



California University of Pennsylvania

POLICY: Appealing a Grade or Other Academic Decision

A. Purpose & Scope:

To describe the policy and procedure for appealing a grade or other academic decision at the undergraduate level

B. Definition(s):

Administration: The collective group of academic and student affairs administrative officers.

Arbitrary: Based on or subject to individual judgment or preference

Capricious: Governed or characterized by impulse or whim

C. Policy:

University decisions are based upon 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 – that is, 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 that gives both the student and the faculty member a fair process to substantiate and/or refute those allegations.

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. This contact must be in writing and must be filed with the chairperson within 30 working days after the beginning of the fall or spring semester following the term in which the grade in question was given. The chairperson 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.

If accord is not reached through the chairperson, the student may then appeal to the college dean. Such an 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. 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.

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, review Financial Aid policies. In matters relating to teacher certification, review College of Education and Human Services policies. In matters relating to transfer credits, contact the Articulation and Transfer Office.

E. Effective date: 2005-2006 Undergraduate Catalog

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