

Procedure V.5001.C.a, Student Final Grade Appeal Process

Associated Policy

Policy V.5001.C, Student Final Grade Appeal

Procedures

Grade determination and awarding of a final grade in a course is clearly the responsibility of the instructor. Final grade reports should be available to the student within a reasonable time following the end of the course.

When a student becomes aware of a final grade that is believed to be incorrect, the student may appeal the final grade received in a course. The appeal process shall be initiated by the student as soon as possible following the receipt of the final grade but shall be initiated no later than 30 calendar days after grades are posted. The appeal must be resolved within 120 calendar days following the initiation of the appeal.

The Grade Appeal Committee will not address concerns or hear an appeal regarding grades for individual assignments or assessment. The grade appeal may not involve a challenge of an instructor's grading standard. A student has a right to expect thoughtful and clearly defined approaches to course and project grading, but it must be recognized that varied standards and individual approaches to grading are valid. The grade appeal considers whether a final grade was determined in a fair and appropriate manner; it does not attempt to grade or re-grade individual assignments or projects.

The procedures for appealing a final grade shall consist of the following steps:

Step 1. Student Meeting with Instructor

The student and instructor shall discuss in private consultation the grade that the student believes is incorrect. At this meeting, only the grades on tests, projects, reports, etc., and the grading system listed in the syllabus will be discussed and recalculated as necessary. Whenever possible, the matter should be resolved at this meeting. If the instructor cannot resolve the problem immediately, the student will be provided with information of the final grade appeal process. The instructor will submit a written decision to the student via email. If, upon receipt of the instructor's written decision, the student is dissatisfied with the decision, the student may request a meeting with the department chair to appeal the decision of the instructor. *If the grade appeal is in a health science program supervised by a program director, the student must first meet with the program director about the appeal.* NOTE: In the event there is no department chair, the student may request a meeting with the dean who will conduct the meeting in accordance with steps 1 and 2 of this procedure. The student must make the appeal within five (5) working days after notification by the instructor.

Step 2. Student Meeting with Program Director or Department Chair

Step 2.1: Meeting with Program Director in Health Science Programs: If the grade appeal is in a health science program supervised by a program director, the student must start the appeal with the program director. The program director must arrange a meeting no more than five (5) working days after receiving a request from the student. This meeting will include the student, the instructor, and the program director. Providing sufficient evidence of discrepancies or errors in the grade will be the responsibility of the student. If insufficient evidence is offered, the appeal is denied. The student will be given an opportunity to present his/her case. The instructor will be given a chance for rebuttal. If the appeal is denied, the student must notify the program director and the department chair he/she is appealing the course grade.

Step 2.2: Meeting with Department Chair: The department chair must arrange a meeting no more than five (5) working days after receiving a request from the student. This meeting will include the student, the instructor, and the department chair. Providing sufficient evidence of discrepancies or errors in the grade will be the responsibility of the student. If insufficient evidence is offered, the appeal is denied. The student will be given an opportunity to present his/her case. The instructor will be given a chance for rebuttal. If the appeal is denied, the student must notify the program the department chair and the dean he/she is appealing the course grade.

On hearing the evidence from both sides, the program director or the department chair will take one of the following actions:

- a. If, in the opinion of the department chair/program director, the student failed to provide sufficient evidence of discrepancies or errors in the grades, the student will be notified in writing that the appeal is denied. The written decision by the department chair/program director will inform the student of the right to appeal the decision and about the procedures for appeal. At the same time, the department chair/program director will notify the instructor in writing of this decision. The notification must be given within five (5) working days of the hearing.
- b. If, in the opinion of the department chair/program director, the student did provide sufficient evidence of discrepancies or errors in the grades, the instructor will be notified in writing within five (5) working days of the meeting. At the same time, the department chair/program director will notify the student in writing of this decision.

The instructor will, in turn, inform the department chair/program director in writing within five (5) working days whether he/she will change the grade. If the instructor changes the grade, the instructor notifies the student in writing, and the matter is closed.

If the instructor chooses not to change the grade, the department chair/program director will be notified of the decision in writing within five (5) working days after having received the recommendation from the department chair/program director. Within five (5) working days after being informed of the instructor's decision to deny the grade change, the department chair/program

director will notify the student in writing that the appeal is denied and inform the student of further rights to appeal and the procedure for doing so.

All time limits may be extended by mutual consent.

Step 3. Student Meeting with Dean

Within five (5) working days after receiving notification from the department chair that the appeal has been denied, a student may request a meeting with the dean who will take either action “a” or action “b” as described above in step 2.

(NOTE: In the event there is no dean or in the event that the dean conducted the initial meeting, the student will proceed to step 4.)

Step 4. Student Meeting with Academic Appeals Committee

Within five (5) working days after receiving notification from the dean that the appeal has been denied, a student appealing a grade in a course may request a hearing before an Academic Appeals Committee. This request will be in writing to the provost. The committee will consist of one (1) full-time instructor to be named by the student, one (1) full-time instructor to be named by the instructor, and one (1) full-time instructor to be named by the provost. The provost will request that the student and instructor submit the name of their nominees via email within five (5) working days after notification of all parties involved. Upon receiving the names of those nominees and appointing a third instructor to the committee, the provost will set the time, date and place of the closed hearing and notify all parties. This will be done within five (5) working days after having received the names of both nominees. The student’s appeal will be dismissed if the student fails to correspond with the Provost’s Office within ten (10) working days of the last communication with the student. A student may present written evidence relevant to the grade appeal and may be advised at the hearing by one or more persons of his/her own choice. The student may have a maximum of two (2) persons, including the nominated instructor, in the room at a time. The individuals selected by the student may advise the student but are prohibited from addressing the committee. The hearing will include the student, the faculty member whose final grade is being challenged, the three instructors named to the committee, and the optional persons chosen by the student. The Academic Appeals Committee may request information from the instructor and/or person’s familiar with the case. The academic appeals committee may limit cumulative, repetitious, or irrelevant testimony or documentary evidence, and may impose reasonable time limits on the presentation of evidence by the parties.

Within five (5) working days after this hearing, the Academic Appeals Committee will notify the student, the instructor, and the provost in writing of its findings:

- a. A grade change is justified and will be made.
- b. A grade change is not justified and will not be made.

If the decision of the Academic Appeals Committee is to change the grade, the provost will have five (5) working days to make the grade change. The decision of the Academic Appeals Committee will be final.

The same appeal process will be followed when the instructor is not accessible or no longer employed by San Jacinto College by excluding step 1 involving the instructor.

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Associated Policy	Policy V.5001.C, Student Final Grade Appeal
Primary Owner of Policy Associated with the Procedure	Deputy Chancellor & President
Secondary Owner of Policy Associated with the Procedure	Provosts