

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
The University of Texas at Arlington

POLICY DOCUMENT

TITLE: GRIEVANCES RELATED TO OFFICIAL COURSE GRADES

DOCUMENT NUMBER: 1

This document was approved by majority vote of the
College of Engineering Leadership Council



Dean of Engineering and
Chairperson, Leadership Council

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Date

The University of Texas at Arlington

GRIEVANCES RELATED TO OFFICIAL COURSE GRADES

ARTICLE -I INTRODUCTION

The instructor of a course has the primary responsibility for the assignment of grades. Appeals of the official grade assigned to a student for a course will not, therefore, be considered at levels above the instructor unless a student offers evidence of:

1. Differential Treatment
2. Grading and Procedural Irregularities.

NOTES:

1. A disagreement with the judgment of the instructor is not a valid basis for an appeal.
2. Grievances based on acts of all discrimination cases must be referred to Human Resources.

ARTICLE- II RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSTRUCTOR

Near the outset of a course, the instructor should explain the practices to be followed in the conduct of the course (e.g., grading, absences, and academic dishonesty). The instructor should then ensure that the grading policies are uniformly applied to all students in the class. If a teaching assistant is employed to aid in grading, the instructor will oversee the assistant's practices.

All instructors are required to maintain the records used in computing final course grades for a minimum of one year after submission to the Office of Records and Registration. The instructor is also required to participate in the appeal process outlined below. If the instructor is to be away from campus from extended periods of during the succeeding year, the course records must be collected and deposited in the departmental chairperson's office. All instructors (part-time and full-time) should deposit their grading policies and records at the end of each term of employment.

If a grade appeal process begins and if additional documentation is requested from the instructor during any stage of review of the grade grievance, then the instructor must provide the documentation requested within 10 business days. Failure to supply the requested material may be considered as a cause for a finding in the student's favor.

ARTICLE -III RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT

A student who wishes to submit a grievance, in accordance to **ARTICLE -I**, against an Engineering Department instructor's assignment of an official course grade must follow the formal process described below.

Grade Grievance Process for Student

Step 1. The student must first discuss the grade with the instructor who issued the grade. This step must be taken promptly.

NOTE: The deadline for filing a grievance is one (1) year from the date that grades are posted.

Step 1a. If the instructor is unavailable, the student may proceed in the appeal process and discuss the matter with the departmental chairperson responsible for the course for which the grade is being appealed.

Step 2. In the event the student and the instructor are unable to reach agreement or the instructor is unavailable, the student must complete the Student Grade Appeal Form shown in the Appendix. The form is available in the Dean's Office, department offices, as well as on the College of Engineering's website.

Step 3. The form, along with any supporting material that the student chooses to append, is to be submitted to the departmental chairperson or his/her designee, preferably in electronic format.

Step 4. If additional documentation is requested from the student during any stage of review of the grade grievance, then the student must provide the documentation requested within 10 business days for the appeal process to continue.

The appeal process then follows the steps given in the succeeding articles of the document.

ARTICLE-IV RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENTAL CHAIRPERSON

Step 1. The chairperson of the department responsible for the course will perform the initial review of the student's grade appeal. The chairperson will review the appeal for evidence of one or more of the two permissible grounds for a grade appeal that were cited above. The chairperson will also review the accuracy and completeness of the student's appeal. The chairperson will consult with the instructor who assigned the grade and may interview the student, although the intent is for the grade appeal document and its attachment to be the principal vehicle for conducting the interview.

Step 2. The chairperson of the department will appoint an advisory committee of three faculty members from the department. The committee should consist of at least two members of the standing departmental Grade Grievance Committee elected by the department's faculty.

NOTE: Each department will elect members -- referred to as standing members -- to serve on the advisory committee that department Chair forms to review the grade grievance. Elections will be by closed ballot and the elected members will serve for a maximum of two academic years. Each department may choose to elect the standing members as needed or on a basis of a recurring two-year cycle. A minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 standing members will be elected. From this group, one member will be selected by the department to serve on the College level Grade Appeal Panel for their term.

Step 3. The chairperson of the department and/or the Grade Grievance Committee will request documentation, if necessary, from the instructor and/or student. The instructor and/or student will provide documentation requested within 10 business days.

Step 4. Within 20 business days of the receipt of the grade appeal, excluding those periods when the university is not in session, the chairperson will communicate his/her decision to the student and instructor. If that decision is appealed by either the student or instructor within 10 business days, the appeal package will be submitted to the Associate Dean of Engineering for Academic Affairs with a recommendation by the chairperson including the summary from the departmental advisory committee for the disposition of the appeal.

ARTICLE-V RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSOCIATE DEAN OF ENGINEERING FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Upon receipt of a grade appeal, the Associate Dean will convene a Grade Appeal Panel made up of one faculty member from Standing Grade Grievance Committee of the major department or offering the course who for the case under consideration has not served on the advisory committee that the department Chair forms. Two additional members from the standing committees of departments other than the student's department will be selected by the Associate Dean for inclusion in the Panel. The Associate Dean will serve as a non-voting chairperson and recording secretary to coordinate the grade appeal review by the Panel. Upon completion of the review, the Associate Dean will prepare a letter to the Dean of Engineering stating the Panel's recommendation including the summary from the Grade Appeal Panel. This action will be completed within 20 business days of the receipt of the grade appeal, again excluding those times when the university is not in session.

ARTICLE-VI RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEAN OF ENGINEERING

The Dean will be responsible for making a final determination for a grade grievance based on either the College Grade Grievance process or with input from the Human Resources findings.

Upon receipt of the report from the Associate Dean, the Dean will review the recommendation of the College Grade Appeal Panel, the departmental chairperson's decision, including a summary from the Advisory Committee, and the student's appeal. The Dean's review will examine the procedures followed in addressing the grade appeal and the evidence, if any, of differential treatment, or procedural/grading irregularities.

For grade appeals based on discrimination filed through the Human Resources, the findings of Human Resources will serve as an advisory memorandum to the Dean of Engineering for his/her final decision.

Within 20 business days of the receipt of the either type of report, the Dean will communicate his/her decision via letters to the student and instructor. If the Dean supports the student's appeal, he/she will initiate appropriate action for resolution of the grievance. No further review of grade appeals is provided beyond the College of Engineering.

**ARTICLE –VII
IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

This document is effective on May 19, 2014 and will be subjected to a mandatory review no later than five years from this date.

APPENDIX

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
FORM FOR THE SUBMISSION OF
GRIEVANCES RELATED TO OFFICIAL COURSE GRADES

STUDENT INFORMATION
(Please type or print legibly)

Name: Last _____, First & MI _____
ID# _____ UTA E-mail: _____
Street _____ Major _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

GRIEVANCE INFORMATION

1. Have you attempted to resolve this dispute with your instructor?
Yes _____ No _____
(If your answer is NO to this question, and the instructor is available, this appeal will not be processed.)

2. Instructor's name _____

3. Course prefix, number, and section _____
Semester/Term _____ Year _____

4. What is the basis for your appeal? Recall that disagreement with the judgment of the instructor is not a valid basis for an appeal and that the only valid grounds are differential treatment, procedural/grading irregularities, or any form of discrimination. (Grievances based on discrimination will be referred to Human Resources.)

5. What specific action did you request from the instructor?

6. What was the outcome of your request to the instructor?

7. What specific actions(s) are you now appealing, and what remedy are you requesting?

Signature

Date