

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION PROCEDURE

Policy Title: Student Academic Appeals

Policy Number: 06-1-01

Functional Area: Student Affairs

Effective:	September 1, 2024
Supersedes:	All previous
Approved by:	Interim Dean Joe Wehrman
Date Approved:	October 1, 2024
Responsible Office:	Academic and Faculty Affairs
Policy Primary Contact:	Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs
Applies to:	College of Education

A. INTRODUCTION

This procedure provides in-depth information to faculty who may become involved in the academic appeal process. On occasion, students will appeal a grade or other program decision of a faculty member in the College of Education. In all instances throughout these procedures, both parties are responsible for professionalism, including that communications between them become official when written.

B. POLICY STATEMENT

No appeal will be upheld, or exception granted without all required documentation. Until the appeal or exception is approved, the student will not be granted permission to engage in relevant professional education activities.

Appeals will be considered for:

- Final grades;
- Denied admission to a professional education program;
- Denied permission to student teach or to complete professional internship;
- Denied permission to graduate due to missing requirements;
- Actions related to thesis or capstone projects;
- Dismissal from a program.

The process for settling a dispute through individual and/or committee responses has prescribed timelines. If a student fails to submit a written request to initiate an appeal to a final grade or other program decision within the first 30 days after the final grade was posted or of the program decision, the student forfeits the rights of appeal in those matters. *The student is responsible for the burden of proof in all appeals that they initiate.*

C. PROCEDURES FOR SETTLING A DISPUTED GRADE OR PROGRAM DECISION

1. **Step One: Informal Resolution**

Students should always try to work the problem out by first discussing it with those involved. Requests to appeal a final grade should start with the faculty member responsible for teaching the course. Requests to appeal other program decisions should start with the program leader (e.g., program coordinator or faculty director). Dealing with concerns in the most direct fashion should always be the first step toward resolution. Many problems are resolved when a student makes an appointment with a faculty member and thoughtfully presents detailed evidence and communicates their concerns.

- a. The student is responsible for contacting the faculty member(s), in writing, within 30 days of the final grade being posted or of the program decision.

- b. The student is responsible for presenting all relevant information pertaining to the request in writing. They are strongly encouraged to resolve the grievance through discussion with the faculty member(s) involved.
- c. Students should be aware that final grades are traditionally within the jurisdiction of individual instructors and are not likely to be changed absent evidence that the faculty member 1) determined the final grade based on considerations other than student performance; 2) substantially differed from previously announced criteria or procedures in determining the final grade; or 3) violated university or college policy in determining the grade. The student bears the burden of proof on these allegations.
- d. Within 15 days of the student's initial request, the faculty member(s) shall provide a written communication to the student regarding their decision on the disposition of the grievance. If a response is not sent by the faculty member(s) within 15 days, the student may proceed to Step Two, Appealing to the Department Chair.

2. Step Two: Appealing to the Department Chair

If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the faculty member(s), they may appeal the request to the Department Chair. If the faculty member is also the department chair, the student may appeal the request to the Associate Dean in the College of Education.

- a. Absent unusual circumstances, the student should email a written grievance to the Department Chair within 30 days of the student's written appeal to the faculty member(s) in Step One.
- b. The grievance should state the basis for the complaint, the remedy requested, and the date and result of the initial communication with the faculty member(s). Any evidence that supports the grievance, such as class syllabi, assignments, and/or statements from other students should also be included.
- c. Within 45 days of the student's written appeal to the faculty member(s) in Step One, the Department Chair shall provide a written communication to the student and faculty member(s) regarding their decision on the disposition of the grievance.

3. Step Three: Appealing to the College Grievance Committee

If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the Department Chair, they may submit a request to bring the grievance to the College Grievance Committee. The College Grievance Committee is comprised of faculty members representing all departments in the college. Faculty members or chairs with direct or prior involvement in an individual grievance should recuse themselves from an individual case. The chair of the committee may also request that an individual member recuse themselves from a particular case.

- a. Absent unusual circumstances, the student should submit a request within 60 days of their written appeal to the faculty member(s) in Step One. The request shall be made via an electronic intake form (e.g., OnBase).
- b. The request for review by the Grievance Committee must contain the initial communication to the faculty member(s), and the written decisions of the faculty member(s) and the Department Chair.
- c. Upon submission of the appeal, the Associate Dean will verify receipt of all required documentation and then, if complete, forward the appeal to the chair of the College Grievance Committee. If incomplete, the Associate Dean will notify the student of what is missing. A resubmission is allowed within the original timeline (see "a" above).
- d. Upon receiving an appeal, the Grievance Committee chair shall convene the committee to consider the available information. Appeals will be considered by the College Grievance Committee at the next scheduled monthly meeting after which the appeal is received. If needed, the committee may request more information regarding the situation from the student and/or faculty member(s).
- e. After rendering a decision, the committee will make its recommendation for action, if any, to the Associate Dean in the College of Education.
- f. Within 15 days of the Grievance Committee's decision, the Associate Dean will notify the student, faculty member(s), and Department Chair via email regarding the disposition of the grievance.

4. Step Four: Appealing the Decision of the College Grievance Committee to the Dean

If a student is not satisfied with the decision of the College Grievance Committee, they may appeal the request to the Dean of the College of Education within 15 days of notification from the Associate Dean.

- a. An appeal should be sent via email to the Dean. The appeal should state the basis for the complaint, the remedy requested, and the date and result of the notification from the Associate Dean. Any evidence previously provided to the College Grievance Committee should also be included.
- b. Within 15 days of receiving the student's appeal of the College Grievance Committee's decision, the dean shall provide a written report containing their decision on the disposition of the grievance to all parties involved.

The Dean of the College of Education is the final authority in matters regarding the academic and professional conduct of students.

Notes

1. History:
Initial procedure approval October 23, 2020 by Dean Valerie Martin Conley
Revised/approved October 1, 2024 by Interim Dean Joe Wehrman