

Academic Standards & Calendar Committee
Report #2005-06--4
Proposed New University Manual Section 8.26.13
Amendment to Section 8.56.10

Last year the Academic Standards and Calendar Committee was directed to look into modifications of the existing regulations concerning grade appeals. The proposal brought to the 2004-2005 Faculty Senate was ultimately sent back to the Committee. The current proposal is the Academic Standards and Calendar Committee's second attempt at the revision of grade appeals procedures. The proposed language attempts to protect both instructors' rights and students' rights in appeals cases.

I. Grade Appeals Procedures

The Academic Standards and Calendar Committee recommends the addition of the following new section 8.26.13 to the University Manual and renumber existing 8.26.13 as 8.26.14.

8.26.13 Faculty members bear responsibility for the evaluation of students and their professional judgment in this regard is to be respected. Undergraduate and graduate students who object to a recorded grade in a course should discuss the matter initially with the instructor. If the issue remains unresolved, students should make their case in writing to the instructor's department chairperson or immediate administrative supervisor. If the chairperson/supervisor thinks the appeal has merit, she/he should so inform the instructor. If this still fails to produce resolution, the chairperson/supervisor should refer the matter to a departmental or college appeals committee for a recommendation. (The latter would be appropriate in colleges lacking departments; otherwise, the case would go to a departmental committee. For petitions concerning grades, appeals committees at both levels shall include a faculty member from a closely allied department or discipline.) If, after investigating the appeal, the committee concludes that compelling reasons exist to modify a grade, it will give the instructor a written explanation of its decision and ask that person to make the change. If the instructor still declines, he/she must provide the committee with a written explanation of the reasons for refusing. If, after considering the instructor's explanation, the committee agrees unanimously that it would be unjust to let the original grade stand, it may recommend to the chairperson/supervisor that the grade be changed over the instructor's objection. The chairperson/supervisor will then initiate the change, notifying the instructor, the student, the instructor's dean, the student's dean, and the Office of Student Affairs of this action. The only exception to these guidelines shall be in cases where the instructor can no longer be consulted (e.g., that person has died or moved to an unknown

address). In these circumstances, the appropriate chairperson/supervisor can act in the stead of the absent instructor and modify a student's grade if a departmental or college appeals committee unanimously recommends such action in writing. In general, grades under appeal should not be considered when evaluating students for continuance in an academic program or for scholarship eligibility. (See section 8.56.10 concerning time limits for changes to recorded grades. Regarding cases involving cheating and plagiarism, see sections 8.27.10 through 8.27.21. For cases involving harassment/discrimination, see University Manual Appendix G, Policy #85-1.)

II. Changes in Records

The Academic Standards and Calendar Committee recommends that the Faculty Senate amend section 8.56.10 to bring the section on Changes in Records into agreement with the new appeals procedures set forth in the proposed 8.26.13: (New material underlined, deleted wording has ~~strikethrough~~)

8.56.10 Changes in Records. No grade (including that of NW) shall be changed after it has been reported to and recorded by the Office of Enrollment Services except in the following circumstances. First, a grade may be changed upon written request by the instructor. ~~to the dean of the instructor's college and approval by the dean.~~ Second, following an appeals case an instructor's department chairperson or immediate administrative supervisor shall act on the advice of the appeals committee (see 8.26.13) and change a grade over the instructor's objection. Third, in the event that the original instructor can no longer be consulted (e.g., having died or moved to an unknown address), the instructor's chairperson/supervisor can act in the missing person's stead and initiate a grade change, including the removal of inappropriate NW grades. This shall only happen, however, if an appeals committee has recommended such action in writing. All grade changes must be authorized by the appropriate dean. Entries to a student's academic record shall not be changed after two years for the undergraduate student and after three years for the graduate student. ~~Appropriate academic deans shall be authorized to allow exceptions for extraordinary reasons.~~ (See sections 8.26.10 through 8.26.13 for appeals procedures.)