

Academic Affairs Manual

Code Number: AA 2017-01

Status: Active

Effective Date: September 11, 2017

Subject: Student Grade Appeals

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Student Grade Appeals (Supersedes PM 14-05)

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 A Student Grade Appeals Board (Board) is hereby established by the University and is charged with responsibility for processing grade appeals submitted by students at California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) in accordance with the following procedures.

2.0 PURPOSE

- 2.1 The applicable evidentiary standard for student grade appeals is based on the evidence, and the established presumption is that grades assigned by faculty members are correct. The burden of proof rests with student appellants. Students may appeal undergraduate or graduate grades which they believe were conferred contrary to procedures established in course syllabi; were prejudicial or capricious; or were the result of instructor, computational, or clerical error.
- 2.2 Student grade appeal procedures may be revised from time to time with the concurrence of the provost/ Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Academic Senate.
 - 2.2.1 Copies of approved revisions shall be forwarded to the Academic Senate, University President, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, Provost/ Vice President for Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Development, College Deans, the University Registrar, and Associated Students, Inc.
- 2.3 Grade appeal procedures may not be used to review University student disciplinary decisions. Nor may grade appeal procedures be used to challenge culminating activities in graduate programs, such as comprehensive examination or theses.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Board shall be comprised as follows
 - 3.1.1 Six (6) academic members
 - 3.1.2 Three (3) student members
- 3.2 Academic Members of the Board
 - 3.2.1 Must be tenured faculty
 - 3.2.2 Shall be elected by the Academic Senate in accordance with established election procedures
 - 3.2.3 One (1) Board member from the College of Arts and Humanities
 - 3.2.4 One (1) Board member from the College of Business Administration and Public Policy

3.2.4 One (1) Board member from the College of Education

3.2.5 One (1) Board member from the College of Health, Human Services, and Nursing

3.2.6 One (1) Board member from the College of Natural and Behavioral Sciences

3.2.7 One (1) Board member from the University Library

3.3 Student Members of the Board

3.3.4 Shall be appointed in accordance with the procedures established by the Executive Board of Associated Students, Inc.

3.3.5 Student members must be full-time students

3.3.6 Student members must have and maintain at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA.

3.4 The selection of the Board members shall be concluded before the conclusion of each spring semester by the Academic Senate and Associated Students, Inc.

3.4.4 The new Board shall not be convened until the beginning of the following fall semester.

3.5 The Board shall vote for a new Chair of the Board (Chair) every spring to serve at the beginning of the following fall semester.

3.6 Member of the Board shall serve one-year terms.

3.7 Members are eligible for reelection to the Board.

3.8 Board Member Vacancy

3.8.4 In the event a vacancy is caused by a member's resignation, inability to serve, or other cause:

3.8.4.1 The replacement of an academic member shall be by appointment by the Academic Senate Executive Committee.

3.8.4.2 The replacement of a student member shall be by appointment by the Executive Board of Associated Students, Inc.

3.9 The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (or designee) is authorized to make decisions on grade appeals and appeal-related issues that arise during summer sessions.

3.9.4 Grade appeals and grade appeal-related issues that are not resolved by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs during summer sessions shall be referred to the new Boars at the beginning of the following fall semester.

4.0 PROCEDURES

4.1 Initiation of Grade Appeal

4.1.1 Before initiating a formal grade appeal, students shall first seek informal resolution with the instructor of record or Department Chair.

4.1.2 Informal Appeal and Resolution

4.1.2.1 Requires student appellants to meet with the faculty member or Department Chair no later than thirty (30) calendar days immediately following the assignment of the original grade.

4.1.2.2 The timeline may be extended if the student appellant requests and receives an extension from the College Dean (or designee) or can demonstrate extenuating circumstances for the submission of a grade appeal beyond thirty (30) calendar days following the assignment of the original grade.

4.1.3 Formal Appeal and Resolution

4.1.3.2 In the event a grade appeal is not informally resolved with the instructor of record or Department Chair, the student may submit a formal grade appeal, in writing, to the Dean of the College (or designee) within twenty-one (21) calendar days after receiving the decision of the instructor of record or Department Chair.

4.1.3.3 The student's written formal grade appeal shall contain the following:

4.1.3.3.1 A clear and concise statement summarizing the problem or dispute

4.1.3.3.2 A specific remedy

4.1.3.3.3 All relevant documentation (i.e., course syllabus) and arguments supporting the student's claims and a justification for the requested remedy.

4.1.3.4 Student appellants shall submit their student identification number as was as contact information.

4.1.3.5 College Dean

4.1.3.5.1 The College Dean (or designee) shall forward copies of the student's formal grade appeal to the instructor of record and Department Chair and request written responses of their respective positions and other relevant comments.

4.1.3.5.2 After receiving separate responses from the instructor of record and the Department Chair, the Dean (or designee) shall attempt to resolve the appeal within 21 calendar days.

4.1.3.5.3 If there is no mutually agreed upon resolution, the Dean (or designee) shall forward the formal grade appeal file to the Chair of the Board via the Office of the Associate Vice President for Retention, University Academic Advisement, and Learning.

4.1.3.5.3.1 The case file shall include the recommendation of the Dean (or designee), the student's written statement, written responses from the instructor of record and the Department Chair, and any other relevant documentation, including the course syllabus.

4.1.3.5.4 The Dean (or designee) shall provide copies of their recommendation to all parties.

4.1.4 Determination by Board

4.1.4.2 Following receipt of the formal grade appeal file from the College Dean (or designee), the Associate Vice President for Retention, University Academic Advisement, and Learning shall review the file to determine that the appeal has been filed in a timely manner and all necessary information and documentation has been provided. Thereafter, the Associate Vice President for Retention, University Academic Advisement, and Learning shall notify the Chair of the Board.

4.1.4.3 Grade Appeal Panel

- 4.1.4.3.1** The Chair shall assign the formal grade appeal to a panel of two (2) faculty Board members and one (1) student Board member. Members of the panel shall review the formal grade appeal based on the information contained in the case file and determine by majority vote whether or not cause exists for a grade change.
- 4.1.4.3.2** The panel may, as necessary, call upon qualified faculty members to receive relevant input regarding the grade appeal. A qualified faculty member must be unbiased and have had no prior involvement with the grade dispute.
- 4.1.4.3.3** The panel shall issue a written decision within 21 calendar days, and the panel's decision shall include a statement summarizing the panel's final disposition of the grade appeal.
- 4.1.4.3.4** The panel shall forward copies of the decision to the student appellant, the instructor of record, Department Chair, College Dean, Chair of the Grade Appeals Board, and the Associate Vice President for Retention, University Academic Advisement, and Learning.
- 4.1.4.3.5** If the panel, by majority vote, concludes that cause exists for a grade change, only the faculty members of the Board shall determine the appropriate grade. The panel shall sustain an appeal only if student appellants meet their burden of proof by a preponderance of evidence.
- 4.1.4.3.6** Approved grade changes must be implemented within ten (10) working days,
- 4.1.4.3.7** The panel's decision shall be final and binding on the parties, and all remedies shall be considered to have been exhausted.

4.2 Students or members of the faculty involved in a grade appeal who contend appeal procedures were not properly followed may submit a written statement and explanation to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs with a copy to the Chair of the Academic Senate. The Provost/ Vice President for Academic Affairs shall render a decision in writing within 21 calendar days.

4.3 Board Report

- 4.3.4** The Chair of the Board shall submit an annual report to the Provost/ Vice President for Academic Affairs and forward a copy to the Chair of the Academic Senate.
- 4.3.5** The report shall be submitted prior to the end of each academic year after Board business has been completed.
- 4.3.6** The Board's report shall report the number and disposition of grade appeals.

Approved: Dr. Michael E. Spagna, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date: September 12, 2017