

## Procedure 6-8: Student Grade Appeal Process

Grade determination and awarding of a final grade in a course is clearly the responsibility of the instructor. Final grade reports should be available to the student within a reasonable time following the end of the course.

When a student becomes aware of a final grade that is believed to be incorrect, the student may appeal the final grade received in a course. The appeal process shall be initiated by the student as soon as possible following the receipt of the grade, but shall be initiated no later than 30 calendar days after grades are posted, and must be resolved within 120 calendar days following the initiation of the appeal.

The procedures for appealing a grade shall be as follows:

### 1. Student Meeting with Instructor

The student and instructor shall discuss in private consultation the grade that the student believes is incorrect. At this meeting, only the grades on tests, projects, reports, etc., and the grading system listed in the syllabus will be discussed and recalculated as necessary. Whenever possible, the matter should be resolved at this meeting. If the instructor cannot resolve the problem immediately, the student will be notified of the availability of a copy of the grade appeal procedures in the office of the appropriate Dean or the Provost. If, upon receipt of the instructor's written decision, the student is dissatisfied with the decision, the student may request a meeting with the Department Chair to appeal the decision of the instructor. (NOTE: In the event there is no Department Chair, the student may request a meeting with the Dean who will conduct the meeting in accordance with steps No. 1 and No. 2 of this procedure.) The student must make the appeal within five (5) working days after notification by the instructor.

### 2. Student Meeting with Department Chair/Program Director

The Department Chair must arrange a meeting no more than five (5) working days after receiving a request from the student. This meeting will include the student, the instructor, and the Department Chair. Providing sufficient evidence of discrepancies or errors in the grade will be the responsibility of the student. If insufficient evidence is offered, the appeal is denied. The student will be given an opportunity to present his/her case. The instructor will be given a chance for rebuttal. (NOTE: If the grade appeal is in a technical program supervised by a Program Director, the Program Director should be included in the process.)

On hearing the evidence from both sides, the Department Chair will take one of the following actions:

If, in the opinion of the Department Chair, the student failed to provide sufficient evidence of discrepancies or errors in the grades, the student will be notified in writing that the appeal is denied. The Department Chair will inform the student of the right to appeal the decision and about the procedures for appeal. At the same time, the Department Chair will notify the instructor in writing of this decision. The notification must be given within five (5) working days of the hearing.

If, in the opinion of the Department Chair, the student did provide sufficient evidence of discrepancies or errors in the grades, the instructor will be notified within five (5) working days of the meeting. At the same time, the Department Chair will notify the student in writing of this decision.

The instructor will, in turn, inform the Department Chair in writing within five (5) working days whether he/she will change the grade. If the instructor changes the grade, the instructor notifies the student in writing, and the matter is closed.

If the instructor chooses not to change the grade, the Department Chair will be notified of the decision in writing within five (5) working days after having received the recommendation from the Department Chair. Within five (5) working days after being informed of the instructor's decision to deny the grade change, the Department Chair will notify the student that the appeal is denied and inform the student of further rights to appeal and the procedure for doing so.

All time limits stated are in working days. All time limits may be extended by mutual consent.

### 3. Student Meeting with Dean

Within five (5) working days after receiving notification from the Department Chair that the appeal has been denied, a student may request a meeting with the Dean who will take either action A or action B as described above.

(NOTE: In the event there is no Dean or in the event that the Dean conducted the initial meeting, the student will proceed to step 4.)

### 4. Student Meeting with Academic Appeals Committee

Within five (5) working days after receiving notification from the dean that the appeal has been denied, a student appealing a grade in a course may request

a hearing before an Academic Appeals Committee. This request will be in writing to the provost. The committee will consist of one (1) full-time instructor to be named by the student, one (1) full-time instructor to be named by the instructor, and one (1) full-time instructor to be named by the provost. The provost will request that the student and instructor submit the name of their nominees via email within five (5) working days after notification of all parties involved. Upon receiving the names of those nominees and appointing a third instructor to the committee, the provost will set the time, date and place of the closed hearing and notify all parties. This will be done within five (5) working days after having received the names of both nominees. The student's appeal will be dismissed if the student fails to correspond with the Provost's Office within ten (10) working days of the last communication with the student. A student may present written evidence relevant to the grade appeal and may be advised at the hearing by one or more persons of his/her own choice. The student may have a maximum of two (2) persons, including the nominated instructor, in the room at a time. The individuals selected by the student may advise the student but are prohibited from addressing the committee. The hearing will include the student, the faculty member whose final grade is being challenged, the three instructors named to the committee, and the optional persons chosen by the student. The Academic Appeals Committee may request information from the instructor and/or person's familiar with the case. The academic appeals committee may limit cumulative, repetitious, or irrelevant testimony or documentary evidence, and may impose reasonable time limits on the presentation of evidence by the parties.

Within five (5) working days after this hearing, the Academic Appeals Committee will notify the student, the instructor, and the provost in writing of its findings:

- a. A grade change is justified and will be made.
- b. A grade change is not justified and will not be made.

If the decision of the Academic Appeals Committee is to change the grade, the provost will have five (5) working days to make the grade change. The decision of the Academic Appeals Committee will be final.

The same appeal process will be followed when the instructor is not accessible or no longer employed by San Jacinto College by excluding step 1 involving the instructor.