



QUILLEN COLLEGE of MEDICINE

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy Name/Number: Grade Appeal Process Policy / ADMIN-0825-28

Policy Owner: Vice Dean of Academic Affairs

Committees, Departments, or Individuals Responsible for Implementation: Academic Affairs – Student Promotions

Original Approval Date: 12/9/2025

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Policy Advisory Committee Review Date: 12/9/2025

Date of Next Review (All policies are reviewed by the Policy Advisory Committee every 3 years unless circumstances for an earlier review is identified.): 12/9/2028

A. Policy Statement:

A student may appeal a course grade if there is evidence that the grade was assigned in a malicious, capricious, erroneous, or arbitrary manner.

B. Purpose of Policy:

To provide steps which provide a guideline for the appeals process.

C. Scope of Policy (applies to):

All Quillen College of Medicine students.

D. Policy Activities:

Basis for Appeal

A student may appeal a course grade if there is evidence that the grade was assigned in a malicious, capricious, erroneous, or arbitrary manner. The following steps provide a guideline for the appeals process.

I. Level One – Instructor Review

- A. A student contacts the instructor to schedule a meeting no later than three weeks after the beginning of the next term, excluding summer school.
- B. The student should discuss the assigned grade with the faculty member and attempts to understand the instructor's reasons for assigning the grade.
- C. If an agreement/understanding is reached, the process ends. In the event of an impasse between the student and faculty member, the student may move the appeal forward by following the procedure outlined in Level Two.
- D. If the faculty member is no longer with the university, the student moves directly to Level Two.

II. **Level Two- Departmental Review**

A. Student Responsibility

The student files a written appeal with the department chair within ten (10) business days of the date of the conference with the faculty member in Level One (if the student begins the appeal process with Level Two, the request must be submitted no later than three weeks after the beginning of the next term)

The written appeal shall be concise and specific and state the student's specific request and grounds for the request. The student should include all known information relating to the appeal. After receiving such an appeal from the student, the chair shall review with the faculty member the substance of the student's appeal and seek to determine its validity.

B. Review of the Appeal

Within fourteen (14) business days of receiving the appeal, the department chair reviews the documentation and discusses the student's grade assignment with the instructor and pertinent individuals. The department chair may attempt, but is not required, to seek a resolution by agreement.

The department chair issues a written statement of findings which shall indicate whether an informal resolution has occurred and include a recommendation concerning the appeal. The written statement of finding is issued to both the instructor and the student and is part of the appeal record.

In cases where the department chair is the instructor who assigned the grade under appeal, the Dean assumes the duties of the Department Chair in this part of the process.

C. Finding in Favor of the Student

1. If the Department Chair determines that the grade is inappropriate, the finding will recommend that the faculty member change the grade. The faculty member may or may not concur with this recommendation
2. The faculty member has ten (10) business days to submit a written response indicating whether the grade will be changed, or provide reasoning for not changing the grade. If the faculty member does not respond by the deadline, the Department Chair may change the grade.
3. The Department Chair notifies the student in writing within ten business (10) days of receiving the faculty member's written response, informing the student whether the faculty member will change the grade.
4. If the grade is changed to the student's satisfaction, the matter is concluded.

D. Finding Not in Favor of the Student/Faculty objects to grade change

If the finding is not in favor or if the Department Chair objects to the grade change, the Department Chair notifies the student in writing of the finding and the right to proceed to Level Three.

If the grade will not be changed, copies of all written communication mentioned above should be sent by the chair to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs.

III. Level 3 – Grade Appeal Hearing Panel and Dean Review

If the grade is not changed to the satisfaction of the student at the departmental level, the student may appeal the assigned grade in writing to the Dean of the Quillen College of Medicine. The appeal shall be prepared in writing by the student in consultation with the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs of the Quillen College of Medicine. The Dean of the Quillen College of Medicine may follow one of two procedures. The dean may discuss the case with the student, the faculty member, the chair of the department in which the course was taught, and the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs of the Quillen College of Medicine.

Following these discussions, the Dean of the Quillen College of Medicine may make a recommendation to the faculty member, the student, and the departmental chair. If this results in an acceptable solution to all parties, the matter is concluded. If not, the appeal will be forwarded to the Student Promotions Committee, which will serve as the hearing body. The dean may appoint the Student Promotions Committee as a hearing body upon receiving the initial appeal

A. Student's Responsibility

Within ten (10) business days of receiving the Department Chair's written statement, the student files a written appeal to the Dean. This appeal includes all the elements submitted to the Department Chair in Level Two and includes all written statements from the Department Chair that were issued in Level Two.