



CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

POLICY NO: 1605

POLICY ON GRADE APPEALS

Under the provisions of Executive Order 1037, “Grading Symbols, Minimum Standards Governing the Assignment of Grades, Policies on the Repetition of Courses, Policies on Academic Renewal, and Grade Appeals” and the University’s “Statement of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Grievance Procedures,” students may appeal grades that they consider to be unfair.

The Executive Order governs the assignment of grades by faculty and requires an appeal procedure to ensure that the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students are properly recognized and protected. Occasionally, a circumstance will prevent assignment of an earned grade or will cause an assigned grade to be questioned by a student.

The following policy has been adopted by Cal Poly Pomona to provide the mechanism to deal with such unusual occurrences:

- Course grades assigned by instructors are presumed to be correct. It is the responsibility of the student, who appeals an assigned grade to demonstrate clerical error, prejudice, or capriciousness in the assignment of the grade, or that a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability was requested and not appropriately provided; otherwise, the judgment of the instructor is final.
- A student who believes that a course grade has been assigned inappropriately must follow the proper steps in the appeal process, observing the time limits for completion of various steps in the process as follows:

Step 1a: The student should contact faculty/instructor in writing **within the first five weeks** of the semester following the assignment of the grade. Note: If the grade is assigned in the spring semester, the student should follow these procedures in the following fall semester. If the instructor is on leave, on sabbatical, or is not currently on the faculty including FERP faculty at the time of the appeal, the University shall attempt to contact the instructor on behalf of the student.¹

If a grade has been assigned in error, the instructor can quickly correct the error by submitting a Grade Change Request via the online grading system.

¹ The grade appeal process is suspended during the summer term when fewer students and faculty members are expected to be on campus. The grade appeal process is also suspended if the faculty member is on leave or on sabbatical. Thus, for spring semester, “the following semester” will be the following fall semester. For appeals of summer term grades, the following semester is the following fall semester. For appeals when the faculty member is either on leave or on sabbatical “the following semester” is the semester the faculty member returns to CPP.



Step 1b: If the grade dispute is not resolved with the instructor and the student intends to appeal the grade, the student must appeal to the next level as soon as possible, but **no later than the fifth week** of the following semester. In most cases, the student will appeal to the chair of the academic department that offered the class. If the instructor is a department chair, the student should appeal to the dean of the college that offered the class. If the instructor is a dean, the student should appeal to the Provost. The person to whom the student appealed will discuss the issue with the instructor and respond to the student, usually within two weeks.

Step 2: If the student is still not satisfied after receiving the response from this second level of appeal, the student may submit a formal grade appeal with supporting documentation no later than Friday of the 7th week of the semester term to the University Course Grade Appeal Committee through the Office of Student Success.

Step 3: The Chair of the University Course Grade Appeal Committee will forward the student's statement to the instructor. The instructor will submit a written response within 2 weeks in writing. The student's statement and the instructor's response will then be reviewed by the Grade Appeal committee, normally within two weeks of receipt of the instructor's response.

- The Committee will take one of the following actions:
 - a. Request additional information from the student and/or the instructor.
 - b. If the University Course Grade Appeal Committee finds that the student has grounds for complaint based on discrimination, caprice, or clerical error, then the instructor of record will be asked to reevaluate the grade. If the instructor refuses to reevaluate the grade or the instructor's reevaluation results in the same grade, then the chair of the academic department that offered the class shall be asked to find a qualified faculty member with academic training comparable to the instructor of record to evaluate the student's work and assign a grade. If the instructor is a department chair, the dean of the college that offered the class shall be asked to find a qualified faculty member with academic training comparable to the instructor of record to evaluate the student's work and assign a grade. If the instructor is a dean, the provost shall be asked to find a qualified faculty member with academic training comparable to the instructor of record to evaluate the student's work and assign a grade.
 - c. Recommend to the instructor that the grade be maintained as given.
 - d. Call for a formal hearing.

Step 4: When the Committee has made its recommendation, the student will be notified of it in writing, and be given a copy of the instructor's written response to the student's statement. This grade appeal procedure may take six to eight weeks to complete. The outcome of the formal grade appeal procedure is final; there is no higher level of appeal.

Additional information on preparing a written grade appeal is available from the Office of Student Success.