



These top fields will be completed by the SOGCE office.
Academic Year: * 23-24 SGOCE#: * 21

Graduate New/Change Policy Proposal

Form Procedure

To share the form with others prior to Submitting choose the **Save Progress** option at the bottom.

Create a PDF of the saved form go to Print and choose Save as PDF copy rather than print.

To access the saved form for editing or to finalize submission visit forms.fitchburgstate.edu to log in and view your Pending/Drafts under My Forms.

Department/Committee Information

The main contact person for the Graduate Curriculum Committee should fill out this form.

Requestor Name: * Becky Copper Glenz

Members of the Graduate Curriculum Committee or Department requesting this change:

This group is part of: An Academic Department An Administrative Department

Administrative Department

Department: * SGOCE

Are you the Head of the Department Above? * Yes, I am the Head of the Department Above. I will enter the name and email address of our Department Head.

Program Chair The Program Chair for this request is among the people listed above.
* Yes No N/A

Policy Information

This proposal is to a Policy that is:

* New Policy Policy Change

Describe the New Policy or Policy Change:

* This is a revised grade appeal policy.

Briefly describe new policy or change to existing policy as it will appear in university catalog (if a policy change please provide current and proposed versions):

* See Attached File.
Proposed Policy
Grade Appeal
The instructor is the primary authority with respect to a student's proficiency and final grade in a course. A student who believes that their final grade reflects an erroneous, capricious, arbitrary, or prejudiced academic evaluation may appeal the grade. The academic judgment used in determining the merits of the grade to be awarded shall not be reviewable. This process does not apply to instances in which a student's grade is based on findings of academic dishonesty, which are addressed through the Academic Integrity Policy.
Students should make every effort to resolve questions with their course instructor about grades prior to going through a grade appeal process. A grade appeal should be pursued only after all other efforts for resolution with the instructor have been exhausted.
Students submitting a grade appeal must provide evidence that they have tried to resolve their grading question with the instructor prior to submitting an appeal. The student submitting the appeal is responsible for developing and presenting the case for changing a grade.
Grade Appeal Steps
The appeal must be submitted within 30 days of the assigned grade.
The appeal should be submitted using the student petition form and should include all relevant facts including but not limited to: evidence that the student has connected with the instructor to resolve the questions prior to submitting an appeal, a

statement of the grounds for the appeal; the desired outcome from the appeal; summary and documentation of the appeal; name(s) of the faculty or administrator(s) involved in the appeal as well as their responses and decisions; and supporting documents.

The appeal should be emailed to gce@fitchburgstate.edu. Attach the petition form and all supporting documentation. The appeal will be forwarded on to the student's program chair for review.

The program chair will have up to 15 working days to review the appeal. The chair will forward their decision to the SGOCE Dean's office via email to gce@fitchburgstate.edu. The SGOCE Dean's office will then forward the student an overview of the outcome which will include a rationale for the decision.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the program chair, they can submit a final review request to the Academic Dean of their School. The student should forward the appeal and supporting documentation along with a summary of why they are appealing the decision made by the program chair. These materials can be emailed to gce@fitchburgstate.edu for processing. The academic dean will respond within 15 working days of receiving the appeal after conducting a thorough investigation of the evidence provided by the student. The instructor will also be asked to submit any related evidence for review. The response will include a rationale for the decision.

All decisions made by the academic dean are final. This concludes the grade appeal process.

Non-Academic Student Complaints

When sexual harassment, racial discrimination or other prohibited/illegal behaviors are alleged by a student to have occurred, the student should address their complaint to the director of human resources/Affirmative Action.

Rationale and expected outcomes for new policy or change to existing policy:

This policy reflects the current practice and better clarifies the steps for all parties involved. The current policy is not accurate and does not align with the process that is used to address grade appeals. This new policy is representative of policies used at similar institution types.

Implementation plan (what semester will new policy/policy change begin; will change be phased in)

The new policy will be in place for the catalog year 2024-2025

Attach suggested execution or other supporting files not included in your text above.

New Policy for Grade Appeals 1.19.24.docx

Attach any letter (s) of support from professional agencies or others within or outside the university.

Signatures

...3631333430

Becky Copper Hlenz 03/21/2024
Requester Signature Date

...3438373730

Becky Copper Hlenz 03/21/2024
SGOCE Dean Signature Date

Graduate Council

The Graduate Council Chair Signature indicates that the Council has discussed this proposal and has decided it should move forward.

Notifications

Graduate Council Chair Signature Date

SGOCE Dean Initials Date

Reviewed by the Registrar: Date

Approval of the President Date

Grade Appeal Policy Change Request - SGOCE - 1.19.24 - Submitted by Becky Copper-Glenz

Rationale for the change – The current policy does not reflect the current process used to manage grade appeals and does not separate the grade appeal process from other types of complaints. This update clarifies what the process is, defines the roles of each office or position and sets an expectation for a review and decision timeline. It is important that this process is clear and transparent to assist all parties through the process.

The proposed policy is based on a review of similar policies at other institutions including the other MA State Universities. It is also based on a review of our current policy and the process that is used for grade appeals. **(In- Process)** *The proposed policy has been shared with SGOCE program chairs, the School Dean's and members of the Provost Council for review and feedback prior to being submitted to the Graduate Council. See Page 3 for Proposed Policy.*

Current Policy

Student Complaints Policy

Right to Confer

- A student who is dissatisfied with a grade or any aspect of instruction has a right to confer with the instructor.
- A student who is dissatisfied with a grade, any aspect of instruction, or academic decision of a graduate program bearing on their status in a graduate program, has a right to confer with their advisor.
- A student who is dissatisfied with a grade, any aspect of instruction, or academic decision of a graduate program bearing on their status in a graduate program, has a right to confer with the program's graduate program chair and department chair.
- A student seeking advice on how to proceed with a complaint about a grade, any aspect of instruction, or academic decision of a graduate program bearing on their status in a graduate program, has a right to confer with the dean of graduate and continuing education. International students also have a right to confer with the Office of International Education.

Department/Program Responsibilities

- Departments/programs will make their policies and procedures for mediating/arbitrating student complaints readily available to students as a part of a department/program handbook, or, as a separate document.
- Entering matriculated students will be apprised of the department's/program's policies and procedures for mediating/arbitrating student complaints as a part of their orientation to the program.
- Each department/program will file its policies and procedures for mediating/arbitrating student complaints with the office of the dean of graduate and continuing education.

- Every effort should be made by the graduate program chair, in accordance with department/program policies and procedures, to informally mediate student complaints concerning academic matters.
- If informal mediation cannot be achieved, the complaint will be formally arbitrated at the department/program level in accordance with its policies and procedures for doing so. Usually, this will involve the participation of the department's Graduate Committee.
- The burden of proof rests with the student.
- Departmental/program decisions may be appealed on procedural grounds when bias is alleged.

Dean of an Academic School or School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education Responsibilities

- A student alleging bias may contest a department's/program's decision on procedural grounds by filing a formal appeal in writing to the dean of their school or dean for the school of graduate, online and continuing education.
- The dean's office will conduct an investigation in a timely manner, and will forward its findings and the student's written appeal, to the Graduate Council.
- The Graduate Council will consider the appeal at its next available meeting.
- Within two weeks of the meeting, the chair of the Graduate Council will forward a written recommendation to the dean.
- The dean, then, will communicate a decision in writing to the student, the Graduate Council, and the graduate program chair.
- The final decision is made by the dean.
- If it is decided that the department/program failed to appropriately follow its procedures for mediating/arbitrating student complaints, the case will be reheard within the department with the dean serving ex officio as a nonvoting member of the committee.
- If it is decided that the department/program was unbiased—that it appropriately followed its procedures for mediating/arbitrating student complaints—the department's/program's decision will stand.

Non-Academic Student Complaints

- When sexual harassment, racial discrimination or other prohibited/illegal behaviors are alleged by a student to have occurred, the student should address their complaint to the director of human resources/Affirmative Action.

Proposed Policy

Grade Appeal

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Grade Appeal Steps

1. The appeal must be submitted within 30 days of the assigned grade.
2. The appeal should be submitted using the [student petition form](#) and should include all relevant facts including but not limited to: evidence that the student has connected with the instructor to resolve the questions prior to submitting an appeal, a statement of the grounds for the appeal; the desired outcome from the appeal; summary and documentation of the appeal; name(s) of the faculty or administrator(s) involved in the appeal as well as their responses and decisions; and supporting documents.
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4. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the program chair, they can submit a final review request to the Academic Dean of their School. The student should forward the appeal and supporting documentation along with a summary of why they are appealing the decision made by the program chair. These materials can be emailed to gce@fitchburgstate.edu for processing. The academic dean will respond within 15 working days of receiving the appeal after conducting a thorough investigation of the evidence provided by the student. The instructor will also be asked to submit any related evidence for review. The response will include a rationale for the decision.

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