

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

GRADE APPEALS PROCEDURES

January 20, 1999; Revised: September 2006, February 2007

PROPOSED REVISION

November 2009

On each campus of the University of Missouri it is the Chancellor who is ultimately responsible to the President and the Board of Curators for all campus programs, policies and activities. On the University of Missouri-St. Louis campus, the Chancellor has delegated responsibility for overseeing the grade appeal process to the Provost. The Provost is therefore responsible for assuring that grade appeals are handled in a fair and timely manner. More specifically, that officer is responsible for seeing that the procedures outlined below are appropriately followed.

Application of This Policy

Students are responsible for meeting the standards established for each course they take. Faculty are responsible for establishing the criteria for grades and evaluating students' academic performance. The grade appeal procedure is to allow only the review of allegedly capricious grading. It is not intended as a review of the instructor's evaluation of the student's academic performance.

Capricious grading is defined as any of the following:

- a) The student's grade was assigned on the basis of other factors rather than the performance on the assignment or in the course;
- b) The student's work was graded with more demanding standards than were applied to equivalent students in the course; (Note: Different grading criteria are expected of graduate students enrolled in 4000-level courses.)
- c) The instructor assigned a grade using standards that were substantially different from those previously announced or stated in the syllabus.

Informal Procedures

At any time after the awarding of a grade, for a course or an assignment in a course, a student may discuss the grade with the instructor and request that the instructor review the grade.¹ If the instructor does review the grade he or she is, of course, free to change the grade as appropriate.

Formal Procedures

The following procedures apply if the informal procedure does not resolve a dispute concerning a grade to the student's satisfaction. The formal process must be initiated within 30 working days of the start of the first regular semester (fall or spring) following the semester for which the grade was given, or 30 days after the assignment of the grade (whichever is later).²

¹ If the instructor is deceased, cannot be located, or is otherwise unable or unwilling to reconsider the grade, the student should consult directly with the chairperson of the department, division, area or discipline housing the course in question.

² Under current campus policy, transcript notation of "DL" automatically becomes an "F" after one regular semester. This change, which the Registrar is mandated to make, is not considered a grade change and is

1. If the student has not already done so, s/he must discuss the contested grade with the instructor. The student should prepare for this meeting by taking all relevant written work (tests, reports, etc) to the meeting with the instructor. If the issue is not resolved, and the student wishes to pursue the appeal, a written appeal should be submitted to the chairperson of the department³, division⁴, area⁵, or discipline housing the course in question. (For grade appeals in the Honors College, College of Nursing, College of Optometry, and the UMSL/Washington University Joint Engineering Program, written appeals should be submitted to the appropriate dean.) The chairperson shall discuss the appeal with the course instructor within 10 days of receipt of the written appeal, and will inform the student of the result of this discussion within 10 days of the meeting. (The result of the meeting may be the instructor's agreement to change the grade or the instructor's refusal to change the grade.)
2. If the matter remains unresolved, the student may, within 10 working days of being notified of the result of the meeting between the chairperson and the instructor, request a review of the matter by a faculty committee comprised of at least 3 members of the department, division, or area offering the course, or if such are not available, in closely allied fields. This committee is charged with determining whether the grade in question was awarded capriciously. Members will investigate the matter, meeting if they deem necessary with the student, the instructor, and possibly others. Following its inquiries and deliberations, but prior to making its final recommendations, the faculty committee will submit a copy of its findings to the course instructor. If the course instructor elects to comment on the findings to the committee, this must be done within 7 working days. After further consideration, but within 30 working days after receiving the student's written statement, the faculty committee will submit its findings with its recommendations and reasons for those recommendations directly to the course instructor, with a copy to the chairperson of the department, division or area.
3. If the faculty committee recommends that the grade be changed, the chairperson will ask the instructor to implement the recommendation. If the instructor declines, the chairperson will change the grade, notifying the instructor and the student of this action.
4. If the student is dissatisfied with the results of the departmental committee review, s/he should request within 10 days of notification of the departmental result, that the dean of the college in which the course is taught convenes a committee of at least three faculty members (different from the departmental committee) to review the appeal. This committee is charged with determining whether the grade in question was awarded capriciously. Members will investigate the matter, meeting if they deem necessary with the student, the instructor, and possibly others. Following its inquiries and deliberations but prior to making its final recommendations, the faculty committee will submit a copy of its findings to the course instructor. If the course instructor elects to comment on the findings to the committee, this must be done within 7 working days. After further consideration, but within 30 working days after appointment by the dean, the college committee will submit its findings with its recommendations and

consistent with this grade appeal policy. Students may appeal this change provided the appeal is initiated within 30 working days of the notification of the grade change.

³ College of Arts & Sciences, College of Fine Arts & Communication

⁴ College of Education

⁵ College of Business Administration

- reasons for those recommendations directly to the course instructor, with a copy to the dean.
5. If the college committee recommends that the grade be changed, the dean will ask the instructor to implement the recommendation. If the instructor declines, the dean will change the grade.
 6. If the student is dissatisfied with the result of the college level review, s/he may appeal to the Provost within 10 working days of receipt of the college report. The Provost will review the appeal process and rule on whether the procedures were followed appropriately. If the Provost concludes that there were procedural errors that denied the student due process, the case will be referred back to the dean to reconvene a new college level committee.
 7. The Provost may NOT change a grade given by any instructor.

NOTES TO DELIBERATING BODIES
CONCERNING DIFFERENCES FROM CURRENT POLICY

- Since the term “administrative officer” is not clear (especially to a student) the term “department chair” is used.
- Since the College of Education and the College of Business Administration do not have departments per se, the reference to first level of appeal was to “department, division, or area” with footnotes to indicate in which colleges these terms are used.
- Students in the Honors College, College of Nursing, College of Optometry, and the UMSL/WU Joint Engineering Program are instructed to appeal directly to the dean of these academic units since they are not departmentalized.
- The most significant change is adding the college level review with authority given to the dean to change the grade if the college level review committee recommends that it be done.
- The appeal to the Provost is designated as a procedural review, not a content review.
- The proposal specifically states that the Provost may not change a grade, but may refer the matter back to the dean for additional college-level review if the procedures were not followed appropriately.