

IV. STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

ACADEMIC GRADE APPEAL POLICY

Consistent with the University's mission, course instructors have both the right and responsibility to render constructive and critical judgment regarding the quality of the academic work performed by students according to the grading criteria stated in the respective course syllabus. While a University student may appeal a final course grade consistent with this policy, a student must prove that the University's course instructor issued the final grade in an "inaccurate or unfair" manner in order to be successful. Consequently, a final course grade appeal is a significant assertion by a student against a course instructor that is taken seriously by the University.

A student may appeal a final grade received in any University course (the "Grade") within ten (10) business days (excluding University holidays) of a final course grade being posted to the University's electronic grade posting system(s) (the "Appeal Deadline").

STANDARD ON APPEAL

A student may appeal a Grade only when the student believes that the Grade is inaccurate or unfair based on the grading criteria stated in the course syllabus. In all Grade appeals, the student has the burden of proof. All of the student's test results, work-product, and/or other grade criteria set forth in the course syllabus may be considered in the Grade appeal process.

GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURE

The following procedure must be followed by a student when making a Grade appeal:

- 1. Written Notice of Appeal:** On or before the Appeal Deadline, the student must provide written notice to the course instructor and dean of the school in which the course is taught (the "Dean") that the student is appealing the Grade. The written notice of appeal must include:
 - (a) Confirmation of the date, time, and location when the student discussed the student's concerns about the Grade with the course instructor prior to submitting the written notice of appeal;
 - (b) Details supporting the student's position that the Grade is inaccurate or unfair based on the grading criteria stated in the course syllabus; and,
 - (c) A request by the student for a conference with the course instructor and school dean to discuss the Grade appeal. (collectively, the "Notice of Appeal"). In the event that the course instructor is also the Dean, another full-time faculty member in the school in which the course is taught shall be appointed by the Office of the Provost to preside over this Grade appeal process instead of the Dean (the "Appeal Faculty") to permit the Dean to serve in the course instructor role during the appeal.
- 2. Appeal Conference:** Following receipt of the Notice of Appeal, the Dean or Appeal Faculty shall schedule an appeal conference with the course instructor and student, which conference shall occur within ten (10) business days (excluding University holidays) of receipt of the Notice of Appeal (the "Appeal Conference"). Prior to the Appeal Conference, the course instructor shall provide documentation to the Dean or Appeal Faculty supporting the Grade. The Dean or Appeal Faculty presides over the Appeal Conference. The student may be accompanied to the Appeal Conference only by
 - (a) the student's assigned University academic advisor, or
 - (b) another full-time member of the University faculty. Any individual who accompanies a student to an Appeal Conference shall not advocate for the student, and may only provide support to the student.
- 3. Grade Appeal Decision:** The Dean or Appeal Faculty shall render a written decision granting or denying the Grade appeal to the student and course instructor within five

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(5) business days (excluding University holidays) of the Appeal Conference (the “Grade Appeal Decision”).

4. Provost Review of Grade Appeal Decision: In the event that the Grade Appeal Decision is unsatisfactory to either the student or course instructor, both the student and the course instructor shall have five (5) business days (excluding University holidays) from the receipt of the Grade Appeal Decision to request that the Office of the Provost review the Grade Appeal Decision (the “Provost Review Notice”). A Provost Review Notice shall be in writing and must include:

- (a) All documents comprising the Notice of Appeal;
- (b) A copy of the Grade Appeal Decision;
- (c) A cover letter detailing the specific reasons that the student or course instructor believes that the Grade Appeal Decision is incorrect. In its sole discretion, the Office of the Provost may request additional documentation from the Dean or Appeal Faculty who presided over the Appeal Conference. The Office of the Provost shall review the collective documentation related to the Grade and render a final decision regarding the Grade appeal (the “Provost Final Decision”) within ten (10) business days (excluding University holidays) of receiving the Provost Review Notice. The Provost Final Decision is binding and is not subject to further appeal.

5. If the course for which the Grade is being appealed is a prerequisite to another course, the student appealing the Grade may seek written permission from the Office of the Provost to enroll in the next course in the sequence while the appeal is pending, which permission shall be granted or denied in the sole discretion of the Office of the Provost.

6. No legal counsel for the student or course instructor may be involved in any step of the Grade appeal process.

7. A student may withdraw a Grade Appeal at any juncture by making a written request to the Dean or Appeal Faculty, who will notify the Office of the Provost.