

ADVICE FOR STUDENTS ABOUT GRADE APPEALS

Should I file a grade appeal?

- Course grades assigned by instructors are presumed to be correct. If you appeal an assigned grade, you must demonstrate clerical error; capriciousness in the assignment of the grade; that a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability was requested and not appropriately provided; or that the grade was assigned in violation of the [Systemwide Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment & Retaliation, Sexual Misconduct, Dating & Domestic Violence, & Stalking Against Students](#). Otherwise, the judgment of the instructor is final.
- You should first seek to resolve the matter informally with the instructor. Sometimes the problem is just a mix-up of names, or a miscalculation. These errors can be corrected quickly if you bring them to the instructor's attention without assessing any blame.
- You should seek to resolve the matter with the Department Chair if you cannot find resolution with the instructor. You should give both the instructor and chair the opportunity to help you before you file a grade appeal.
- You should not appeal a grade because the final was very difficult or because most of the students in the class were given failing grades (or because most of the students were given "A" grades). You should not appeal because the instructor refused to discuss the homework or avoided answering questions in class or during office hours. You may wish to share these concerns with the department chair, but they are not grounds for appealing your grade.
- You should not appeal a grade because the instructor did not give partial credit, did not grade on a curve, did not allow calculators, did not distribute a review sheet, etc. These all relate to the instructor's style of teaching. If the instructor outlined their procedure on the course syllabus and/or applied it equally to all students, a grade appeal will not be successful.
- You should file a grade appeal if you can demonstrate that the instructor deviated from the syllabus.
- You should file a grade appeal if you can demonstrate that you were evaluated in a different manner than other students without good cause.

How does the process work?

- You, as well as any faculty, staff, or administrators involved in a grade appeal, have an obligation to make every effort to resolve the differences fairly and informally and to negotiate in good faith towards a mutually agreeable resolution of the problem.
- If you cannot resolve your grade dispute with the instructor, you should first try to informally resolve the matter with an individual at the next level. In most cases this will be the chair of the department in which the course was offered. If the chair was the instructor, meet with the dean of the college in which the course was offered. If the dean was the instructor, meet with the Provost.
- Make sure you document your meetings with the instructor and chair. You will be asked to provide proof you make the attempt to resolve the matter with the instructor and chair.
- At this point, if the dispute has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may file a formal grade appeal. You should start the grade appeal as soon as possible after the grade is reported. If it is necessary for you to file a formal grade appeal, you will need to do so no

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later than the published deadlines to the University Course Grade Appeal Committee through the Office of Student Success.

- The Chair of the University Course Grade Appeals Committee will forward your appeal to the instructor. The instructor will be required to respond in writing. The entire committee will then review your statement and the instructor's response. The committee will make a recommendation, and you will be notified in writing.
- You should keep a written record of phone contacts, email messages and meetings with university personnel to document your actions with respect to the appeal process.

What is a formal grade appeal?

A formal grade appeal is a file submitted to the University Course Grade Appeals Committee, through the Office of Student Success. The file should include:

- Your name, Bronco ID number, address, phone, and Cal Poly Pomona email address.
- The course number and title, the instructor's name, the term taken, the grade received, and the grade expected.
- A statement that provides a clear explanation of the error, prejudice, or capriciousness that occurred.
- Documentation that supports your explanation, such as a course syllabus or copies of assignments and exams.
- All of the required information and documentation must be provided before the deadline.

Any advice on preparing a formal grade appeal?

- Keep your statement simple. State what happened without adding your opinions. Be as specific as possible. For example, "He said on Thursday, October 1, during his office hours that female students should not take music" is better than "I don't think he likes female students."
- Avoid inflammatory remarks, such as, "This instructor should never teach again!"
- Do not just submit all the notes and assignments you completed for the class. Submit only work that supports your appeal. Your statement should explain how to interpret the documentation that you do include. It is helpful to the committee for you to include explanations such as, "The first midterm, dated October 1, 2020, demonstrates that the instructor did not follow the grading scheme outlined on the syllabus."

Where can I get more information?

- CSU Executive Order 1037 establishes minimum standards for campuses governing the assignment of grades by faculty and for provisions for appeal to ensure that the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students are properly recognized and protected. You can read it at <http://www.calstate.edu/eo/eo-1037.html>.
- The policies and procedures for grade appeals are in the University Catalog at <https://catalog.cpp.edu/> under Academic Policies.
- Questions about University policy should be referred to the Associate Provost, Office of Student Success at osspetitions@cpp.edu.

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