



**CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA  
POLICY NO: 1605**

**GRADE APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

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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”, 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 1) clerical error; 2) capriciousness in the assignment of the grade; 3) that a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability was requested and not appropriately provided; or 4) that the grade was assigned in violation of the Systemwide Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment & Retaliation, Sexual Misconduct, Dating & Domestic Violence, & Stalking Against Students<sup>1</sup>. Otherwise, the judgment of the instructor is final.
- A student who believes that a course grade has been assigned inappropriately must take action during the semester following assignment of the grade<sup>2</sup>, unless they allege that the grade was assigned in violation of the Systemwide Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment & Retaliation, Sexual Misconduct, Dating & Domestic Violence, & Stalking Against Students, in which case action should be taken after resolution of the systemwide procedure for handling such complaints<sup>1</sup>. Students must follow the proper steps in the appeal process, observing the time limits for completion of various steps in the process as follows:

Step 1: The student should communicate with the instructor in writing during the first 4 full weeks of the semester following the assignment of the grade. If the instructor is not currently on the faculty at the time of the appeal, the University shall attempt to contact the instructor on behalf of the student. If a grade has been assigned in error, the instructor can quickly correct the error by submitting a change of grade request to the Registrar’s Office Grade Change Request via the online grading system.

Step 2: If the grade dispute is not resolved with the instructor, and the student still intends to appeal the grade, the student must appeal to the next level as soon as possible, but no later than the fifth full week of the same semester. In most cases, the student should 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

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<sup>1</sup> Executive Order 1097 or its successor.

<sup>2</sup> The grade appeal process is suspended during the summer term when fewer students and faculty members are expected to be on campus. Thus, grade appeals for both spring and summer grades should take place during fall semester. The grade appeal process is also suspended while a faculty member is on leave or sabbatical and should instead take place the first semester that the faculty member is back.



whom the student appealed will discuss the issue with the instructor and respond to the student, usually within two weeks, but no later than the end of the 6th full week of the semester.

Step 3: If the student is still not satisfied after receiving the response from this second level of appeal, they may submit a formal grade appeal no later than the end of the 7th full week of the same semester to the University Course Grade Appeal Committee through the Office of Student Success. The University Course Grade Appeal Committee is constituted annually and is comprised of faculty appointed by the Academic Senate, a Student Success representative, a Student Affairs representative, and a student appointed by ASI. This committee will handle grade appeals in a manner compliant with FERPA and HIPAA regulations. Additional information on preparing a written grade appeal is available from the Office of Student Success.

Step 4: The Chair of the University Course Grade Appeal Committee will forward the student's statement to the instructor as soon as possible. The instructor will be asked to respond in writing by a specified date (normally within two weeks). The student's statement and the instructor's response will then be reviewed by the entire 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 clerical error, caprice, not receiving reasonable accommodation for a documented disability, or a violation of the Systemwide Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment & Retaliation, Sexual Misconduct, Dating & Domestic Violence, & Stalking Against Students, 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 does not meet the expectations of the committee, 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 to complete this task; and if the instructor is a dean, the Provost will be asked to find a qualified faculty member to complete this task.
- c. Recommend to the instructor that the grade be maintained as given.
- d. Call for a formal hearing.

Step 5: 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, and therefore should finish by the end of the 15th week. The outcome of the formal grade appeal procedure is final; there is no higher level of appeal. However, if there is an allegation of improper procedure, this may be reported to the Provost or their designee.

The University Course Grade Appeal Committee will submit a report detailing the number and disposition of cases heard to the President and the Academic Senate annually.