

Curriculum Final Grade Appeal Process

Course grades are determined by the course instructor according to a policy set forth in the course syllabus and/or addendum. Course grades must be based on a fair and consistent system for all students. Students may appeal the final course grade using the process below:

Step 1:

Appeals concerning final grades given for a course must be directed to the instructor who assigned the grade. The student should contact the instructor and request an initial conference to discuss the grade. The instructor assigning the grade and the student appealing the grade shall discuss the issue in person or via videoconferencing and attempt to resolve the difference. Every reasonable effort should be made to resolve the issue during the conference. The initial conference between the student and the instructor should occur no later than the fifth business day of the following semester. If the instructor and the student fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, the student may continue to Step 2.

Step 2:

The student shall present a written letter of appeal to the appropriate dean no later than the fifth business day after the conference with the instructor.

The letter must contain the following components:

1. Date, student's name, student's signature, student's SCC email address, and student's current telephone number.
2. Prefix, number, and section of the course for which the grade is being appealed.
3. Name of the instructor issuing the grade.
4. Date of the conference with the instructor.
5. Grade received and the grade the student believes to be correct.
6. An explanation, in three pages or less, listing and describing factual and valid reasons why the student thinks the assigned grade is incorrect. The letter must specifically describe the student's reasoning for appealing the grade. This reasoning must be logical and based on (1) the student's perception and explanation of how the grading policy in the course syllabus was incorrectly applied or (2) the student's belief and evidence that the grade was not based on a fair and consistent system for all students.
7. In ideal situations, the student will present clear documentation that supports their reasoning. Unsubstantiated information, hearsay, and/or information irrelevant to the grading policy may not be included in the letter of appeal.

NOTE: The dean may deny the appeal if the letter of appeal does not contain the components described above.

Step 3:

The dean shall consider the letter of appeal and reach a decision to deny or accept the letter and the student's appeal.

1. If the dean denies the letter of appeal, the student may appeal to the executive vice president (EVP) (proceed to Step 4 below).
2. If the dean accepts the letter of appeal, then the dean shall confer with the student and the instructor and attempt to seek a resolution by mutual agreement.
3. The dean will make a decision to uphold the grade or change the grade based on the conversations with the instructor and the student.
4. If the dean's decision is to change the grade, the grade change will then be submitted using the established college process.

Step 4:

If the student wishes to appeal the dean's decision, the student must submit the letter of appeal to the executive vice president no later than the fifth business day after the dean's decision; the executive vice president will consider the letter and make one of the decisions below.

1. The executive vice president may require the student to adjust the letter of appeal in a way that will bring clarification, remove irrelevant information, or add additional factual information. If adjustments to the letter are required, the student must submit changes within 2 business days of receiving the recommendations from the executive vice president.
2. The executive vice president may deem the letter to be satisfactory. In this case, the executive vice president will convene the Academic Review Committee (ARC). The meeting of the ARC will be scheduled as promptly and expeditiously as possible.

Step 5:

The Academic Review Committee will be convened. The ARC will be comprised of:

- Four instructors (representative of at least two of the divisions of the college). If possible, at least one of the instructors on the committee shall be qualified to teach the course. The instructor who assigned the grade in question will not serve on the ARC.
- An academic dean other than the dean who is responsible for the course that is the focus of the grade appeal shall chair the ARC; the chair will be a non-voting member of the ARC.
- A student representative selected by the dean of student services.

The ARC will proceed as follows:

1. All participants must follow the directions of the ARC chair.
2. The ARC may reject the appeal if the procedures described herein have not been followed by the student.
3. During the appeal process, the dean who is responsible for the course that is the focus of the grade appeal and/or the instructor of the course will provide relevant course and grade information to the ARC.
4. The student's written letter of appeal will be provided to the ARC.
5. The instructor and the student shall be afforded the opportunity to personally appear and provide pertinent information to the ARC and to ask questions of anyone providing documentation. Personal

appearance is not required by the instructor or the student. The student may bring an additional person to support him/her at the ARC meeting; however, the support person may not address the committee or the instructor.

6. Upon receipt of all relevant information, the ARC shall determine, by a simple majority vote, whether the grade assigned by the instructor shall be upheld or overturned.
7. Should the ARC vote to uphold the original grade received by the student, the ARC chair will communicate the decision to the executive vice president, and upon approval by the executive vice president, the ARC chair will draft a response to the student within five business days.
8. If the EVP does not approve the ARC's decision to keep the original grade as assigned by the instructor, then the EVP shall identify the method and means of determining a new grade. The student may be required to complete revised or additional assignments and/or assessments as the EVP deems appropriate. The EVP may also use the grading policy outlined in the course syllabus and information gathered during the appeal process to arrive at a revised final grade. The EVP will communicate her decision to the student, the ARC, and the instructor within 5 business days.
9. If the original grade assigned by the instructor is not upheld by the ARC, the executive vice president, the ARC chair, and the dean responsible for the course shall use the grading policy outlined in the syllabus and information gathered during the appeal process to arrive at a revised final grade. The executive vice president shall notify the instructor and the student about the new grade in writing within five business days.
10. If the executive vice president does not approve the ARC's decision to change the grade, the executive vice president will respond to the student, the instructor, the dean who is responsible for the course, the ARC chair, and ARC members with his/her decision within five business days of the ARC meeting.
11. Any grade change resulting from this process will be submitted using the established college process.

Failure of a student to pursue a grade appeal in accordance with the provisions of this process or any publications derived therefrom shall be deemed unacceptable and the grade assigned will be the grade of record.

The decision of the executive vice president is final.

This process shall apply to all credit courses offered by the college regardless of length, credit awarded, method of delivery, time of delivery or other factors.