

# Grading & Grade Review / Grade Appeals Process

Only the instructor of the course has the responsibility and authority to judge the quality of a student's work and assess the appropriate grade. The grading policy employed in a class, including the comparative weight of each component used to determine the final grade, is outlined in the syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to read and comply with the grading policy outlined in the syllabus. The instructor must review the basis of an assigned grade with an inquiring student and correct the grade if an error is found. Perceived or actual differences in grading policies or standards between instructors, which are not a violation of College policies, are not a basis for review.

NOTE: This grade review procedure does not apply to instances where students have been assigned grades based on academic dishonesty or academic misconduct, which are included in Ringling College's Academic Policies and Procedures. Also excluded from this procedure are grade reviews alleging violations of the policies on Nondiscrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Harassment, which shall be referred to the appropriate office at Ringling College as required by law and by Ringling College policy.

## STEP 1: Instructor Grade Review (Required)

Instructor Grade Review Process for Final Semester Grades

### Student Responsibility

Students who have questions about final grades for the semester are required to contact their instructor by e-mail or in writing and request a review of the grade no later than 10 days after final grades are posted on to determine if an error has been made

### Instructor Responsibility

The instructor must respond to the student within 10 days of being contacted by the student and explain to the student how the grade was determined.

If an error was made in calculating the grade, the instructor submits a grade change request to the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services.

If no resolution is achieved, and if the student believes that: the composition of the semester grade conflicts with the grading policy stated in the syllabus, a clerical error exists, or the grade was given arbitrarily, with capriciousness or with prejudice, he or she may go to Step Two and request an additional meeting with the Department Head or Program Director and the instructor to formally appeal the final semester grade.

## STEP 2: Formal Appeal Process for Final Semester Grade

Department Head or Program Director Grade Review for Final Semester Grades

NOTE: The Instructor Grade Review MUST be concluded before initiating the Formal Grade Appeal process.

## Student Responsibility

The request for a formal grade appeal of a semester grade must be filed with the student's Academic Advisor in the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services no later than 10 days after contact with the instructor. The "Grade Appeal" form can be requested from the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services.

There are three reasons a student may request this review:

1. The student believes that the grade received conflicts with the grading policy on the syllabus.
2. The student believes that there is an error in calculation with the grade.
3. The student believes that the grade was given arbitrarily, or with capriciousness or prejudice.

## Academic Advisor's Responsibility

The Academic Advisor notifies the Department Head or Program Director of the grade appeal and sets up the meeting between the student, instructor of the course, Department Head / Program Director, and has a notetaker for the meeting.

## Department Head or Program Director's Responsibility

The Department Head or Program Director must inform the instructor of the substance of the student's grade appeal request. The instructor of the course shall forward the following information to the Department Head or Program Director:

A copy of the course syllabus outlining assignments, tests, and examinations, along with their respective weights to the final grade calculation. The student's grades for all tests and assignments. A demonstration of the calculations by which the final grade was determined.

The Department Head / Program Director may also request any other appropriate documentation; however, the Department Head or Program Director's role is not to regrade the work completed for the course.

The meeting with the department head or program director and instructor of the course must be held before or during the Drop / Add Week of the following semester. At the conclusion of this meeting the grade appeal is over and the decision of the course instructor is final.

NOTE: If the instructor is the Department Head or Program Director, the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his or her designee will review the grade.

## STEP 3: Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) Panel

If in the opinion of the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his / her designee, it appears that prejudicial, capricious, or arbitrary behavior may have occurred, the VPAA may convene a panel consisting of three full-time faculty members, the Vice President of Student Life and Dean of Students, or designee, and a representative from Human Resources. Faculty appointees to the panel must not have any apparent conflicts of interest with the instructor or the student. Through its review of all documentation and inquiries, the panel is charged to determine whether the grade was assigned in a fair and appropriate manner, or whether clear and convincing evidence of unfair treatment such as arbitrariness, capriciousness or prejudice might justify changing the grade. The VPAA shall receive the recommendation of the panel, review the documentation, and make additional inquiries if necessary before reaching a decision. After such review, the decision of the VPAA is final.

Should a student want to appeal an issued grade, "Final Semester Grade Appeal" forms are available at the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services. The College requires the Instructor Grade Review

Process for Final Semester Grades be completed before the “Grade Appeal” form is requested and filed with the Academic Advisor in the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the student must submit a “Grade Appeal” form to the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services no later than 10 days after contacting the instructor of the course.