

## Memorandum of Administrative Policy Academic Appeals Policy

**Area:** Academic Affairs

**Section:** General

**Number:** 01.A.03 AP

### Purpose

This document outlines the procedures for academic appeals, which include grade and program appeals, and degree requirements. Specific instructions are provided below for each type of academic appeal. Students are responsible for meeting the academic standards stated in the syllabus.

### Definitions

**Business Day:** A day when the University is open, Monday through Friday, excluding designated holidays and/or campus closures.

**Academic Appeal Committee (AAC):** A standing committee of faculty established to review grade appeals, should need arise, after the department chair review. The Academic Appeal Committee would be needed if a student chooses to appeal the decision of the department chair in matters of grade appeals. Policies outlining the membership, terms, and functioning of the Academic Appeal Committee shall be established in college bylaws.

**Program Appeal:** Appeals relating to specific program requirements.

**Degree Requirement Appeal:** Appeals relating to specific degree requirements.

## Policy

1. Grade Appeals: Students must make an initial grade appeal directly to the instructor in an attempt to resolve the dispute. If a resolution has been attempted and is not possible, students may then initiate an appeals procedure. Grounds for grade appeal must be demonstrated in writing; more than the student's opinion must be presented. Students must complete a Student Academic Appeal Form. A grade appeal may be filed for the following reasons:

- Instructor error in computing grades;
- Disagreements concerning grading requirements stated in the syllabus;
- Disagreements concerning the instructor's directions for submitting work or performing tasks;
- Instructor departing from standards/expectations outlined in the syllabus without timely notice.

Note: An unfavorable grade due to violations of academic honesty cannot be appealed through the Academic Appeals process - see Academic Honesty Policy.

### 1.1. Faculty and Department Chair

A student has a right to file a grade appeal ten (10) business days from the calendar date when grades are available as reported in the UHCL Academic Calendar for that semester. It is expected that students will first attempt to reach an informal resolution by approaching the instructor with request for reconsideration of their grade. The instructor has ten (10) business days from receipt of student informal request for

reconsideration to respond to an informal grade appeal request initiated by a student.

If a satisfactory solution cannot be reached with the instructor or the instructor does not respond within 10 business days, the student may send a written statement detailing the grounds for the appeal to the chair of the department in which the grade was earned. The student must send the Academic Appeal Form to the department chair within ten (10) business days of the date of response from the instructor or when a response from the instructor was due. The department chair may request relevant information from the instructor, including but not limited to course syllabus, assignment descriptions, and any grading criteria or rubrics.

The chair of the department in which the appeal is based reviews the documents provided by all parties. The department chair must respond to the student and instructor within ten (10) business days of receipt of a timely appeal.

If the chair of the department in which appeal is based is the faculty member involved in the grade appeal, students should contact the associate dean of the college in which the appeal is based to request an alternative department chair to be identified for the purpose of reviewing the grade appeal. All deadlines and timelines remain the same in this circumstance.

If the student or the instructor does not appeal within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the decision, the decision of the department chair is final.

## 1.2. Academic Appeal Committee

If the student or the instructor wishes to appeal a decision by the department chair, it is appealed to the Academic Appeal Committee within the college in which the appeal is based. Additionally, if the student does not receive a response from the department

chair within ten (10) business days, they may appeal to the Academic Appeal Committee within the college where the appeal is based.

To initiate this appeal, the student (or the instructor) must forward any written documentation and any responses received as well as a written reason for appealing the decision of the department chair, within ten (10) business days of receipt of the department chair's decision, to the associate dean who will promptly notify and initiate a meeting of the Academic Appeals Committee. The associate dean must provide the committee with all the documentation prevailing to the case for review. The student and faculty member will be notified of the date upon which the Academic Appeals Committee received the documentation regarding the appeal which marks the initiation of the ten (10) business day window of consideration.

The Academic Appeals Committee can request any and all relevant materials from the department chair, student and faculty member. The committee should not re-grade the student's work. The committee must review the grade appeal and any additional provided documentation and render a decision on the requested grade appeal within ten (10) business days of receipt of the materials from the associate dean and forward this decision to the student, instructor, department chair and associate dean.

If the student or the instructor does not appeal the decision of the Academic Appeals Committee within ten (10) business days of receipt of the decision, the decision is final.

### 1.3. Dean

If a student or the instructor wishes to appeal a decision of the Academic Appeals Committee, they must notify the associate dean of the college within ten (10) business days of receipt of notification from the Academic Appeals Committee. Additionally, if

the student does not receive a response from the Academic Appeals Committee within ten (10) working days of the date materials were provided to the committee, they may appeal.

To initiate this appeal, the student (or the instructor) must forward any written documentation and the written reason for their appeal within ten (10) business days to the associate dean of the college in which the grade was earned.

The associate dean will forward the student appeal of the decision of Academic Appeals Committee and any provided documentation to the dean of the college for review and consideration. The dean, or their designee, can request any and all relevant materials from the faculty member, department chair, and the Academic Appeals Committee. The dean, or their designee, must review the grade appeal and any additional provided documentation and render a decision on the requested grade appeal within ten (10) business days of receipt of the materials from the associate dean and forward the decision to the student, instructor, and associate dean who will notify the Academic Appeals Committee.

The dean's decision (or the decision of their designee) is final on all grade appeals.

At any time during the appeal process, the person(s) reviewing the academic appeal may request, in writing, additional information from the student. The student then has ten (10) business days to respond to the request for additional information. Once the requested information has been received or when the student response was due, whichever is later, the reviewer(s) must issue a written decision within ten (10) working days.

## 2. Appeals of Academic Program or Degree Requirements

All appeals relating to specific program requirements (e.g., residency requirements) require that students submit a written petition to the associate dean of the degree-granting college detailing the grounds for the appeal. The associate dean must respond within fifteen (15) business days of the receipt of the appeal. The associate dean will respond in writing with a decision to the student with a copy to the program director and department chair.

The student may appeal this decision in writing to the dean within ten (10) business days of notification. The dean's decision must be rendered within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the appeal and is final.

### **Review and Responsibilities**

This policy will be reviewed by The Office of The Provost every three years or sooner, if warranted.

Responsible Parties: Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs & Provost

Review: Every 3 years

### **Revision Log**

Revision Number: 1

- Approval Date: 04/30/1997
- Description of changes: Initial Policy

Revision Number: 2

- Approval Date: 05/28/2021
- Description of changes: Policy updated and placed in the standardized UHCL template.

Revision Number: 3

- Approval Date: 09/26/2024
- Description of changes: Updated to add required response timeline to ensure due process. Further amended so that the faculty member can also appeal lower level decisions; previously only the student could appeal.

## **Approval**

Approved by:

*/Dr. Christopher Maynard/*

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**Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost**

*/Dr. Richard Walker/*

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**President**

*September 26, 2024*

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**Date**