

# Hunter College Grade Appeals Procedures

(Approved by the Hunter College Senate 10/9/85 – Updated 5-4-05)

## I.

### Appeal at the Department (or School) Level

#### A. First Step in Appeal: Student-Initiated Discussion with Instructor

When a student considers a final course grade unsatisfactory, he/she should first confer with the instructor regarding the accuracy of the grade received. This conference should be held within the **first three weeks of the semester following receipt of the grade**. At this time errors may be corrected.

If the grade is not an error, the student and instructor must together review all class material pertinent to the grade.

#### B. Second Step in Appeal: Student Request for Department/School Grade Appeal

##### Written Appeal by Student

If the student is not satisfied, or if the instructor does not confer with the student within the first three weeks of the semester, the student should promptly contact the Department Chair by submitting a written appeal, consisting of a statement giving the factual reasons and basis for the complaint. The student has the right to request in writing that the Chair appoint a student as a member to the Department/School Grade Appeals Committee. This appeal at the Department/School level must be submitted **within the first five weeks of the semester following receipt of the grade**. The Department Chair shall be responsible for giving the student a copy of the *Hunter College Grade Appeals Procedures* as set forth in this document.

Students appealing the grade to the School of Nursing or the School of Health Sciences should direct their appeal to the Director of the School. Students appealing the grade to the School of Social Work should direct this appeal to the Dean of the School, who shall carry out the responsibilities of the Department Chair as described in this document.

##### Department/School Grade Appeals Committee

The Department Chair shall convene a Department/School Grade Appeals Committee of three members who are familiar with the course in question **within one week of receiving the appeal**. The purpose of the Department/School Grade Appeals Committee is to consider all of the evidence within the grading standards previously established by the instructor of the course, and on this basis render a decision, either to sustain or to change the original grade.

The Department/School Grade Appeals Committee (if not otherwise specified in the By-laws) shall consist of three members of the Department/School faculty, unless the student has requested that a student be appointed as the third member of the committee. The Department Chair shall designate one member of the Committee as Chair, who will be responsible for gathering the pertinent materials from the student and instructor into a file for review by the Committee. This should include the work submitted by the student, the instructor's grading criteria for this course, including the course syllabus, and the instructor's evaluation of the work submitted, as well as any other pertinent evidence.

The Department/School Grade Appeals Committee must notify the student and the instructor in writing that they have the right to appear separately before the committee. **Within three weeks of its appointment**, after considering all the evidence, the Department/School Grade Appeals Committee will meet in closed session and render its decision and prepare a written report of its findings, and submit it to the Department Chair. All proceedings are confidential. The Department Chair immediately shall inform the student and instructor, in writing, of the Committee's decision. The Department Chair shall also submit a change of grade if recommended.

**Notes Re: Department/School Appeal:**

- a. If the instructor of the course in question is presently the Department Chair, the student should direct the appeal to the Dean (School of Education or School of Arts & Sciences), who will assume the duties of the Department Chair in this regard.

If the instructor of the course in question is the Director of the Schools of Nursing or Health Sciences, the student should direct the appeal to the Dean of the Schools of Health Professions. If the instructor of the course in question is the Dean of the School of Social Work, the student should direct the appeal to the Program Director (or equivalent administrator).

- b. A letter grade may not be changed to CR/NC, and CR/NC grades may not be changed to letter grades.

## **II.**

### **Appeal at the Senate Level**

#### **Initiating Appeal at the Senate Level**

- A. 1. In cases in which the student or the instructor is dissatisfied with the decision of the Department/School Grade Appeals Committee, either may appeal to the Senate Grade Appeals Committee. **This appeal must be initiated within two weeks of having been notified of the Department/School decision.**
2. **If the Department/School has not notified the student of its decision by the 10<sup>th</sup> week of the semester**, the student, at that time, may appeal directly to the Senate Grade Appeals Committee.
- B. **The individual initiating the appeal must fill out a *Grade Appeals Form* that is available in the Senate Office--Room E1018**, stating the basis for the appeal. The individual should also submit to the Senate Office for the Senate Grade Appeals Committee all information that supports the appeal (e.g., copies of any disputed examinations or assignments in the individual's possession).

#### **Senate Grade Appeals Committee**

- C. Upon receipt of this material the Senate Grade Appeals Committee will request the Department/School to forward copies of the following for the Senate file:
  1. Student's initial written complaint to Department Chair.
  2. Letter notifying student and instructor of right to appear before the Department/School Grade Appeals Committee and the student's right to request that the Department Chair appoint a student member to the Grade Appeals Committee.
  3. All materials used by the Department/School Grade Appeals Committee in reaching a decision (e.g., disputed examinations and papers).
  4. The course syllabus.

5. Report from the Department/School Grade Appeals Committee to Department Chair on the decision and basis for it.
6. Letter from Department Chair notifying student and instructor of decision.

**D.** The Senate Grade Appeals Committee (consisting of 4 faculty members and 3 students) will then review all the written evidence. The Committee may interview individuals involved in the grade appeal or other resource persons. It shall notify the student and the instructor of a scheduled committee meeting, thereby providing an opportunity for them to appear separately before the committee.

After considering all the evidence within the grading standards previously established for the class, the Committee will meet in closed session and will reach a decision by majority vote. All proceedings are confidential. The Chair of the Committee shall inform all parties concerned (i.e. student, instructor, department chair, registrar) of its decision in writing. **The decision of the Senate Grade Appeals Committee is final.**

**E.** The Senate Grade Appeals Committee may not accept appeals (a) in cases where a charge of academic dishonesty is pending, or (b) concerning changes from a letter grade to CR/NCR, or changes from CR/NCR to letter grades.

### **III.**

## **Appeal in Instructor's Absence**

So that a student's grade appeal can be judged in an instructor's absence, the Department Chair shall be responsible for obtaining and keeping on file in the Department/School Office the following:

1. Copy of their grade books
2. The student's final examinations
3. An address where they can be reached
4. Grading standards (criteria) for each course
5. Course syllabus