

UP 13.02.99.H0.01 Discussion and Resolution of Grade Disputes, Grievances, and Appeal Processes



Approved: November 16, 2007
Revised: November 16, 2009
Revised: April 2013
Next Scheduled Review: April 2016

Procedure Statement

This procedure provides guidance for the discussion and resolution of grade disputes, grievances, and appeal processes.

Reason for Procedure

This procedure is intended to provide consistency in the discussion and resolution of grade disputes, grievances, and appeal processes.

Procedures and Responsibilities

Faculty members are responsible for developing appropriate methods of evaluating student learning, for evaluating student artifacts fairly, for upholding academic standards, and for enforcing policies concerning academic dishonesty. Decisions made by faculty members regarding the quality or honesty of student work are accepted as expert judgment concerning student performance.

1. GRADE GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL PROCESS

1.1 Informal Resolution (Grievance)

A student with a grievance regarding a final course grade should attempt to resolve the issue by conferring with the course instructor. A student challenging a final grade must show that the instructor's judgment was an unfair academic evaluation based upon: some basis other than performance; standards different from those applied to other students in the same course section; or a substantial,

unreasonable, and unannounced departure from previously articulated standards on the syllabus. The burden of proof lies with the student.

- 1.1.1 An instructor should make every effort to accommodate the student's schedule if a grade grievance conference is requested.
- 1.1.2 If the student remains dissatisfied after meeting with the instructor, he/she may file a formal, written appeal with the appropriate College Dean within 10 university business days of the grade posting. The student must utilize the *Grade Appeal Petition* form found in the Appendix of this procedure. The Dean shall send a copy of the written appeal to the instructor as soon as practicable but no later than 3 business days after receiving the formal appeal.

1.2 Formal Resolution (Appeal)

- 1.2.1 The written appeal must:
 - 1.2.1.1 Identify and provide a thorough explanation of the complaint
 - 1.2.1.2 Define the basis of the complaint
 - 1.2.1.3 Identify the desired outcome
 - 1.2.1.4 Attach any appropriate documentation to support the grievance
 - 1.2.1.5 Provide contact information including email address, cell and home phone numbers, and current address
- 1.2.2 Within 10 university business days of receiving a copy of the student's written appeal, the instructor shall provide a written response, including supporting documentation, to the College Dean.
 - 1.2.2.1 Within 10 university business days, the College Dean will establish a grade hearing committee to render a recommendation regarding the grade appeal.
 - 1.2.2.1.1 The Grade Appeal Committee shall be an ad hoc committee comprised of two students who are members of the Student Government Association (SGA), three faculty (one from each college), and the Director of Student Affairs, the latter of whom will be a non-voting member. All appointees will be recommended by the College Dean and confirmed by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost/VPAA) who shall appoint the committee chair.
 - 1.2.2.1.2 The College Dean will forward all written documentation to the chair of the committee.

- 1.2.2.1.3 The grade appeal hearing must be held within twenty (20) university business days of the committee chair's receipt of the written appeal from the College Dean. If the 20 university business day time period falls during the summer semester when instructors may not be available, the grade hearing must be scheduled within ten (10) university business days of the first day of class of the fall term.
 - 1.2.2.1.4 The chair of the Grade Appeal Committee will serve as the facilitator of the hearing. The chair must designate a time keeper to maintain adherence to the presentation of the appeal and the response to the appeal.
 - 1.2.2.1.5 The agenda for the grade appeal hearing must follow the sample *Grade Appeal Hearing Agenda* provided within this procedure.
 - 1.2.2.1.6 The committee will provide a written recommendation to the College Dean within 24 hours of the conclusion of the hearing.
- 1.2.2.2 After the College Dean has reviewed the student's written appeal, the instructor's written statement, and the recommendation of the Grade Appeal Committee, he/she will make a decision.
- 1.2.2.2.1 The College Dean will provide a written statement documenting his/her decision to the student, the chair of Committee, and to the instructor. The College Dean shall articulate in his/her statement the factual basis/bases for reaching his/her decision.
 - 1.2.2.2.2 The College Dean's decision must be made within five (5) university business days of his/her receiving the committee's written recommendation. This decision is final and cannot be appealed.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Supplements System Policy 13.02 *Student Rights and Obligations*

Contact Office

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
903.223.3004

Appendix

Grade Appeal Petition



Texas A&M University-Texarkana

Instructions: Using this form as a guide to drafting the appeal. Provide the information listed below as well as any additional information necessary to provide an accurate account of the grievance. Use this sheet as the cover page for your grievance documentation. Be sure to sign and date it at the bottom of the page.

- (1) Identify and provide a thorough explanation of the complaint.
- (2) Define the basis of the complaint.
- (3) Attach any appropriate documentation.
- (4) Identify the desired outcome.
- (5) Provide contact information including email address, cell and home phone numbers, and current address.

This process adheres to **UP 13.02.99.H0.01 Discussion and Resolution of Grade Disputes, Grievances and Appeal Processes** which can be referenced on the A&M-Texarkana website by clicking on *University Rules and Regulations*.

Signature of
Petitioner: _____

Date: _____

Grade Appeal Committee Recommendation



Texas A&M University-Texarkana

Instructions: The committee must utilize this form to document their recommendation and will provide this form to the College Dean in a sealed envelope. The committee chair should sign the sealed flap of the envelope once the document is inserted.

Grievance Request:

Committee Recommendation:

By signing the *University Grade Appeal Committee Recommendation* form, you are agreeing to keep any and all information regarding today's hearing confidential. Your signature also documents your participation in the hearing. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the committee's recommendation. If you disagree, you must provide a statement regarding the reason you disagree with the committee's recommendation.

_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
<i>Student Affairs Council Representative</i>	<i>Graduate /Undergraduate</i>	<i>Date</i>		
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
<i>Student Academic and Support Services Representative</i>		<i>Date</i>		
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
<i>Faculty Member, Chair</i>	<i>College</i>	<i>Date</i>		

*If you **disagree** with the committee's recommendation, provide a handwritten justification below:*

(Use the back of this form if more space is needed.)

Grade Appeal Hearing Agenda



Texas A&M University- Texarkana

Charge of the committee: To listen to each presentation of the appeal; to ask questions as appropriate to assist in the understanding of the appeal; to review the documents provided regarding the appeal; and to provide a written recommendation as to the committee's decision.

Instructions: Thank you for your time today. You are fulfilling an important service role. Today you will hear a student grade appeal. An agreement has not been reached at this time between student and instructor, thus resulting in today's hearing. As a committee, you are an advising body. You will provide to a College Dean a written recommendation based upon what is presented here today as to the outcome of this appeal. As a committee, please note that all information regarding the grade appeal is confidential. It is important to maintain the student's and the instructor's privacy regarding the grade appeal. You will sign the committee recommendation at the conclusion of today's hearing. Please note your signature not only signifies your participation today but also signifies that you will not discuss the grade appeal hearing information with others. Do not take notes; it is important to *listen* to the information being presented. All cell phones must be turned to 'silent' or 'off' at this time. If anyone is on-call for employment reasons, please identify yourself.

Agenda

I.	Welcome and Charge of Committee	Chair	5 mins.
II.	Review of Documentation	Committee	20 mins.
III.	Oral Presentation: Student	Student	10 mins.
IV.	Questions of Student	Committee	5 mins.
V.	Oral Presentation: Instructor	Instructor	10 mins.
VI.	Questions of Instructor	Committee	5 mins.
VII.	Deliberation of Committee	Committee	20 mins.
VIII.	Closing Statements & Adjournment	Chair	5 mins.

The time periods indicated for each step on the agenda should be adjusted to appropriately accommodate the complexity of the case presented.