

Policy Reference:

The Grade Appeal process contains strict timelines; *therefore, the college will publish important dates notifying students of deadlines which follow the timeline outlined below.* Additionally, all course syllabi must make reference to the policy alerting students that they have fifteen (15) business days *after grades are due (or submitted if done so after the due date)* to contact the instructor to question a final grade. Additionally, because most grade appeals arise after a lack of communication about student progress, faculty should ensure students are aware of their course grade status throughout the academic term.

Grade appeals are appropriate when the student believes that a final grade has been miscalculated, or when the student believes that the final grading was inconsistent with the grading policies stated in the syllabus or other published MATC procedures. The Grade Appeal process does not deal with course content and should not be used by students who wish to dispute a grade received on a test, essay, homework, or other assignment. Also, if the student charges that the grade given was based on discriminatory conduct, the academic grade appeal process will not be used; the student's charge will be referred to the MATC Affirmative Action Office.

When a student believes that the final grade he or she has received in a course is inaccurate, or unjustified based on course policies or other published MATC procedures, the student may appeal the grade. In those instances, the following procedures will be followed.

Grade Appeal Process

1. Within fifteen (15) business days from the date grades are due (*or submitted if done so after the due date*), the student shall contact the instructor who issued the final grade and discuss the grade in question. The contact or the discussion should occur or be documented in writing via email. If the student is unable to contact the faculty member, he or she may seek assistance through *the instructor's* Associate Dean.
2. The faculty member must respond in writing via email to the student's appeal within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. The faculty member must also copy their Associate Dean.
3. If the student and instructor are unable to resolve the dispute, and the student wishes to pursue the matter, he or she shall contact the Associate Dean in writing within five (5) business days of the faculty member's decision. The student must indicate the course number, the instructor's name, and the reasons for disputing the final grade on a Grade Appeal Request form.
4. The Associate Dean will contact the instructor to notify, discuss, and confer about the grade appeal. He or she should have, or will obtain, a copy of the syllabus. The Associate Dean will confer with the Chair of the Academic Appeals Board and will reach any one of the following conclusions in considering the Appeal:
 - a. That the student does not have grounds for an appeal, and that the matter should be closed.
 - b. That the student may or does have grounds for an appeal and attempt to reach a resolution between the student and faculty member. A resolution must be reached within ten (10) business days, or the Appeal will automatically proceed to the Academic Appeals Board.
 - c. That the student may or may not have grounds for an appeal, but that no resolution can be reached and thus the matter should proceed to the Academic Appeals Board.
 - d. If the Associate Dean and the Chair of the Academic Appeals Board are unable to reach a consensus on the Appeal, the Appeal will automatically proceed to the Academic Appeals Board.
 - e. If the recommendation is that the appeal proceeds to the Academic Appeals Board, all academic and/or financial aid based penalties will be postponed until the conclusion of the grade appeal.
 - f. If the Chair determines that there is insufficient cause to proceed, he or she will notify the student in writing within ten (10) business days after receiving the request for hearing and the matter is closed.

5. If there is sufficient cause to proceed and a resolution is not possible, the Chair of the Academic Appeals Board (or designee) will schedule an Academic Appeal Hearing. The Chair (or designee) will also notify the student, the instructor, and the Associate Dean of the date, time, and location of the hearing in writing within ten (10) calendar days after receiving the written request for a hearing.

Academic Appeals Board Composition & Hearing Process

1. The Academic Appeals Board (AAB) shall be established to hear appeals initiated by a student to contest a final course grade received by the student.
2. The Academic Appeals Board consists of at least nine (9) members. These members will come from a trained pool of at least five (5) students, and at least four (4) faculty/counselors/paraprofessionals including the AAB Chair. AFT Local 212 will select a diverse group of faculty, counselors, and paraprofessionals to serve on the AAB. The Director of Student Life will recommend students to receive training for possible service on the Appeals Board. From this pool, the chair of the AAB will consult with the pool and select an Appeals Board for each appeal of which one member may, or may not be a part.
3. The selected Appeals Board will consist of three members: one instructor, one student, and either an additional instructor, or a counselor/paraprofessional.
4. In order for a student to sit as a member of an appeal hearing, both the appealing student and the AAB student member must sign a release to authorize a student sitting in on the hearing. If all appropriate authorizations are not obtained, the hearing will proceed without a student representative.
5. Instructors serving on the AAB who are in the same department as the Appeal in question may not participate in the Appeal.
6. The Chair of the Appeals Board must be a faculty member and will be appointed by AFT Local 212.
 - a. The Chair must be recused in any case involving the Chair as the instructor of a grade appeal.
 - b. In cases involving the Chair as the instructor, any member of the Appeals Board may act in place of the recused Chair.
7. The instructor who assigned the final grade will be invited and highly encouraged to participate, but he or she need not be present in order for the hearing to proceed.
8. The Appeals Board will convene on the second Tuesday of January, February, June, and July, and may choose to convene other times, as needed.
9. The student and instructor may each have one person of their choosing present during this hearing for support, but this support person will not be permitted to speak for, or otherwise act as an advocate for, the student or instructor.
10. After hearing all information, all participants except Appeals Board members will be asked to leave the room. The Appeals Board will then deliberate in private and shall, by majority vote, make a recommendation as to whether or not the instructor needs to adjust the grade. The decision will be sent in writing to the Associate Dean, the student, the instructor, within three (3) business days. The Registrar will also be informed if there is a change in grade.
 - a. The Appeals Board will reach one of the following decisions:
 - i. Recommend that the original grade stand.
 - ii. Recommend that the original grade be reconsidered.
 - iii. Require that the original grade be vacated or changed.
 1. Any recommendation may be accompanied by additional advice or suggestions to the instructor & student.
 2. The AAB does not specify a particular grade.
11. Instructors are expected to abide by the recommendation of the AAB.
 - a. In cases of non-compliance, the AAB reserves the right to consult with faculty who are content experts if the AAB determines that a grade change is necessary.
12. Decisions of the AAB are final and may not be appealed.