



**07/AS/23/UEPC**

**California State University, Stanislaus  
Grade Appeal Policy and Procedures**

By order of the Chancellor's Office, the Senate of CSU Stanislaus is responsible for providing students a grade appeal procedure. Assigned grades are assumed to be correct. Thus, the burden of proof of the need for a formal appeal rests with the individual who is appealing a grade. The procedures and timelines described in more detail below must be adhered to by those involved in the appeal. This process should be initiated *after* the student and instructor have had conversations about the grade before submitting a formal grade appeal.

For issues with the Grade Appeal Form, students may contact the Curriculum Analyst in the Provost Office ([academicprograms@csustan.edu](mailto:academicprograms@csustan.edu)).

The appeal form with a written explanation must be submitted within the first 4 weeks of the immediately following semester (Fall or Spring terms).

Students graduating at the end of Fall Term (appealing a Fall-term grade) or the end of Spring Term (appealing a Spring-term grade) or at the end of a Summer Term (appealing a Summer-term grade) who desire to submit a grade appeal should write to the Department Chair and/or College Dean as soon as possible after noticing a grading issue.

**Procedures**

1. To initiate a grade appeal, the student must download and complete the Grade Appeal Form and submit the form with an attached written appeal to the instructor describing the reasons for the appeal. If the appropriate College Dean or his/her designee judges that the instructor of record is inaccessible, the student may initiate the appeal with the department chair. The student's written appeal must include a detailed explanation of the errors in the grading process. Normally, the appeal will include specific examples as evidence.

*Grounds for Grade Appeal may include the following:*

- a. The Instructor did not explain how the final grade was determined.
- b. Grading that results from a substantial departure from the instructor's previously announced standards.
- c. Grading based on anything other than the student's performance in the course.
- d. Discrimination or prejudice.
- e. Error in calculating the grade.
- f. Arbitrary grade assignment (the lack of consistent and equitable standards for grade assignment).



2. The instructor has 10 working days to respond in writing to the grade appeal indicating either approval or denial of the appeal.
3. In the event the instructor denies the appeal or fails to respond in writing, and the student wishes to pursue the matter further, the student shall submit the written appeal to the department chair of the program where the course is offered with any further clarifications and/or contentions the student chooses to add to the original appeal. This action must be taken within 10 working days of the time the instructor informs the student of the denial or if the instructor does not respond, the student can initiate this step with the department chair. The department chair will, on receipt of the written appeal from the student, constitute a Grade Appeal Committee within 15 working days.
4. The Grade Appeal Committee shall be appointed by the chair in consultation with the student and instructor and consist of one faculty member from the involved department, one faculty member from outside the involved department, and the Vice-President of the Associated Students or his/her designee. The department chair shall, in consultation with the instructor and student, appoint the chair of the Grade Appeal Committee. In cases in which a Grade Appeal Committee is constituted to hear multiple appeals of capricious grading from students in the same class, the Committee Members must take actions to ensure confidentiality/privacy of each student and render an independent decision for each case.
5. The Committee Chair should contact the AVPAA for orientation of their duties with respect to this policy and procedure. Other committee members may join the orientation. The Committee Chair is responsible to (1) Manage the appeal documents, (2) Adhere to the timeline, and in consultation with the committee members, (3) Write the final report for submission to the Department Chair.
6. The duties of the Grade Appeal Committee shall be completed within 20 working days from the date constituted. This committee shall be provided with all prior written correspondence from the student and instructor related to the grade appeal. The Committee will review the written documents provided by the student and the faculty member.

### **Results of a Grade Appeal**

The grade appeal shall be dismissed by the Grade Appeal Committee if:

- a. The student has not provided the instructor with written notification, or
  - b. The appeal was not submitted in accordance with the time limitations, or
  - c. The allegations do not meet the standard of capricious grading as defined above.
7. After review of the provided documentation, the Committee will take one of the following actions:
    - a. Judge that the appeal has no merit and so inform the student and instructor in writing, in which case the appeal process is ended,



Or

- b. Judge that there is a reasonable doubt regarding the correctness of the grade and, in this event, initiate a hearing.

### **Hearing Procedures**

8. In the event a hearing is initiated, the Committee shall investigate and discuss the matter with the student and instructor involved. Both student and instructor shall be entitled to be present throughout the hearing and to present evidence, including testimony by other persons. The student and instructor may be accompanied by a person from the University faculty or student body to assist them in presenting evidence. The hearing shall not be open to the public. At the close of the hearing, the Committee shall deliberate privately. The chair shall ensure that the following procedures are employed in the conduct of the hearing:

- a. Efforts may be made to resolve the matter by extra-procedural settlement at any time.
- b. The student shall first make an opening statement by presenting evidence which the student believes constitutes legitimate grounds for the grade appeal. After the student presents evidence in support of the grade appeal, the instructor may present rebuttal evidence.
- c. After presentation of the evidence, the non-committee members may be excused so the Grade Appeal Committee members may deliberate.
- d. Following the private deliberations of the Committee, the Committee chair shall, in writing, inform the student, instructor, and department chair of its findings. The report of the vote should reflect the Committee members' opinions and include a rationale for the decision. The report is submitted to the student, instructor, and department chair, Dean, and AVP Academic Affairs. The majority opinion of the Committee members shall prevail.
- e. If the Committee finds that there is a compelling reason to approve the grade appeal, the instructor is expected to change the grade to the grade recommended by the Committee.
- f. In the event the instructor chooses not to change the grade, the department chair shall be vested with the authority and required to inform the Enrollment Services Office in writing to change the original grade to the grade recommended by the Committee. The transcript shall reflect that the grade was changed because of administrative action.

9. After committee members sign the grade appeal form, the Committee Chair submits the grade appeal form to the department chair. The department chair signs and routes grade appeal form for signature to the College Dean, who signs and should route the grade appeal form to the AVPAA for final approval, signature, and recordkeeping. The AVPAA shall notify Enrollment Services of the new grade as soon as practical so a graduation clearance can be granted.



10. If the department chair is the instructor of record, or serves in lieu of the instructor, the appropriate College Dean or his/her designee shall assume the responsibilities normally discharged by the chair.

11. In the event the student or instructor alleges that improper grade appeal procedures were employed, the appropriate College Dean or his/her designee shall investigate and take corrective action, if improprieties have occurred.

12. The Committee is not authorized to reprimand or otherwise take disciplinary action against the instructor. Evidence put before the Committee shall be admissible in any disciplinary proceedings which may thereafter be undertaken against the instructor, but the disciplinary body shall make an independent determination of whether that evidence and any other information before that body constitutes sufficient proof of the conduct charged.

13. No actions of the Grade Appeal Committee shall abridge or restrict any of the established procedures available to the instructor to raise grievances before the Faculty Affairs Committee or through CSU grievance procedures.

14. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her designee shall annually provide a written summary of grade appeals to the CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate and President.

### **Winter and Summer Appeals for Graduating Students**

Students graduating at the end of Fall Term (appealing a Fall-term grade) or the end of Spring Term (appealing a Spring-term grade) or at the end of a Summer Term (appealing a Summer-term grade) who chose to submit a grade appeal should write to the Department Chair and/or College Dean as soon as possible after noticing a grading issue. A grade with this special circumstance may only be appealed within four weeks after the date grades are due by faculty or, if later, when the grade is submitted. When an appeal is begun, the student shall notify Enrollment services that they are appealing a grade. If the appeal is during the Spring term (for appealing a Fall grade), the standard procedures shall be followed, with the expectation of a timely conclusion for the student graduating in Spring.

The Department Chair or Dean shall follow the procedures outlined above with the following modifications for winter and summer. The grade appeal committee shall be composed of a Department Chair from outside the affected department, the home-department Chair, and a student representative selected by ASI. If the Grade Appeal comes from a student in a course taught by the Department Chair, that department chair shall notify the College dean a committee Chair shall be designated by the Dean of the student's College.

Specific questions regarding Grade Appeal Procedures should be addressed to the Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs, whose office is in the Mary Stuart Rogers Building, Suite 360. Students may also call (209) 667-3031 or email [academicprograms@csustan.edu](mailto:academicprograms@csustan.edu).



The grade appeal procedures are included in the [Academic Catalog](#) in the Academic Policies, Procedures and Standards section. This policy follows requirements as indicated in Executive Order 1037.

This policy will be reviewed five years after approval.

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Approved by President Ellen Junn on **05/02/23**