

Grade Appeals System

I. Adoption by the Faculty

The Faculty of Purdue University Calumet hereby adopts the following procedures for grade appeals pursuant to the authority delegated to its Faculty.

II. Preamble

- A. In the academic community, grades are a measure of student achievement toward fulfillment of course objectives. The responsibility for assessing student achievement and assigning grades rests with the instructor, and except for unusual circumstances, the course grade given is final.
- B. The Grade Appeals System affords recourse to a student who has evidence or believes that evidence exists to show that he or she has been assigned an inappropriate grade. Additionally, a student may challenge the reduction of a grade for alleged scholastic dishonesty.
- C. When the student is a graduate student who wishes to appeal a grade received in regular course work he or she may do so through the Grade Appeals System. However, a case involving the decision of a graduate examination committee, the acceptance of a graduate thesis, and the application of professional standards relating to the retention of a graduate student shall be handled by procedures authorized by the Graduate Council rather than the Grade Appeals System.
- D. In appealing a grade, the burden of proof is on the student, except in the case of alleged academic dishonesty, where the instructor must support the allegation.
- E. Each of the Schools of Purdue University Calumet shall establish a Grade Appeals Committee to conduct School grade appeals in accordance with the procedures described in this document, and to conduct the regular business of the Committee.
- F. A University Grade Appeals Committee shall be established with the authority to hear appeals of decisions rendered at the School level.
- G. The only University authorities empowered to initiate a grade change are the instructor or faculty member in charge of the course in question, and the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee.

III. Organization of the School Grade Appeals Committees

- A. Each of the multiple degree granting Schools of Purdue University Calumet shall establish a Grade Appeals Committee to conduct School grade appeals in accordance with the procedures described in this document, and to conduct the regular business of the Committee. Single degree granting Schools shall establish a Joint Grade Appeals Committee. Additionally, each of the multiple degree granting schools shall establish a Grade Appeals Screening Panel to review the validity of pending grade appeals. Single degree granting Schools shall collaboratively establish a Joint Grade Appeals Screening Panel.
- B. The Schools shall determine procedures to select two faculty from each of the departments within the School to serve on its School Grade Appeals Committee. Where Schools consist of a single degree granting unit, each unit shall appoint three members to serve on a Joint School Grade Appeals Committee. These faculty collectively shall constitute a School pool from which hearing panels shall be selected. Aside from selecting faculty from each department, each multiple degree granting School shall determine procedures to select the Chairperson of its School Grade Appeals Committee. Members of the Joint School Grade Appeals Committee shall determine procedures to select a Joint School Grade Appeals Committee Chairperson. School Grade Appeals Committees and Chairpersons shall be selected by May 1 and shall start their terms of service at the beginning of the fall semester.
- C. The Schools shall determine procedures to select one faculty member from each of the departments within the School to serve on its School Grade Appeals Screening Panel. Where Schools consist of a single degree granting unit, this unit shall appoint two members to serve on a Joint School Grade Appeals Screening Panel. No faculty shall serve on both the School Grade Appeals Committee and the School Grade Appeal Screening Panel at the same time. Additionally, each School Grade Appeals Screening Panel shall include one student member (from a different School) who will be assigned by the Student Government Association, Student Leadership Development Office, Office of Student Services, or the Graduate School Office. School Grade Appeals Screening Panels shall be selected by May 1 and shall start their terms of service at the beginning of the fall semester. The Chairperson of the School Grade Appeals Committee shall serve as Chairperson of the School Grade Appeals Screening Panel without vote.

- D. A School Grade Appeals hearing panel shall consist of three faculty and two student members. The Student Government Association annually will be asked by the faculty governance body to provide a pool of students for inclusion on both the School and University Appeals panels. This pool shall consist of 18 undergraduate students and 6 graduate students. In the event that additional students are required for the two appeals panels, the Student Leadership Development Office, Office of Student Services, or the Graduate School Office, and/or any school or academic department office shall be asked to provide student names for establishing the pool. The student pool shall be formed by September 15. In the event that there are not enough students in the pool to constitute a panel, the Panel Chairperson may recruit the students needed for the hearing panel. The status of the student members, undergraduate or graduate, shall correspond to the status of the appellant.
- E. Members of a hearing panel may be disqualified because of a potential conflict of interest. The Chairperson of the School Grade Appeals Committee shall make this determination. In no case shall a panel member (faculty or student) be selected from the same department as the instructor or the student involved. A substitute panel member shall be selected as necessary by the School Grade Appeals Chairperson.
- F. A hearing panel shall elect a Chairperson who shall be one of the faculty members of the panel.
- G. Each School Grade Appeals Committee shall submit an annual report to the University Grade Appeals Committee. The report shall consist only of the decision, date, and panel membership for each hearing.

IV. Organization of the University Grade Appeals Committee

- A. A University Grade Appeals Committee shall be established with the authority to hear appeals of decisions rendered at the School level. The University Grade Appeals Committee shall report to and be responsible to the Student Affairs Committee of the Purdue University Calumet Senate.
- B. The University Grade Appeals Committee shall consist of each of the School Grade Appeals Committee Chairpersons. The members shall serve staggered two-year terms. The members shall be selected no later than May 1 and shall start their terms of service at the beginning of the fall semester. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms. Initially, the terms shall be staggered by lot.
- C. At its last meeting of the academic year, the University Grade Appeals Committee shall elect one of its continuing members as Chairperson for the next academic year.
- D. The Chairperson shall establish a University Panel to address an appeal of a decision rendered by a School Hearing Panel. Each University Panel shall consist of three faculty members chosen from the University Grade Appeals Committee pool and two student members. The status of the student members, undergraduate or graduate, shall correspond to the status of the student involved. Student members of this panel shall be selected from the student pool. (See Section III. D.) In the event that there are not enough students in the pool to constitute a panel, the Chairperson may recruit the students needed for the hearing panel.
- E. Members of the University Panel may be disqualified because of a potential conflict of interest. The Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee shall make this determination. In no case shall a panel member (faculty or student) be selected from the same department as the instructor or the student involved. Also, none of the faculty or student members of the School Grade Appeals Committee Hearing Panel whose decision is being appealed shall be selected. The University Grade Appeals Chairperson shall select a substitute panel member as necessary.
- F. Each University Panel shall elect a faculty member to serve as Chairperson.
- G. The Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee may make appointments or fill vacancies under the following conditions:
 - 1. When an appointing authority fails to make an initial appointment within the specified time;
 - 2. When an appointing authority fails to fill a vacancy within seven calendar days of notification to do so by the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee;
 - 3. When one of the panel members is unable to serve.

- H. The University Grade Appeals Committee shall submit an annual report to the Student Affairs Committee. The report shall consist of the following:
1. A copy of each School Committee's annual report;
 2. An enumeration of appeals to the University Grade Appeals Committee that were denied a new hearing,
 3. A statement consisting only of the decision, date, and panel membership for each new hearing granted.

V. School Grade Appeals Procedures

- A. A student who wishes to appeal a grade must file a written notice of intention to appeal with the Chairperson of the Grade Appeals Committee of the School in which the course was taken. In the case of a single degree granting department schools written notice should be filed with the Chairperson of the Joint Schools Grade Appeals Committee. This must be done by the twenty-first calendar day from the start of classes of the regular semester following the semester in which the questioned grade was given. The written notice must include the date, course, section, semester, name of the course instructor, and a statement as to why the grade given was inappropriate. The School or Joint Schools Chairperson must forward a copy of this written notice immediately to the instructor **and the head of the department (or dean in single degree granting department schools).**
- B. In preparing an appeal, a student may seek assistance from the Chairperson of the Grade Appeals Committee or the Dean of Students.
- C. The student is expected to meet with the instructor and must meet with the head of the department (or dean in single degree granting department schools) through which the course was offered to attempt to resolve the grievance. These meetings must take place by the thirty-fifth calendar day from the start of classes. If a meeting with the department head (or dean) does not take place within the specified time, then the case is closed and the grade shall stand.
- D. If a mutually acceptable solution between student and instructor cannot be reached, then the student must return to the School or Joint School Committee Chairperson with a detailed written statement of allegations, facts, and circumstances. If the detailed statement is not submitted by the thirty-fifth calendar day from the start of classes, then the case is closed and the grade shall stand.
- E. After receipt of the student's detailed statement, the Chairperson shall promptly forward a copy of the statement to the instructor involved. The instructor may prepare a written statement responding to the student's allegations and submit it to the School or Joint School Committee Chairperson. If a written statement is prepared, the School or Joint School Committee Chairperson shall forward a copy to the student.
- F. The Chairperson shall convene the School Grade Appeals Screening Panel. In the case of single degree granting schools, a Joint Schools Grade Appeals Screening Panel will be convened. Members of the panel from the same department as the instructor and student involved shall not participate in the subject panel discussions and vote. The Chairperson shall select substitute panel members as necessary. The Chairperson shall submit a copy of the student's detailed statement and evidence, and the written statement from the instructor to the panel. The panel shall review the matter and decide if the appeal is valid based on Items 1 through 4 of Section V.J. of this document. If any panel member deems that the appeal may meet any of the cited items, then the appeal will move forward and a formal hearing will be scheduled. If the panel unanimously determines that the appeal is not valid based on any of the cited items, then the case is closed and the grade shall stand. The School Grade Appeals Screening Panel or Joint Schools Grade Appeals Screening Panel shall meet and review the matter within seven calendar days of the receipt of the student's detailed statement.
- G. If the School (or Joint Schools) Grade Appeals Screening Panel determines that the appeal appears to be valid, then the Chairperson shall schedule a panel hearing. The hearing must not be scheduled earlier than seven calendar days from the receipt of the student's detailed statement. The hearing must be concluded by the fifty-sixth calendar day from the start of classes. Once the hearing panel has been selected, the Chairperson shall promptly give written notice of the hearing to the parties involved. The notice shall specify the time, date, and place of the hearing, as well as the procedures and sequence of events to be followed in conducting the hearing.
- H. The Chairperson shall ensure that all written statements concerning the case have been received at least one day in advance of the hearing by the student, instructor, and panel members. All parties are to preserve confidentiality and to refrain from discussing the case.

I. The following shall apply in conducting a panel hearing:

1. The hearing shall be closed unless both parties agree in writing that it be open. The Panel Chairperson shall determine the number of individuals that can be accommodated at the hearing. The Panel Chairperson shall be responsible for maintaining the integrity of the grade appeals process. The Panel Chairperson may set time limits for presentations and rebuttals. Anyone interfering with the orderly procedure of the hearing may be excluded at the sole discretion of the Panel Chairperson.

2. The student and the instructor may each have an advisor present at the hearing. Both parties have the right to present evidence and witnesses on their behalf and to challenge evidence and to question opposing witnesses. All parties shall be reminded that the appeal hearing is not a legal proceeding and procedure is not dictated by established precedent pertaining to court hearings. Advisors shall be allowed to advise the parties concerned, but shall not be allowed to address the panel or witnesses directly.

3. All evidence initiated by the student at the hearing is restricted to addressing the allegations, facts, and circumstances contained in the student's detailed statement.

4. Normally, if the student does not appear for the hearing, the complaint shall be dismissed, the case closed, and these actions are not subject to further hearing or appeal. A hearing can be rescheduled only when extraordinary circumstances prevent an involved party from attending the hearing. The party must petition in writing the School Chairperson and the University Grade Appeals Committee Chairperson to reschedule the hearing. The petition must document the circumstances. If the School Chairperson and the University Grade Appeals Committee Chairperson unanimously conclude the circumstances are extraordinary, then the School Chairperson shall reschedule the hearing and the appeal shall continue. If, however, an instructor does not appear, the hearing will continue on the presumption that there is no desire to challenge, in person, evidence or witnesses presented by the student.

5. A hearing should be structured in the following manner.

a. Student's presentation of witnesses and evidence.

b. Instructor's cross-examination of witnesses.

c. Instructor's presentation of witnesses and evidence.

d. Student's cross-examination of witnesses.

e. Question period by the panel members.

f. Student's final statement.

g. Instructor's final statement.

h. Parties dismissed so panel members may deliberate and reach a decision in private.

In the case of alleged academic dishonesty, the order of the student's and instructor's presentations shall be reversed.

6. The School Committee Chairperson may attend any panel hearing in order to insure that proper procedures are followed.

7. An official tape recording shall be made of each hearing. The Panel deliberations shall not be recorded. The Panel Chairperson is expected to identify voices for the benefit of a subsequent panel.

- J. In both the evidentiary and deliberative aspects of the hearing, the members of the panel shall restrict questions and discussion to the allegations, facts, and circumstances pertaining to the student's detailed statement. The panel's decision shall be based on the following:
 - 1. Evidence exists that the grade assigned to the student is inconsistent with those of other students in the class performing at the same level;
 - 2. Evidence exists that there has been mechanical error in the determination of the final grade;
 - 3. Evidence exists that the grade assigned is contrary to formally stated initial criteria;
 - 4. Evidence exists that course requirements or procedures violate University policy or regulations.
- K. At the conclusion of the hearing, the panel shall determine the student's grade by majority vote of all members (including the Panel Chairperson). The panel may raise, lower, or uphold the original grade. The Panel Chairperson shall send the decision to the Chairperson of the School Committee on the same day that the hearing is held. The Chairperson of the School Committee shall notify both parties and the Chairperson of the University Committee of the panel's decision no later than the sixty-third calendar day from the start of classes.
- L. An official file containing the notice of intention to appeal, the student's detailed statement, the tape recording, copies of other material entered as evidence, and a written record of the panel's decision shall be kept in the office of the School Dean or Head for a period of one calendar year. The official file is confidential and will be released only to the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee.

VI. Appeal of the School Decision

- A. Either party may appeal the School decision. The grounds for an appeal shall be either that substantial inequities or irregularities existed in the conduct of the hearing or that substantial new evidence has been discovered pertaining to the allegations, facts, and circumstances presented in the student's detailed statement
- B. To appeal, a written statement must be filed with the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee within seven calendar days of the receipt of the decision of the School Panel. The written statement must fully describe the reason for the appeal and substantiate the basis of the appeal.
- C. If no such statement is received by the Chairperson within the seven calendar day period, the decision of the School Panel shall stand. The School Panel's decision is then final and shall not be subject to further hearing or appeal. If the grade determined by the School Panel differs from the original grade, then the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee shall file the appropriate grade change with the Registrar, who shall expunge the old grade and record the new grade.

VII. University Grade Appeals Procedures

- A. Upon receipt of a written statement appealing a School Panel decision, the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals shall assign the case to a University Panel and send a copy of the written statement to both parties. The University Panel shall elect one of its members to Chair.
- B. The University Panel shall evaluate the appellant's written statement and other available evidence, including the official file, to determine if a new hearing will be granted. If any panel member deems that the appeal may have merit, then the appeal will move forward and a formal hearing will be scheduled. A University Panel serves as the screening panel and as the hearing panel for a university grade appeal.
- C. The decision of the University Panel regarding the request for a new hearing shall be made by the ninety-first calendar day from the start of classes. If the Panel decides to hear an appeal, then the hearing must be held and a decision rendered by the 112th calendar day from the start of classes.

- D. The Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee shall promptly give written notice to both parties of the University Panel's decision. When a new hearing is not granted, the decision of the School Panel shall stand. The School Panel's decision is then final and shall not be subject to further hearing or appeal. If the grade determined by the School Panel differs from the original grade, then the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee shall file the appropriate grade change. When a new hearing is granted, the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee shall schedule a hearing and promptly give written notice to the parties involved. The notice shall specify the time, date, and place of the hearing, as well as the procedures and sequence of events to be followed in conducting the hearing.
- E. If the University Panel grants a new hearing, the Chair of the University Appeals Committee shall inform both parties of the following procedures which shall apply.

1. The University Panel shall hear the appeal de novo.

2. As with proceedings at the School level, all parties shall be reminded that the appeal hearing is not a legal proceeding and established precedent pertaining to court hearings does not dictate procedure. The hearing shall be closed unless both parties agree in writing that it be open. The Panel Chairperson shall determine the number of individuals that can be accommodated at the hearing.

3. The student and the instructor may each have an advisor present at the hearing. Both parties have the right to present evidence and witnesses on their behalf and to challenge evidence and to question opposing witnesses. Advisors shall be allowed to advise the parties concerned, but shall not be allowed to address the panel or witnesses directly.

4. Normally, if the student does not appear for the hearing, the case shall be closed and the School decision upheld and these actions not subject to further hearing or appeal. A hearing can be rescheduled only when extraordinary circumstances prevent an involved party from attending the hearing. The party must petition in writing to the University Grade Appeals Committee Chairperson and the Student Affairs Committee Chairperson to reschedule the hearing. The petition must document the circumstances. If the University Grade Appeals Committee Chairperson and the Student Affairs Committee Chairperson unanimously conclude the circumstances are extraordinary, then the University Grade Appeals Committee Chairperson shall reschedule the hearing and the appeal shall continue. If the instructor does not appear, the hearing will continue on the presumption that there is no desire to challenge in person evidence or witnesses that may be presented.

5. A hearing should be structured in the following manner:

a. Student's presentation of witnesses and evidence.

b. Instructor's cross-examination of witnesses.

c. Instructor's presentation of witnesses and evidence.

d. Student's cross-examination of witnesses

e. Question period by the panel members.

f. Student's final statement.

g. Instructor's final statement.

h. Parties dismissed so panel members may deliberate and reach a decision in private.

6. An official tape recording shall be made of each hearing. The Panel deliberations shall not be recorded. The Panel Chairperson is expected to identify voices.

- F. In both the evidentiary and deliberative aspects of the hearing, the members of the panel shall restrict questions and discussion to the allegations, facts, and circumstances pertaining to the student's statement. The panel's decision shall be based on the following:
1. Evidence exists that the grade assigned to the student is inconsistent with those of other students in the class performing at the same level;
 2. Evidence exists that there has been mechanical error in the determination of the final grade;
 3. Evidence exists that the grade assigned is contrary to formally stated initial criteria;
 4. Evidence exists that course requirements or procedures violate University policy or regulations.
- G. At the conclusion of the hearing, the University Panel shall determine the student's grade by majority vote of all members (including the Panel Chairperson). The panel may raise, lower, or uphold the original grade. The University Panel's decision shall be sent to the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee on the same day that the hearing is held. The Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee shall promptly notify both parties of the University Panel's decision. The University Panel's decision is now final and shall not be subject to further hearing or appeal.
- H. If the grade determined by the University Panel differs from the original grade, then the Chairperson of the University Grade Appeals Committee shall file the appropriate grade change with the Registrar, who shall expunge the old grade and record the new grade.
- I. The tape recording of the University Panel hearing and a written record of the Panel decision shall be included in the official School file and returned to the School Dean or Head.

VIII. Outline of Appeals Process

In order to avoid undue hardship or injustice, the appeals process shall conform to the following one semester time line:

GRADE APPEALS SYSTEM TIME LINE

Notice of Intention	Student - Instructor Discussion	Screening Panel Meets and Notice of Hearing	School Hearing	Notice of Decision	Appeal of School Decision	Decide on University Hearing	Notice of University Hearing	University Hearing	Report
3 Weeks	2 Weeks	1 Week	2 Weeks	1 Week	1 Week	3 Weeks	1 Week	2 Weeks	
	21st Day	35th Day	42nd Day	56th Day	63rd Day	70th Day	91st Day	98th Day	112th Day

This time line is applied to the regular semester following receipt of the questioned grade, and begins on the first day of classes. The Student Affairs Committee shall maintain a calendar that incorporates this time line with the official university calendar.

Approved by the Purdue University Calumet Senate March 1, 2000

Revised and approved by the Purdue University Calumet Senate April 11, 2001