

Grade Appeals

California State University, Long Beach Policy Statement

99-16

August 9, 1999

Grade Appeal Procedure

(This Policy Statement supersedes Policy Statement 79-17, 86-05, 86-05 Amended, and 94-07.)

This policy was recommended by the Academic Senate on April 22, 1999 and approved by the President on July 7, 1999.

1.000 Grade Appeal General Information

The primary authority of the instructor in the assignment of grades must be respected. An instructor's evaluation of a student's work and performance in that instructor's course must not be over-ridden merely because of a difference of opinion or evaluative judgment, provided it is formed in accordance with the generally accepted canons of the relevant discipline and of the academic institution where said course is offered. The University presumes that every instructor wants and tries to be non-prejudicial, objective, and consistent in the assignment of grades. This presumption, however, may be over-ridden by weight of evidence to the contrary.

1.100. Although the University presumes that grades assigned are correct, the University has established this grade appeal procedure to both protect students against academic and administrative evaluations and decisions that are prejudicial, capricious, or arbitrary, and to preserve the authority of instructors to evaluate student work in a non-prejudicial, objective, and consistent way. This procedure, available equally to undergraduate and graduate students, also preserves the rights of instructors to appeal grade appeals committee findings as outlined below, and in its entirety constitutes the only grade appeal procedure at California State University.

2.500. Distribution of materials submitted in an appeal shall allow reasonable time for response by the involved parties before committees render their decision. "Reasonable time" for rebuttals and rejoinders shall generally be understood to be ten [10] instructional days from receipt of a response.

2.600. After making its determination, the Committee hearing the appeal shall prepare a written statement of its decision, including an explanation of its reasoning and a response to the specific issues upon which the appeal is based. The decision statement shall be placed in the appeal file and a copy of the statement shall be sent to all parties involved.

2.700. Committee Chairs shall provide a written report to their Dean at the end of each semester detailing the number and disposition of cases heard.

3.000 Preliminary Phase of the Grade Appeals Process: Initiation of Grade Appeals

Students who believe they have received a final course grade that reflects prejudicial, capricious, or arbitrary grading of their academic performance must make this belief known to the instructor(s), either orally or in writing, before they begin the formal appeal process. If students and instructors are not able to resolve the problem to the satisfaction of both parties, the formal process may then be initiated. In the event an

(although a Program is ordinarily administered by a Director or Coordinator, the title Chair also applies to this position throughout this document).

3.120. An appeal must be initiated within the regular semester immediately following the semester or special session in which the course was completed. As long as a student has filed a written notification of the appeal with the appropriate Department/Program Chair within the required semester, action on the appeal may continue during subsequent semesters.

3.200. After receiving the student's grade appeal file (see 3.100 above), the Department/Program Chair will consult with both the student and the instructor(s) involved to attempt a resolution to the grade appeal.

Appeals Committee shall reach its decision within the semester in which it receives the appeal.

3.500. If the appeal is supported by the Committee, the Committee will then determine a grade for the student based upon the evidence included in the appeal file (exams, papers, assignments, etc.).

3.510. The Committee shall communicate its decision and rationale as specified in paragraph 2.600 above, and shall also provide a copy to the Department/Program Chair. If, within ten [10] instructional days of the receipt of the Committee's decision, the instructor does not either file a grade change or file an appeal of the Committee's finding, the Department/Program Chair shall authorize a grade change by filing the appropriate grade-change forms. If the Department/Program Chair does not effect the change within ten [10] instructional days of notification, the Chair of the Department/Program Grade Appeal Committee can sign in lieu of the instructor or the Department/Program Chair and the College Dean will change the grade.

3.520. If, within ten [10] instructional days, either the instructor, or the student files in writing an appeal of the Department/Program Committee's finding, the Committee Chair shall, within (10) instructional days, forward the file (including the Committee's decision and rationale) to the College Grade Appeals Committee.

3.600. If the Department/Program Grade Appeals Committee rejects the appeal, it shall communicate its decision and its rationale as provided in paragraph 2.600 above, providing a copy also to the Department/Program Chair. If, within ten [10] instructional days, the student does not request further review of the appeal, the grade appeal process is terminated.

Department/Program Chair. The Department/Program Chair must then inform the instructor, student and College Dean, in writing, that an appeal has been filed and the Dean must immediately inform the appropriate College Grade Appeals Committee, in writing, that an appeal has been lodged. The Chair of the Department/Program Grade Appeals Committee must immediately forward the appeal file, including the Committee's decision and rationale, to the College Dean who must immediately inform the College Grade Appeals Committee that the grade appeal file has been received and is ready for review. The College Grade Appeals Committee shall normally render its review decision within 20 instructional days of receipt of the grade appeal file.

4.100. The College Grade Appeals Committee shall review the grade appeal file, the

4.230. If the College Grade Appeals Committee recommends re-consideration, it shall

the appeal process, the Committee Chair shall forward the file (including the Committee's decision and rationale) to the University Grade Appeals Committee.

4.420. If a grade change is recommended by the Committee and the change is not appealed by either appellant (in compliance with 4.410 above), the College Grade Appeals Committee Chair shall, within ten [10] instructional days of the College Committee's action, inform the College Dean, in writing, of its decision and the College Dean will change the grade as determined by the Committee.

5.000 Third Phase of the Appeals Process: Appeal to the University Grade Appeals Committee

The University Grade Appeals Committee shall function as the final level Grade Appeals Committee. The University Grade Appeals Committee may communicate with the appellant, and Department/Program and College Grade Appeals Committees as needed.

5.100. The University Grade Appeals Committee shall normally render its decision within 20 instructional days of receipt of the Grade appeal file.

5.200. The University Grade Appeals Committee shall review the grade appeals file, the lower level Committees' decisions and rationales, and any rebuttals to those decisions and rationales provided by the appellant, in the light of paragraphs 1.000 through 3.600 above. It may consider both matters of procedure and substance. The Committee may seek further clarification from either lower level Committee or the appellant as needed. The University Committee shall either disagree with or confirm the decision of the College Grade Appeals Committee

5.210 In the event that a grade change is authorized by the University Grade Appeals Committee, the Chair of the University

Grade Appeals Committee shall ensure that the appropriate change-of-grade form is properly signed by the University Provost and filed with the Office of Enrollment Services.

5.220 The Chair of the University Grade Appeals Committee shall inform all parties to the grade appeal, in writing, of the Committee's decision.

5.230. The rendering of the Committee's decision, notification of all parties of the decision, and effecting a grade change where authorized by the Committee, completes the appeal process.

EFFECTIVE: Fall 1999