

Central Michigan University
Grade Grievance Policy

The University recognizes that it is the instructor's prerogative to determine a grade. Responsibility for resolving grading 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 their 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 their own initiative, the instructor who believes a change of grade is justified may initiate a request for a change in grade.

The following steps are available for review of allegations of capricious grading under the grade grievance policy. They are not for review of the judgment of an instructor in assessing the quality of a student's work nor are they to be used in cases involving violations of CMU's Academic Integrity Policy. Determination of the grade in such cases is left solely to the instructor.

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

Step 1:

- 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 thirty days after the grade is posted. 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, they may request in writing a joint consultation with the instructor and the chairperson of the department involved. In a case in which 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 school or college involved. In such cases, the dean shall act in place of the department chairperson.

Step 2:

- A student who is not satisfied after consultation with the instructor and department chairperson and who alleges that the course grade is the result of capricious grading may file an appeal within forty-five days from the date of the posted grade 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 College Committee on Review of Change of Grade Appeal and accompanying documentation explaining the basis for the allegation that the grade was the result of capricious grading and presenting any evidence they may have.
- 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* shall submit a copy of the student's completed College Committee on Review of Change of Grade Appeal and accompanying documentation 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

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to the student. If, upon the basis of these papers, the dispute appears to 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. A teleconference can be arranged for an individual who does not reside in proximity to the main campus.

Step 3:

- If such a meeting is not held or, if held, the 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 the session and to present any relevant evidence, including testimony by other persons. The student and the instructor both may be accompanied by a person to assist them in presenting evidence. The session shall not be open to the public.
- At the close of the session, the committee shall deliberate privately. If a majority finds the allegations of capricious grading to be supported by substantial evidence, the committee shall determine the most appropriate remedy. The committee may direct the instructor to grade the student's work anew, give the student a new examination in the course, or 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.

The 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.

*If the instructor of the course is a member of the Committee, they shall be disqualified from considering the appeal.

Adopted by Academic Senate: 03-09-76

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College Committee on Review of Change of Grade Appeal

Student Information		
Last name:	First name:	Student ID:
Phone number:	CMU email:	

Course Information	
Session of enrollment:	Course number:
Instructor:	Section number:
Course title:	

Grade Information	
Original grade:	Grade change requested:

Nature of Perceived Capricious Grading
Which standard(s) of capricious grading do you believe have been met in the assignment of your final grade? At least one standard must apply to your situation.
<input type="checkbox"/> Relying on some basis other than my performance in the course;
<input type="checkbox"/> Relying on more exacting or demanding criteria than were applied to other students in the course;
<input type="checkbox"/> Relying on standards representing a substantial departure from those previously published.

Instructor/Department Chair/Student Meeting
<input type="checkbox"/> I verify that I have attempted to resolve this matter with the instructor.
<input type="checkbox"/> I verify that I completed Step 1 of this process within thirty days after the final grade was posted.
Date of meeting with instructor and/or department chair:
Outcome of meeting with instructor and/or department chair:

Additional Supporting Documentation
You must include the following with your completed College Committee on Review of Change of Grade Appeal:
1. A copy of the course syllabus,
2. A statement explaining the basis for the perception of capricious grading, and
3. Any evidence that supports the rationale presented in your statement.

Student Signature	
I acknowledge that this is a formal appeal for a change of grade, the result of which may raise, lower, or have no effect upon my final grade. I confirm that this appeal contains accurate, honest and original statements of facts related to this matter.	
Student signature:	Date:

Send to the College Dean's Office which is responsible for the department responsible for the course.

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Student Statement