

# *Grade Appeal Policy and Procedures*

## *Online and Continuing Education*

### *Preamble*

The evaluation or assessment of student performance leading to the assignment of the final course grade involves exercise of independent and professional judgment by individual college faculty and academic staff. The joint statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students (AAUP, October 1967) provides: "Students should have protection through an orderly process against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation. At the same time, they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled." (AAUP Policy Documents and Reports, 1984 Edition, page 142)

### *Policy*

All students enrolled in courses in Online and Continuing Education shall be afforded an opportunity to seek redress of perceived grievances concerning the assessment of student performance by faculty and academic staff. Recognizing that the evaluation of student performance is based upon the professional judgment of instructors, grievances will not be considered unless based upon one or more of the following factors:

- An error was made in grade computation
- The grade was based on factors contrary to those stated in the course syllabus or a reasonable interpretation of it
- The grade reflected, in whole or part, some penalty for actions involving the freedom of written or spoken classroom expression
- The grade involved some breach of federal or state constitutional protections, federal laws, Regents' Rules, or UW Oshkosh policies.

## *Grade Appeal: Student Grievance Procedures*

### *Preliminary Procedures*

- The student must attempt an informal resolution of the problem with the instructor no later than the 10th day of the next regular semester.
- If the informal process with the instructor does not resolve the problem, the student should communicate with the Director of Instruction within five working days. The Director may either attempt informal resolution of the problem within five working days or inform the student in writing of formal grievance policies within that same time limit.

### *Formal Procedures*

#### **1. Director's Procedures**

- If the director decides that an attempt at informal resolution is inappropriate or should that attempt be unsuccessful, the student may request a formal review of the matter by a grievance committee. This request must be received by the director within five working days of the notification of the failure of the attempt at mediation. The student's request shall be in writing and shall include the nature of the grievance and its basis from the four factors listed in the "Policy" section above, the attempt at informal resolution, the desired outcome that the student wishes, and all supporting evidence. The director will, within five working days, arrange for the formation of an ad hoc grievance committee.
- At the same time, the director will acknowledge the student's request and inform the instructor of it. If the instructor, upon seeing the petition, wishes to respond, this must be done within five working days.

- Upon receipt of the response from the student and the instructor, the director will convene the grievance committee within five working days and deliver to it all written documents concerning the case, including a written account of the chair's attempt at mediation, if any.

## **2. Grievance Committee**

- The committee will review the materials presented. It may on its own initiative call for oral presentations to gather or clarify information, and it may make written inquiries of either or both the student and the instructor for the same purpose. Should further evidence be presented to the committee, each person will be given the opportunity to respond.
- Following its review of the evidence the committee will, on the basis of this evidence, render a formal recommendation and communicate that recommendation to the director within 10 working days of the first meeting. The report will include the committee's findings of fact, its recommendation, and its rationale for the recommendation.
- The director will render a decision within five working days of receipt of the committee's recommendation and inform those involved.
- Should the student reject the director's decision or the instructor refuse a grade change at the departmental level, the student may continue the grievance with the Executive Director for Online and Continuing Education within five working days after the notification.

## **3. Online and Continuing Education Executive Director Action**

- The Executive Director for Online and Continuing Education will review the documents in the case, and in particular the findings, recommendations, and the rationale for these at each level of review, and will render a decision to the student and the instructor, indicating the reasons for it. Copies will be sent to the Director of Instruction. The Executive Director's decision will be considered final, with no appeal possible.

### *Conditions*

- At all levels of review, the burden of proof will be on the student.
- The term "working days" shall refer to those days when classes are actually scheduled.
- All grievance petitions must be individually filed.