



## 3.6P Academic Grade Grievance Procedure

Category: Academics

Name of Responsible Office: Academic and Student Affairs

Title of Responsible Executive: Provost and Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs

Date Established: August 1, 2022

Date Last Approved: February 1, 2023

### Description of Procedures Related to Academic Grade Grievances

A student *may* file an academic grade grievance (herein after “grievance”) for one of the following reasons:

1. The grade reflects evidence of unfair grading practices on the part of the instructor (e.g., standards different from those that were applied to other students).
2. The grade assigned reflects a computational error.
3. The instructor failed to comply with the course information sheet concerning grades or assignments.

Generally, students may *not* file an academic grade grievance under these circumstances:

1. Disagreement with the grading policy as established in the course information sheet.
2. Disagreement with course rigor, standards, and/or performance expectations.
3. Personal dislike of the professor.

If a student has questions about the viability of a grievance, they should contact the Assistant to the Provost.

Before submitting a formal grievance, students must contact the instructor to discuss the disputed grade within ten (10) working days of when the grade is published or received; if needed, the department chair may facilitate contact. The faculty member and student are then afforded ten (10) working days\* to attempt to resolve the complaint.

### ***Formal Academic Grade Grievance Process***

If the issue cannot be resolved with the faculty member, the grievance must be formally submitted to the department chairperson within three (3) working days, per the process outlined below.

#### **I. Submission of Grievance**

- a. Student fills out the online grievance form and provides the following information:

Reason for grievance (referring to one of the three reasons listed above).

Explanation of the grievance, specifically what grade the student is grieving and why. This information must be specific and detailed. Vague explanations such as “it wasn’t fair” or “the grade should have been higher” will not be accepted. The student, for example, might explain that according to the assignment and rubric provided, the student should have received a passing grade.

Evidence that the requirements, as specified by the instructor, for the assignment/class were met by the student at a level necessary to exceed the assigned grade.

The specific resolution the student is seeking.

Attach any evidence based on criteria such as the assignment(s) in question, CIS, emails, and other supporting documents.

- b. Faculty member receives the notification of the grievance via the online system, provides a response to the complaint, and submits any related documentation within three (3) working days\*.

## II. Determination of Grievability

- a. Department chair review: The department chair reviews the grievance materials submitted by the student and the faculty member in the online system. If necessary, the chair meets separately with each party to render a written decision within three (3) working days.\* The chair will make one of the following decisions:

- i. The grade is NOT grievable. In this case, the student has three (3) working days to appeal the decision. The process moves to the next step, “Appeal of Chair’s Decision.”
- ii. The grade IS grievable. In this case, the student proceeds to the next step in the process, “111. Grievance Process.”

- b. Appeal of chair’s decision: If a department chair determines that the student’s complaint is not grievable, the student may appeal that decision to the dean\*\* within three (3) working days.

The grounds for the appeal should include any new evidence that could affect the matter’s outcome, which was not reasonably available when the student submitted the original grievance. The student must submit any new evidence via the online system.

- c. Dean’s appeal decision: The dean reviews the appeal and supporting documentation provided by the student via the online system and determines within three (3) working days\* whether the student has a grievable grade.
  - i. If the dean determines the grade IS NOT grievable, the dean closes the case. There is no further appeal. The dean notifies all parties in writing.
  - ii. If the dean determines the grade IS grievable, the department chair is notified via the online system, and the process continues to “111. Grievance Process.”

## III. Grievance Process

- a. Department chair review: If a grade complaint is determined to be grievable by the decision of the chair or dean, the department chair reviews the information provided in the online system and renders a decision supporting the student or the faculty member.
  - i. A finding for the student may result in a grade change; it is the professor’s responsibility to change the grade. Both parties are notified in writing within three (3) working days, and the grievance process ends.
  - ii. A finding for the faculty member means the grade(s) remain as assigned. Both parties are notified in writing within three (3) working days and the grievance process ends, or a student may appeal to the dean in “b. Appeal of chair’s decision.”
- b. Appeal of chair’s decision: The student may appeal to the dean within three (3) working days.
  - i. In general, there are two grounds for appeal:
    - 1. A procedural irregularity occurred that affected the outcome (e.g., a failure to follow the institution's procedures), or
    - 2. New evidence is available that was not reasonably known at the time the determination was made that could affect the outcome of the matter.

- ii. Students must submit the following information in the online system:
  - 1. Reason for the appeal.
  - 2. New and specific evidence to support this reason.
- c. Dean's appeal decision: The dean shall meet with the student and faculty member within ten (10) working days\* to review the materials provided in the online system.
  - i. The chair may be asked to provide a rebuttal to the student's appeal before the meeting.
  - ii. The dean renders a decision in support of the student or the faculty member:
    - 1. A finding for the student may result in a grade change; it is the professor's responsibility to change the grade.
    - 2. A finding in support of the chair's decision means the grade(s) remain as assigned.
  - iii. The dean submits a decision in writing to the student, faculty member, chair, and Provost within three (3) working days\*. This decision is final.

During either of the appeals processes, questions may be addressed to the Assistant to the Provost.

## Related Information

### *College Documents*

#### [Academic Grade Grievance Policy](#)

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\*Most grievances will follow these timelines. However, in some cases, the adjudicator may extend the time for just cause which shall be communicated in writing to all parties.

\*\*Dean refers to the Academic Affairs Deans and the designee from the Economic Development, Workforce and Career Technical Education Division.