

## 3.51 Grade Appeal Process – Graduate Programs

*Revised: 8/26/2009*

*Group Responsible: Academic Vice President*

*Previous Revisions: Original*

Grading system and criteria used by each faculty member should be included in the syllabus distributed to the class at the beginning of the term. Any modifications of such criteria or system should be explained publicly to the students in the class. Each student in the class is to be evaluated on the same basis, unless there are alternative options which are available to each student in the class.

### **3.51.1 Process**

A student must initiate a grade appeal prior to the end of the next regular academic semester following the term in which the grade was received. It is the student's responsibility to support a grade change. The grade appeal process is described below:

### **3.51.2 Initial Conference**

A student who believes that a grade received is incorrectly recorded, inaccurate, unfairly awarded or based on criteria different than that applied to other students in the same class, is first required to arrange a private conference to discuss the matter with the faculty member in order to receive an explanation for the basis of the grade given.

### **3.51.3 Appeal**

In the event the faculty member determines that grade change is not appropriate, and the student is dissatisfied with the explanation of the faculty member, the student may formally present the case to the chair of the department in which the course is offered, in writing within ten (10) class days from the date of the conference with the faculty member. The chair may request a student to present the basis for dissatisfaction with the grade awarded and/or the explanation given by the faculty member. In the process of consideration of the appeal, the chair will privately consult with the faculty member and program director (if one exists) as well as the student, in an effort to reach a resolution that is satisfactory to both parties. In a written recommendation, the chair should refer to the faculty member's perspective and documentation, together with the student's reason for the requested change and evidence together with course materials and other relevant information. If a grade change is recommended, that change should be noted in the class records and the appropriate grade change form submitted to the office of the registrar.

### **3.51.4 Grade Appeal Committee**

In the event either the student or the faculty member wishes to appeal the recommendation of the chair, that person may appeal such recommendation in writing to the dean of the school in which the course is offered within ten (10) class days from the date of the recommendation. The dean will chair a grade appeal committee which shall be configured as follows: (a) the dean, (b) one faculty member who is not a member of the same department as the faculty member or the student's major to be selected by the graduate program director, (c) one graduate student who is not a member of the same department as the faculty member or the student involved in the appeal process to be appointed by director of graduate programs. The grade appeal committee shall conduct a hearing. Both the student and the faculty member will have the opportunity to present their respective cases. The committee may, on its own initiative, request or collect evidence or testimony to be presented at the hearing as it

deems pertinent. The finding of the grade appeal committee shall be final. Its decision concerning the appropriate grade to be assigned must be communicated in writing to the student and the faculty member. If the committee finds that a grade change should be made, then the graduate program director shall arrange for the appropriate change on the class records and the form to be completed in the office of the registrar.

### **3.51.5 General Provisions**

- Because the foregoing is an internal hearing procedure, neither the student nor the faculty member may be represented by legal counsel during any of these internal meetings.
- If the faculty member involved in the grade appeal also is the chair, then the appeal in section 3.51.3 should be directed to the Dean who will act as the Chair, and the graduate program director will act as the Dean.
- If the faculty involved in the grade appeal also is the dean, for section 3.51.4, the graduate program director will act as the Dean.