

## **PROCEDURES AND TIMELINES FOR AN ACADEMIC APPEAL RELATED TO FACE-TO-FACE COURSES**

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the appeal process. Procedures and timelines for the appeal process must be obtained from the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies. Appeals are not heard in the summer.

### **A. ACADEMIC APPEAL REGARDING MATTERS OTHER THAN GRADES**

If a student wishes to appeal an academic issue that is not a final grade appeal, she or he should contact the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies. The Dean or the Director will assist the student in determining the appropriate process or policy to be followed. The student may be requested to submit a letter of appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee. The chair of the Committee will invite the student and whomever the Committee deems appropriate to a hearing to be scheduled within three weeks of the submission of the letter of appeal. A decision will be rendered at the end of the hearing.

### **B. ACADEMIC APPEAL REGARDING FINAL GRADE ISSUES**

**Bases for Grade Appeal:** A student has the right to appeal an assigned final course grade if the student believes that:

- The final grade was the result of a miscalculation of work presented by the student, and/or
- The final grade does not reflect the weighted values specified in the course syllabus, and/or
- The final grade does not reflect course requirements as stated in the course syllabus.

The process should begin no later than the end of the third full week of the start of the next full semester. A full semester is defined as a fifteen-week term designated as 'fall' or 'spring' by the Registrar.

It is the student's responsibility to assemble all supporting documentation. Documentation should include the course syllabus, tests, quizzes, all other written assignments, and any correspondence or other material relevant to assigning the grade.

### **STEPS TO BE TAKEN IN REQUESTING A GRADE APPEAL BY A STUDENT IN A FACE-TO-FACE COURSE**

**Step 1:** Within one week of obtaining the appeals policy/procedures from the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies, the student must begin the process with the instructor of the course.<sup>1</sup> The student requests and participates in a meeting with the instructor of record to discuss her or his issues of the grade appeal. Using the *Grade Appeal* form (part of the *Grade Appeal Policy and Procedures* initially obtained from the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies), the student states the reason for challenging the course grade.

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<sup>1</sup> If the instructor is no longer associated with Fontbonne or is on leave from the university, regardless of the reason, the chair (or her or his designee) of the department in which the course is housed will serve in the capacity of *instructor*.

After meeting with the student, the instructor records the outcome of the meeting on the *Grade Appeal* form and signs and dates the form. The student also signs and dates the form.

If the student agrees with the outcome, the process ends at this point and no further appeal on this issue is allowed at a later date. The student returns the *Grade Appeal* form with the appropriate signatures to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies.

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**Step 2:** If the issue is not resolved and the student wishes to proceed with the appeal, within one week of the completion of Step 1, the student contacts the department chair in which the course is housed to schedule a meeting.<sup>2</sup> Before the meeting, the student assembles all supporting documentation and brings it to the chair or the designee. The *Grade Appeal* form must be attached. The chair invites the instructor of the course to attend the meeting. At this meeting, the student discusses the issue of the grade appeal. The chair records the outcome of the meeting on the *Grade Appeal* form and signs and dates the form. The student also signs and dates the form.

If the outcome is acceptable to the student, no further appeal on this issue is allowed at a later date. The student returns the *Grade Appeal* form with the appropriate signatures to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies.

**Step 3:** If the issue is not resolved in Step 2, the student may request a meeting within five academic days after the completion of Step 2 with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss her or his intention to continue the appeal process.

If the student requests a formal hearing at this meeting, she or he must provide all supporting documentation and a copy of the *Grade Appeal* form to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies. Within five academic days of this meeting, the Dean or Director contacts the chair of the Academic Appeals Committee and requests a hearing.

**Step 4:** The chair of the Academic Appeals Committee will assemble a committee of three faculty and three students. Unless some extenuating circumstance warrants, the hearing date should be scheduled to occur within three weeks of the completion of Step 3. The student making the appeal and the instructor attend and present their cases at the hearing.

All materials filed by the student and the instructor will be available to the members of the Academic Appeals Committee before the hearing. The materials will be housed and must be read in the Office of Academic Affairs.

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<sup>2</sup> If the chair is the instructor of record, then another member in the department will serve as the designee. This could be the senior member in the department.

## THE HEARING:

- A. A minimum of six members, with an equal number of faculty and students, must be present for a hearing. One of the faculty members will serve as chair.
- B. It is expected that the student and instructor are present at the hearing. However, if the student or instructor does not attend the scheduled hearing, the Committee will proceed with the hearing. If the appeal involves an instructor who is no longer connected with the University, the department chairperson (or her or his designee) may act on the instructor's behalf.
- C. The Committee chairperson presides over the hearing, and is responsible for maintaining orderly procedures. Subject to being overruled by a majority of the members of the Committee, the chairperson has the power to rule on the relevance of evidence presented.
- D. The student and the instructor have the right to have an advisor who must come from the Fontbonne University community. This individual will not be permitted to address the Committee or make statements.
- E. The Committee must give the parties involved the opportunity to verbally present their cases before it.
- F. Either party may request to bring in no more than two witnesses. Witnesses are present only for the portion of the hearing in which their statements are to be heard. All parties may ask questions of any witness.
- G. All hearings are closed.
- H. On the basis of the evidence presented at the hearing, the Committee must reach its decision immediately in executive session.
  1. Committee members will vote by secret ballot. A simple majority of votes is necessary to pass the appeal. In the event of a tie vote, the appeal will be forwarded to the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs or her or his designee for a final determination.
  2. The decision made by the Committee or, in the event of a tie vote, by the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs or her or his designee, **may not be appealed.**
  3. The Academic Appeals Committee chairperson will communicate in writing the Committee's decision to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies, the student, instructor, departmental chairperson or designee, and the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs or her or his designee.

## **OUTCOME**

The instructor must complete the following within one week after the decision is handed down:

- Review the decision communicated in writing by the Academic Appeals Committee chairperson.
- Make the final decision as to whether or not a grade change should be made.
- If a grade change is to be made, the instructor will submit a *Change of Grade* form to the Office of the Registrar and will notify the Dean or the Director of the final grade.
- If the instructor elects not to change the grade, the instructor will notify, in writing, the Dean or Director of this decision.

Within one week, the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies will notify, in writing, the student and the department chair or designee of the implementation of the final decision.

If the student chooses to make the Committee's decision a part of her or his permanent file, the student should request the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies to convey the decision to the Registrar; the decision will be transmitted by that office to graduate schools, employers, and others to whom the student requests that a transcript be sent.

All materials, communications, and discussions are confidential. An official record of the proceedings will be kept in the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Office of the Director of Graduate Studies for a period five years, after which it will be destroyed.

***Records may not be used in any detrimental way against either the student or the instructor.***