



# California University of Pennsylvania

## **Graduate School POLICY: Appealing a Grade or Other Academic Decision**

### **A. Purpose & Scope**

To define for students, faculty and administration the academic appeal process.

### **B. Definition(s)**

### **C. Policy**

University decisions are based on applicable policies, rational procedures, and sound decision-making principles. Concerning a student's grade, it must be understood that it is not the policy of the administration to change a properly assigned grade, i.e., one based upon recorded grades for quizzes, exams, assignments, projects, and other grade criteria as indicated on the course syllabus or outline.

However, when a student alleges violations of sound academic grading procedures, the University administration and faculty mutually support a student appeal procedure, which gives both the student and the faculty member a fair process to substantiate and/or refute those allegations.

In the case of other academic decisions, the student should follow the same appeal procedure insofar as possible. In matters relating to student conduct and discipline, the Vice President for Student Development has authority to review student appeals. In matters relating to financial aid, see the section on Financial Aid in the graduate catalog; in matters relating to teacher certification, see the relevant section in this catalog.

### **D. Procedure(s)**

In appealing a grade, a student should first contact the faculty member who issued that grade to discuss the reason for the grade. If the student is not satisfied with the faculty member's explanation, the student should then contact the faculty member's department chairperson or program coordinator. This contact must be in writing and must be filed with the chairperson or program coordinator within thirty working days after the beginning of the fall or spring semester following the term in which the grade in question was given. The chairperson or program coordinator shall notify in writing the student and faculty member of his/her receipt of the appeal from the student.

If accord is not reached through the chairperson or program coordinator, the student may then appeal to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research. Such appeal must be in writing and must be filed with the dean within 15 working days from the date of the final written determination of the chairperson or program coordinator. The dean shall notify in writing the student and faculty member of his/her findings and decision within 15 working days of his/her receipt of the appeal from the student. The final source of appeal is the Provost. This final step should be taken only if there is no possibility for resolution at an earlier stage, and only if the student is convinced that arbitrary and/or capricious standards were applied. The appeal to the Provost must be in writing and must be filed with the Provost within 15 working days from the date of the final written determination of the dean. The Provost shall review the matter and take action as necessary to provide equity in the situation.

**E.     Effective date:** 2005-2006 Graduate Catalog  
**Updated date:** August 15, 2010  
**Amended Date:**