmental faculty committee and notify the faculty member of the grade appeal.
3. If the instructor in question is a member of the departmental faculty committee, the remaining members will choose another member to replace the instructor for the hearing of the appeal. The committee should resolve the appeal in the same semester the appeal is made, excluding summer sessions. If the contested grade is "F," the committee may let it stand or change it to "W," "U," or "S." If the contested grade is a passing grade, the committee may let it stand or change it to "S," meaning that the course would be counted toward graduation requirements but not be computed in the student's grade point average.
4. The student may request a review of the faculty committee's decision within two weeks of that decision *only* for the following reasons:
  - a. a procedural error which substantially affected the hearing's outcome;
  - b. failure of the faculty committee to hear the appeal or to render a decision;
  - c. new or newly discovered information of a character which may have substantially affected the outcome.

The student will submit a written request for such a review to the Vice President for Academic Affairs indicating the basis for the review. If such circumstances are found by the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her representative to exist, the Faculty Association Grade Review Committee, a six-member panel composed of one member from each unit, will conduct the review within the semester or subsequent semester or during the semester in which the request for a review is made. The Faculty Association Grade Review Committee will be composed of two members from each unit, but only one member from each unit participating in any single panel of review, with each unit represented on each panel but its representatives alternating. The Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her representative shall convene and chair the committee as a non-voting ex-officio member. Coordination, notification, and reports of the committee shall be handled through the Office for Academic Affairs. The affected student, the affected faculty member and other parties to the dispute have a right to appear at the Faculty Association Grade Review Committee meeting and to present oral and written information. If the contested grade is "F," the committee may let it stand or change it to "W," "U," or "S." If the contested grade is a passing grade, the committee may let it stand or change it to "S" meaning that the course would be counted toward graduation requirements but not computed in the student's grade point average. The decision to the Faculty Association Grade Review Committee is final, and is not appealable. Only the faculty member who assigned the grade, the departmental faculty committee, or the Faculty Association Grade Review Committee has the authority to change a grade using this process.

5. If the departmental committee and/or the Faculty Association Grade Review Committee fails to hear the grade appeal or the administration finds it necessary to change a grade directly, a written justification for such an action will be given to the faculty member and the Faculty Association Grade Review Committee.
6. If the faculty involved feels that any grade appeal decision is arbitrary, capricious or improper, he/she may appeal to the Faculty Association Ethics Committee.

## Rights and Responsibilities under the Grade Appeal Policy

## Introduction

Unless the instructor agrees to change the letter grade, a successful course grade appeal can result only in a final course grade change to W, S, or U. The grade appeal process cannot, for instance, result in the change of a grade of D- to a C. A grade of S counts toward graduation requirements but is not computed in the student's grade point average; a grade of U is not computed in the student's grade point average. To assign a grade of S during this process, the grade appeal committee must determine that the student's work in the course is equivalent to a grade of C- or better.

## Definitions

**Student** refers to the student who is appealing a final course grade.

**Instructor** refers to the instructor whose grade is being contested.

**Committee** refers to the Departmental Grade Appeal Committee.

**Trained person** refers to a student or faculty member who has successfully completed training through the SCSU Mediation Program.

## Rights and Responsibilities

Throughout this procedure, the following processes, rights and responsibilities apply:

### Student

1. The student has the responsibility to notify the instructor of the student's concern regarding a final grade. Notification may be face to face, by telephone, by email, by mail, or as facilitated by the department chair (see Department section below).
2. The student has the responsibility to present documentation and complete required forms.
3. The student has the right to contact the Student Government Association Academic Affairs Committee to receive assistance and coaching in the grade appeal process from a trained committee member.
4. The student has the right to be accompanied by a trained person to any meeting of the Grade Appeal Policy process, including the student's initial notification of the instructor.
5. The student has the right to speak to and to present evidence to the committee reviewing the grade appeal.
6. The student has the right to receive the committee's written recommendation.

### Instructor

1. The instructor has the responsibility to present documentation and evidence to the student during the grade appeal process that is unbiased, truthful and accurate.
  - 1.1 The instructor must be available for a meeting during office hours, or a mutually agreed upon time.
  - 1.2 The instructor will explain the grading process and the grade given to the student. The grading process must be explicitly stated in the course syllabus that was made available at the start of the course.
2.
  - 2.1 If invited by the committee, the instructor will meet with the committee. The instructor will explain the grades and grading process in question to the committee.
  - 2.2 The instructor has the responsibility to present documentation and provide evidence to the committee that is unbiased, truthful and accurate.

3. The instructor has the right to speak to and to present evidence to the committee regarding the grade appeal.
4. The instructor has the right to receive the committee's written recommendation.
5. The instructor has the right to change the student's grade at any point in this process, based on a review of the student's performance or to correct clerical errors.
6. The instructor has the responsibility to maintain confidentiality.

### **Department**

1. The department and/or chair has the right and responsibility to assist the student and instructor in reaching an informal resolution. To this end, the department or department chair may assist the student in notifying the instructor of the student's concern. The chair may refer the student to the Student Government Association Academic Affairs Committee to receive assistance and coaching on the grade appeal process. The chair may also contact an appropriate trained faculty facilitator, who will assist with facilitated meetings during the process as needed.
2. Early each fall semester, each department has the responsibility to establish a grade appeals committee and a departmental procedure for grade appeals that is within the general guidelines of this policy. A written copy of the departmental procedure will be given to any student who files a grade appeal. The departmental information sheet given to students will set forth the steps of a student grade appeals process.
3. The department has the responsibility to maintain confidentiality.

### **Committee**

1. The committee has the responsibility to follow both the guidelines of this policy and the department procedure for grade appeals. Departmental policy cannot be in conflict with this university policy.
2. The committee has the responsibility to generate a written response, with copies given to the college dean and all involved persons and filed according to this policy and department policy.
3. The committee and dean have the responsibility to maintain confidentiality.