



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHANNEL ISLANDS ACADEMIC SENATE POLICY

Policy on Course Grade Appeals (supersedes SP 05-09)

Policy #: SP 11-05

Drafted By: Student Academic Policies and Procedures Committee 2011-2012: Stephen Clark, Chair; Beatrice de Oca, Tiina Itkonen, Nancy Mozingo, Nitika Parmar

Applicability: All CSU Channel Islands students

Purpose: The purpose of the proposed policy is to clarify the process for appealing a course grade. Specifically, the proposed changes to the existing policy specify that while only final course grades may be appealed, grades on individual exams and/or assignments may be included as part of the documentation.

Definitions:

- Prejudice: The grade awarded was motivated by ill will, and is not indicative of the student's academic performance in the class in question;
- Capricious: The grade awarded was assigned on some basis other than the criteria stated in the course syllabus;
- Arbitrary: The grade awarded represents such a substantial departure from accepted academic norms as to demonstrate that the instructor did not actually exercise professional judgment;

Policy:

1. Each student has the right to appeal the final course grade, but only the final course grade. For example, a student may not appeal grades on individual assignments and/or examinations.
2. Appeals are limited to situations in which the student believes the grade was "prejudicially", "capriciously", or "arbitrarily" assigned. While grades for individual assignments cannot be appealed, students who believe that the grading of individual exams and/or assignments demonstrates prejudicial, arbitrary, or capricious grading and that those grades had a direct bearing on the final grade should include them in the grade appeal file as supporting documentation.
3. The appeal must be initiated within the first seven weeks of the first regular semester after assignment of the grade*(See item 6 below). A student who believes that a course grade has been assigned inappropriately must follow the proper steps in the appeal process, observing the time limits for completion of the steps as follows:
 - Step 1: The grade appeal must first be directed to the instructor of the course, in writing, by the end of the seventh week of the semester and copied to the Chair. If the grade is not correct, the instructor can change the grade with a change of grade form. The instructor has two weeks to respond to the student's request in writing and copied to the Chair.



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Step 2: If the instructor believes the grade is correct and the student is not satisfied with the instructor's explanation, and intends to appeal the grade, the student must make an appointment to speak with the program chair. If the instructor is not available or does not respond to the student's appeal within the given time frame, the program chair may act on behalf of the instructor. If the program chair is the instructor, the student should speak with the Provost (or designee). The program chair or Provost (or designee) cannot change the grade, but will then discuss the issue with the instructor and provide a written response by the end of the ninth week of the semester to the student.

Step 3: If the student is not satisfied after receiving the response from the appropriate administrator, the student should submit a written appeal by the end of the eleventh week of the semester to the University Appeals Committee through the office of Academic Affairs.

Step 4: The University Appeals Committee will forward the student's statement to the instructor. The instructor will be required to respond in writing by a specified date within the semester, and the student will be given a copy of the instructor's written response by the end of the semester. The student's statement and the instructor's response will be reviewed by the entire committee, after which the committee can:

- a. Request more information from the student and/or the instructor
- b. Decide to change or maintain the grade

Step 5: When the committee has made its decision, it will notify the student and instructor in writing

4. The University Appeals committee shall consist of faculty and at least one student.
5. Individuals may not participate as a member of the University Appeals Committee in review of an appeal if they are a participant in the appeal. The decision of the University Appeals Committee is final.
6. If a student is a candidate for graduation, the Registrar's Office must be notified in writing of the intent to appeal the grade within 30 days of the last day of the semester. The final degree evaluation will not be performed and the degree will not be granted until the grade appeal process has been completed.
7. No grades can be appealed or changed for any reason after a degree has been granted.