



## POLICY

**Title:** Grade Appeals

### Policy Statement

The University of Vermont is committed to an environment in which the quality of students' work is evaluated fairly, and in which students have the right to discuss and review their academic performance with their instructors.

### Reason for the Policy

This policy is designed to establish consistently administered procedures for grade appeals.

### Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to all University of Vermont students.

### Definitions

Semester: For the purposes of this policy, a semester is defined as either the fall term or the spring term; and does not include the summer term or winter session.

Unfair grade: For the purposes of this policy, an unfair grade is one that is the product of blatantly inconsistent or clearly inappropriate application of standards, or is inconsistent with criteria laid out in the course syllabus.

### Procedures

#### 1. The Procedure:

- A. A student who believes that s/he has received an unfair course grade should first contact the Registrar's Office to verify that the grade submitted by the instructor is the same grade the Registrar has recorded. If the grade has been recorded correctly, the student should next contact the instructor. The instructor shall meet with the student, and consider the student's reasons for thinking the grade unfair. The instructor shall inform the student of the results of his or her consideration.
- B. If, after hearing from the instructor, the student still believes that the grade is unfair, the student may ask to discuss the matter with the head (hereafter referred to as the Chair) of the program that offered the course. The Chair, or the Chair designate in academic units that do not have chairs, shall meet with the student. The Chair may discuss the matter with the instructor and may also seek advice from other faculty members. The Chair may not change the grade, but the instructor may choose to do so after

discussing matters with the Chair. The instructor shall inform the student about whether s/he has decided to change the grade.

- C. If, after being informed of the instructor's decision, the student still believes that the grade is unfair; the student may take up the matter with the Dean of the school or college offering the course. In this case, the student must prepare a written statement explaining why she or he believes that the grade in question is unfair. The student should include any documentation that may support this position.
- D. After reviewing the student's statement, the Dean may discuss the matter with the student, the instructor and/or the Chair. The Dean can also invite the instructor to submit a statement. The Dean shall consider both statements, and may seek input from the student and/or the instructor, and advice from other faculty. The Dean may also decide to hold a meeting at which both the student and instructor can respond to the other's written statements, and to any questions the Dean wishes to pose to them. If the Dean determines that there is no merit to the appeal, the Dean shall inform the student that the grade will stand. This ends the appeal process.
- E. If the Dean determines that there may be merit to the appeal, the Dean may refer the case to the faculty committee responsible for student academic review within the instructor's unit. This committee would review the substance of the case and make recommendations regarding whether a grade change would be appropriate. The committee would have the authority, after a thorough review of all relevant assignments and related materials, to assign an appropriate grade or allow the student to accept a pass in the course rather than a letter grade.

Note: In all meetings with the instructor, Chair or Dean that are part of this appeals process; the student may bring a support person of his or her choice other than legal counsel.

## 2. Deadlines:

- I. The following deadlines must be observed by the student who wishes to appeal a grade (though extensions may be granted by the Dean of the college or school offering the course): The student should contact the instructor as soon as possible, and no later than the tenth day of instruction of the semester immediately following the assignment of the grade in question (see the definition of a semester above).
- II. If, after being notified of the results of part A of the process, the student wishes to proceed to part B, s/he should contact the Chair within ten instructional days of being notified of the results of part A. If, after being notified of the results of part B, the student wishes to pursue part C, s/he should contact the Dean within fifteen instructional days of being notified of the results part B.
- III. The following deadlines must be observed by the instructor, Chair and Dean. The instructor, Chair and Dean should set up meetings at the first mutually convenient time after the student's request. Following part A of the above procedure, the instructor should notify the student of the result within five instructional days.

Following part B, the instructor should notify the student of the result within five instructional days. Following part D, the Dean should notify the student within fifteen instructional days. If the appeal is referred to the unit academic review committee, that committee shall have 30 calendar days to convene a meeting, and must notify the student of its decision no later than five instructional days after the meeting.

### Summary of Procedures and Deadlines:

Part	Action	Student Deadline	Institutional Deadline
Part A1	Student verifies grade with Registrar	No later than 10 <sup>th</sup> instructional day of the immediately following semester	
Part A2	Student contacts Instructor to discuss grade	No later than 10 <sup>th</sup> instructional day of the immediately following semester	Instructor responds within 5 days of student meeting
Part B <i>(if no resolution from Part A2)</i>	Student contacts Chair to appeal Instructor decision	Within 10 instructional days of outcome of Part A2	Instructor responds within 5 days of Chair discussion
Part C <i>(if no resolution from Part B)</i>	Student contacts Dean to appeal Instructor/Chair decision	Within 15 instructional days of outcome of Part B	
Part D <i>(if no resolution from Part C)</i>	Dean consultation (appeal may end here)		Dean responds within 15 instructional days
Part E <i>(if no resolution from Part D)</i>	Faculty review committee (if Dean advances appeal); decision is final		30 days to convene meeting; 5 post-meeting instructional days to notify student

### 3. Exceptions:

- I. If the course is offered through a program rather than through a department, the director of that program takes the place of the department Chair. If the course is not offered through a department or a program with a director, the student may proceed directly to the Dean as set out in step C above.
- II. If the instructor is not teaching at the University during the semester in which the grade appeal takes place, the student may contact the Chair directly.
- III. If the instructor is no longer employed by the University, the Chair may send the appeal to the unit academic review committee to determine if a grade change is appropriate.
- IV. If the student does not take any courses on campus during the semester immediately following the assignment of the grade in question, but does take courses during a future semester (e.g., in cases of study abroad), the deadline for discussing the grade with the instructor is the tenth day of instruction of

the next semester (see the definition of a semester above) in which the student takes classes on campus, or 18 months regardless of on-campus enrollment status, whichever comes first.

- V. If the process is begun in the semester in which the grade was given, and all steps cannot be completed before the term ends, the process will continue into the following semester. In the case of fall to spring, winter session will not be included. In the case of spring to fall, summer session will not be included.

## Contacts

<b>Questions concerning the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to the following (in accordance with the policy elaboration and procedures):</b>	
<b>Title(s)/Department(s):</b>	<b>Contact Information:</b>
The Dean of the academic unit in which the course was taught	

## Forms/Flowcharts/Diagrams

- None

## Related Documents/Policies

- None

## Regulatory References/Citations

- None

## Training/Education

Training will be provided on an as-needed basis as determined by the Approval Authority or the Responsible Official.

## About This Policy

<b>Responsible Official:</b>	Provost and Senior Vice President	<b>Approval Authority:</b>	President
<b>Policy Number:</b>	V.2.16.3	<b>Effective Date:</b>	February 21, 2018
<b>Revision History:</b>	V. 2.16.2/V. 3.1.1.2 effective August 19, 2013 V. 3.1.1.1 approved June 20, 2006		