

GRADE GRIEVANCE POLICY

1. The University recognizes that it is the instructor's prerogative to determine a grade. Responsibility for resolving grade disputes is shared among the instructor, the student, the department, and the college. If a question is raised by a student concerning a grade, the instructor should discuss the matter willingly and give evidence to make clear his/her basis for determining the grade. (In turn, the student should recognize the need to demonstrate a valid basis for complaint.) At any time, either upon the student inquiry or upon his/her own initiative, the instructor who believes a change of grade is justified may initiate a request for a change of grade.
2. A student who desires discussion of a complaint about a grade shall contact the instructor or if the instructor is unavailable, the department chairperson, either in person or in writing as soon as possible, but in no case later than sixty days after the beginning of the next regular semester. Any exception to the time limitation shall be for unusual and most compelling reasons. Ordinarily, the student should accept the instructor's decision. However, if the student is still not satisfied, he/she may request in writing a joint consultation with the instructor and the chairperson of the department involved. In case the student's request for joint consultation involves an instructor who is also chairperson of the department, the student's request in writing should be sent to the Dean of the college involved. In such cases the Dean shall act in place of the department chairperson.
3. The following procedures are available for review of allegations of capricious grading. They are not for review of the judgement of an instructor in assessing the quality of a student's work, nor are they to be used in cases involving academic dishonesty. Determination of the grade in such cases is left solely to the instructor. A student who is not satisfied after consultation with the instructor and department chairperson, and who alleges that the semester grade is the result of capricious grading may file an appeal within ninety days of the start of the next regular semester to the Dean of the instructor's college for forwarding to the College Committee on Review of Change of Grade. The student shall file the appeal by submitting a written statement particularizing the basis for the allegation that the grade was the result of capricious grading, and present any evidence he/she may have.

Capricious grading, as the term is used herein, constitutes any of the following: (a) the assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than his/her performance in the course; (b) the assignment of a grade to a particular student by resort to more exacting or demanding standards than were applied to other students in that course. It is understood that standards for graduate credit may be different than standards for undergraduate credit; (c) the assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the instructor's previously announced standards.

4. The appeal shall be dismissed if (a) the appeal was not timely; (b) the allegations, if true, would not constitute capricious grading; or (c) the student has not attempted to confer with the instructor or chairperson of the department. If the appeal is not dismissed, the Committee ¹ shall submit a copy of the student's written statement to the instructor of the course with a request that the instructor promptly submit a written response thereto, a copy of which shall be made available to the student. If, upon the basis of these papers, it appears that the dispute may be attributable to inadequate or incomplete communication between the parties, the Committee may arrange to meet individually or together with the student and instructor to discuss the problem.
 5. If such a meeting is not held or, if held, such meeting does not result in a mutually agreeable solution, the Committee shall proceed to hold a fact-finding session concerning the allegations set forth in the appeal. Both the student and the instructor shall be entitled to be present throughout this session and to present any relevant evidence, including testimony by other persons. The student and instructor both may be accompanied by a person to assist them in presenting evidence. The session shall not be open to the public.
 6. At the close of the session, the Committee shall deliberate privately. If a majority find the allegations of capricious grading to be supported by substantial evidence, the Committee shall proceed to determine the most appropriate remedy. The Committee may direct the instructor to grade the student's work anew or to give the student a new examination in the course, or may take such other action as will bring about substantial justice in the individual case. However, except in the most extraordinary circumstances, the Committee itself should not award the student a new grade in the course. The decision of the Committee shall be final and shall be reported in writing to the student, instructor, and the departmental office.
 7. College Committee on Review of Change of Grade may also resolve complaints involving suspected violation of grading policies for incomplete and deferred grades, dropping a class, or withdrawal from the University. The same procedures as outlined above for review of alleged capricious grading shall be followed.
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¹If the instructor of the course is a member of the Committee, he/she shall be disqualified from the consideration of that appeal.