Grade Appeal Policy

This grade appeal policy establishes a clear, fair process by which undergraduate students can contest a course grade that they believe has been awarded in a manner inconsistent with university policies or that has resulted from calculation errors on the part of the instructor. Recognizing, however, that the evaluation of student performance is based upon the professional judgment of instructors, and notwithstanding the exceptions noted at the end of this policy, appeals will not be considered unless based upon one or more of the following factors:

- An error was made in grade computation.
- Standards different from those established in written department, school, college, or university policies, if specific policies exist, were used in assigning the grade.
- The instructor departed substantially from his or her previously articulated, written standards, without notifying students, in determining the grade.

Only the final course grade may be appealed. The grade assigned by the instructor is assumed to be correct and the student appealing the grade must justify the need for a change of the grade assigned.

Appeals Procedure

1. Formal grade appeals must be initiated by the student within four months after the date that grades were due for the course(s) in question. For example, if grades were due on December 25, the appeal must be filed by April 25.
2. The first step to resolving differences between an instructor and student concerning a grade must be a discussion between the student and the instructor. If the instructor of record will not be available within the four-month period, the department chair or designee may act in lieu of the instructor of record for the purpose of grade appeals.
3. If the instructor and student cannot resolve the appeal, and the student wishes to pursue the matter further, he or she must present to the chair of the department in which the course is offered a written appeal that includes the following:
   a. A statement addressing how the appeal meets one or more of the three criteria necessary for a formal appeal.
   b. A description of the outcome of the informal discussion process.
   c. Any relevant documents the student would like to have reviewed as part of the appeal process.
   d. A copy of the course syllabus and assignment descriptions.
   e. The department chair may request additional materials from the student. After receiving a copy of the appeal materials from the department chair, the instructor has ten (10) business days to respond in writing to the appeal. The department chair will discuss this response with the instructor and will provide the student with written notification of the outcome of this step within five (5) business days after receiving the instructor's response.
4. If there is no mutually agreed-upon resolution between the student and the instructor, and the student wishes to pursue the matter further, he or she has five (5) business days to submit his or her written appeal to the dean of the department. The dean will review the appeal, provide copies of all appeal materials to the instructor, and discuss the appeal with the chair, instructor, and student. The instructor has five (5) business days to review the written appeal the student has presented to the dean and, if desired, prepare an additional written response. The dean will provide the student with written notification of the result of this step within ten (10) business days after receipt of the appeal from the student.
5. If the fourth step does not lead to a mutually agreeable resolution, and the student wishes to pursue the matter further, then a Grade Appeal Committee shall be formed by the dean within ten (10) business days. This committee shall include 3 faculty members from the college/school: one selected by the student, one selected by the instructor of record, and one appointed by the dean. A majority shall prevail in the committee. The committee shall elect its own chair. The function of the Grade Appeal Committee shall be to evaluate the appeal in terms of the stated grounds for the appeal. The committee's decision may be to keep the assigned grade or to raise the assigned grade. The committee shall provide a written justification to the dean for its decision, including minority opinions when they exist, no later than fifteen (15) business days after the committee's formation. The dean shall inform the department chair, student, and instructor of the committee's decision and provide all parties with copies of the committee report. This decision by the Grade Appeal Committee is final.
6. In the case of a change of grade, the instructor of record must implement the change of grade decided upon by the committee within ten (10) business days after learning of the committee's decision. If the instructor fails to make the change, the dean shall implement the change of grade as determined by the committee on the student's official transcript through the change-of-grade procedure. This shall be the last step in the deliberation of the formal grade appeal.
7. The dean shall forward a written record of the results of all grade appeals to the appropriate Office of the Provost designee within ten (10) business days.

Exceptions to the Grade Appeal Policy

The Grade Appeal Policy shall constitute the sole internal administrative remedy for a change in grade, except when the grade being disputed resulted from an alleged academic integrity violation. If a grade dispute arises from an issue that is covered under the university's Academic Integrity Policy

(https://www.apu.edu/provost/integrity/), the process for resolution that has been established for appealing academic integrity violations must be followed.