

Title: Appeal of Final Grade
Category: Education/Student Services - Admissions/Registrar
Policy No.: E2006
Replaces: E2006 – Appeal of Final Grade
Applicability: All Langara Faculty and Students
Effective Date: January 8, 1985; Revised October 19, 1987; Revised January 20, 2009
Source(s): Education Council

Approval: (President’s signature is on the original copy of this policy)

1. PURPOSE

To provide students with the opportunity to appeal the final grade received in a regular studies course.

2. DEFINITIONS

Instructor: The individual or team responsible for providing instruction and evaluation in a credit/regular studies course, and assigning the final grade in that course.

Relevant material: All material in documentary or other format that was evaluated by the instructor for the purpose of determining a final grade. This includes, but is not limited to, the course syllabus, all available original marked assignments, examinations, examination keys, evaluation notes, recordings, etc.

3. AUTHORITY

3.1 Related Acts and Regulations

[B. C. College and Institute Act](#) (24(2)(e))

3.2 Related Policies

[Concerns about Instruction](#)

4. RELATIONSHIP WITH COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

Not applicable.

5. POLICY

- 5.1 The College will establish a two-stage process for adjudicating appeals of final grades: 1) Informal Appeal, and 2) Formal Appeal.
- 5.2 The intent of the Informal Appeal is to facilitate the resolution of questions and disputes about final grades as expeditiously as possible. If the matter is not resolved through the Informal Appeal process, the student may proceed to the Formal Appeal.
- 5.3 Students must normally complete the Informal Appeal process before proceeding to the Formal Appeal. The Informal Appeal stage may be waived by the consensual agreement of the student, instructor and Division Chair. However, it is the Division Chair who is responsible for ensuring that the appeal policy is correctly and fairly administered at each stage, and who has the authority to establish the composition of the Department Appeals Committee.
- 5.4 In order to proceed to a Formal Appeal, the student must present in writing credible evidence of at least one of the following grounds for appeal:
 - a. Failure of the instructor to follow the evaluation criteria set out in the course syllabus.
 - b. Failure of the instructor to apply the evaluation criteria in a reasonable and fair manner.
 - c. Failure of the instructor to follow any college policy that is relevant to the determination of a final grade.

Dissatisfaction or disagreement with the final grade, without satisfying one of the above, does not constitute sufficient grounds for a Formal Appeal.

- 5.5 The Department Appeals Committee is the only appeal level with sufficient expertise to make changes to final grades. Any other review is limited to consideration of the process by which the Department Appeals Committee came to its decision.

6. GUIDELINES/STANDARDS

Not applicable.

7. EXCEPTIONS

Not applicable.

8. PROCEDURES

Informal Appeal

- 8.1 There are two steps in the Informal Appeal process.
- a. The student must first obtain the “Informal Appeal of Final Grade” form from the Registrar’s Office and then meet with the instructor. The purpose of this meeting is to clarify the method and calculation of the final grade. If the instructor determines that a grade change is warranted, the instructor will forward a Mark Change Request form to the Department Chair. If the instructor feels the grade as assigned should stand, then he or she will indicate this on the “Informal Appeal of Final Grade” form, and both the instructor and the student will sign it.
 - b. If the student wishes to pursue the appeal after meeting with the instructor, the student must then take the “Informal Appeal of Final Grade” form and meet with the Division Chair. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that the student clearly understands the Formal Appeal process, including the three possible outcomes of such an appeal:
 - i. The grade may be raised.
 - ii. The grade may remain unchanged.
 - iii. The grade may be lowered.
 - c. If the student wishes to submit a Formal Appeal, the Division Chair will determine if the student meets the criteria set out in 5.4. If the student does not meet any of those criteria, the student will not be permitted to submit a Formal Appeal.
- 8.2 The outcomes of the meetings with the instructor and the Division Chair are recorded on the “Informal Appeal of Final Grade” form. This form, bearing the signatures of the student, the instructor, and the Division Chair, constitutes proof of completion of the Informal Appeal. It will also constitute the Division Chair’s approval to proceed to Formal Appeal if he or she finds that this is warranted.

Formal Appeal

- 8.3 The student must initiate the Formal Appeal no later than ten (10) working days following the last day of examinations in the semester in which the course(s) under appeal was completed. This time limit may be extended by mutual agreement between the Division Chair and the Registrar.
- 8.4 The student initiates the Formal Appeal by submitting the following to the Office of the Registrar:
- a. The “Formal Appeal of Final Grade” form (one form for each course being appealed),

- b. The completed “Informal Appeal of Final Grade” form (one form for each course being appealed). This form must include the signatures of the student, the instructor, and the Division Chair. The Division Chair must indicate that the student has satisfied the grounds for appeal as set out in 5.4,
- c. The current fee for each final grade being appealed,
- d. Any relevant material that should be considered in support of each appeal.

All of the above must be submitted by the deadline set out in 8.3.

- 8.5 The Office of the Registrar will forward the forms and supporting material to the appropriate Department Chair.
- 8.6 Upon receipt of the appeal from the Office of the Registrar, the Department Chair will:
 - a. Collect all available relevant material from the instructor.
 - b. Request that the Division Chair convene a Department Appeals Committee.
- 8.7 The Department Appeals Committee shall be composed of the appropriate individuals. The Department Appeals Committee will consist of two instructors who are familiar with the course content but who did not teach the course to the student who has requested the appeal. In cases where a department consists of three or fewer instructors, or the Department Chair was the instructor of the course in which the final grade is being appealed, the Division Chair will appoint an alternate to carry out the duties of the Department Chair.
- 8.8 The Department Appeals Committee members will:
 - a. Make independent judgements of the submitted material.
 - b. Write individual reports of their decisions. Each report will include reasons for that decision along with a letter grade.
 - c. Submit the report to the Division Chair within ten (10) working days of receipt of the Formal Appeal by the Office of the Registrar.
- 8.9 The Department Appeals Committee may request a meeting with the student and the instructor. The purpose of the meeting is to clarify any questions that the committee members may have about the relevant material. If such a meeting is called, the committee must allow both the student and instructor to attend.

The student and the instructor may bring a person to the meeting. The person may not speak or otherwise participate in the meeting. The College is not liable for any fees or expenses incurred by the student or the instructor for the attendance of this person at the appeal meeting.

- 8.10 If the two members of the Department Appeals Committee arrive at different letter grades for the course, the Department Chair (or alternate) will automatically become a third member of the committee.
- 8.11 Upon receipt of the decision of the Department Appeals Committee, the Registrar will:
- a. Inform the student of the decision.
 - b. Revise the permanent student record, if applicable.

Appeal of the Decision of the Department Appeals Committee

- 8.12 If the student believes that the Division Chair, the Department Chair, or the Department Appeals Committee did not follow the process stated in this policy, or that the process was otherwise flawed in some way, the student may request that the Dean of Student Support Services undertake a review. Such a request must be submitted in writing no later than five (5) working days after the decision is made by the Department Appeals Committee. The request must clearly state the grounds upon which the request is based, and include any evidence the student wants to have considered.
- 8.13 The outcome of the Dean's review is constrained by 5.5. Consequently, the possible outcomes are limited to:
- a. The process is not found to be flawed or improper, and the decision of the Department Appeals Committee is confirmed.
 - b. The process is found to be flawed or improper in some way, but any irregularity did not impair the student's right to procedural fairness. Therefore, the decision of the Department Appeals Committee is confirmed.
 - c. The process is found to be flawed or improper in a way that did impair the student's right to procedural fairness. In such a case, the Dean will direct the Division Chair to convene a new Department Appeals Committee and consider the student's Formal Appeal according to proper procedure. The Dean may provide written directions regarding corrective actions to ensure acceptable process.
- 8.14 The decision of the Dean is final and not subject to further appeal.

9. RESPONSIBILITY

For inquiries related to this policy, please contact the Dean of Student Support Services.

10. APPENDICES

Not applicable.