
Administrative Procedure
Chapter 4 – Academic Affairs

AP 4231 GRADE CHANGES

References:

Education Code Sections 76224 and 76232;
Title 5 Section 55025

Responsibility

- A. The Vice President of Academic Affairs shall be responsible for the overall coordination and implementation of the procedures relating to change of grades.
- B. The Dean of Enrollment Services, as the official District custodian of student records, shall be responsible for the implementation of these procedures and shall ensure, through appropriate security measures and internal procedures, that no grade is changed without proper authority as defined in these procedures.
- C. The Associate Vice President of Human Resources, as the official District investigator of complaints of unlawful discrimination, shall be responsible for investigating any allegations of unlawful discrimination that come before the Grade Review Committee, and that after the complaint of unlawful discrimination has been properly addressed, the Associate Vice President of Human Resources shall refer the matter back to the Grade Review Committee for proper handling of the grade dispute in accordance with these procedures.

Definitions

- A. Grades are A, B, C, D, F, P (Pass), NP (No Pass)
- B. Non-evaluative symbols are I (Incomplete), IP (In Progress), W (Withdrawal), MW (Military Withdrawal), EW (Excused Withdrawal), NS (No Show), NA (Not Active), and RD (Report Delayed).
- C. "Mistake" includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - 1. A clerical error in recording the grade on official documents.
 - 2. A mathematical error or miscalculation of the grade.
 - 3. An error relating to a quiz, test, examination or any other evaluative basis upon which a grade is determined including participation or attendance.

4. An incorrect application of the College grading policy.
- D. "Fraud" may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 1. The assignment of a grade to a student who has not met the requirements for such a grade.
 2. The assignment of a higher grade than earned for any form of personal payment or favors, or the assignment of a lower grade than earned because of the absence of such payment or favors.
 3. The application of any grading standard based on unlawful discrimination.
 4. Inaccurate recording or change of a grade by any person who gains access to grade records without authorization.
 - E. "Bad Faith" includes, but is not limited to, any act that deviates from an announced grading standard or procedure and which adversely affects the grade of an individual or individuals.
 - F. "Incompetency" includes, but is not limited to, the diminished capacity of an instructor to teach and/or assign grades within acceptable standards.

Processes

- A. The instructor of the course shall determine the grade to be awarded to each student. A grade assigned by the instructor shall be final in the absence of mistake, fraud, bad faith or incompetency.
- B. A student who has been assigned a grade which she/he/they believes to be incorrect may file a request for a change of grade. Such request must be filed in writing on appropriate District forms within two years of when the grade was assigned. The instructor of record, the department head, and the Dean of the College (if still employed by the District), shall determine if the request shall be approved or denied in accordance with these procedures and the college grading policy. If the instructor is no longer employed by the District, the Grade Review Committee shall make the determination. If the procedure requires that a student first request a grade change from the instructor, provisions shall be made to allow another faculty member to substitute for the instructor if the student has filed a discrimination complaint, if the instructor is not available or where the District determines that it is possible that there may have been gross misconduct by the original instructor. In the case of fraud, bad faith, or incompetence, the final determination concerning removal or change of grade will be made by the Director of Admissions and Records. In all cases, the instructor who first awarded the grade will be given written notice of the change.
- C. The instructor of record may initiate a grade change at any time provided she/he/they is/are still employed by the District.

- D. An administrative grade review may be initiated at any time. All administrative grade reviews shall be forwarded to the Grade Review Committee for appropriate action.
- E. A "W" non-evaluative symbol shall not be assigned, or if assigned, shall be removed, from a student's academic record, if a determination is made that the student withdrew from the course due to discriminatory treatment or due to retaliation for alleging discriminatory treatment or that the student withdrew because he or she reasonably believed that remaining in the course would subject him or her to discriminatory treatment or retaliation for alleging discriminatory treatment.
- F. The removal or change of an incorrect grade from a student's record shall only be done pursuant to Education Code Section 76232 or by an alternative method that ensures that each student shall be afforded an objective and reasonable review of the requested grade change.

Grade Review Committee

Membership

The Grade Review Committee shall consist of the Dean of Enrollment Services, as a nonvoting consultant and facilitator, an instructional dean to be appointed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and three faculty members to be appointed by the Academic Senate President. Two faculty members will be assigned for a three-year term and one faculty member will be assigned on a case-by-case basis.

Responsibilities

The role of the Grade Review Committee is to adjudicate each case in an unbiased manner and without conflict of interest.

Should the Grade Review Committee be made aware that the grade dispute involves an allegation of unlawful discrimination, the committee shall temporarily suspend the grade review process and immediately refer the matter to the Associate Vice President of Human Resources for review and investigation of the allegation of unlawful discrimination in accordance with the procedures.

Appeals

Rights - Any student, instructor or administrator may appeal a decision involving a grade review.

- A. **Student Appeal Procedures**
 - 1. **Informal** - The Dean of Enrollment Services shall conduct an informal meeting of the parties involved in an attempt to resolve the issue prior to a formal appeal hearing.
 - 2. **Formal** - A formal appeal must be requested in writing through the Office of Admissions and Records. If the appeal is granted, the Grade Review Committee shall conduct a hearing in which all parties to the appeal are

present and shall either uphold or deny the appeal. Decisions made by the Grade Review Committee are final.

B. Instructor and Administrative Appeals

Instructor and administrative appeals shall be directed to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Security of Grade Records

- A. The District shall implement security measures for student records that assure no person may obtain access to student grade records without proper authorization. These measures shall be installed as part of any computerized grade data storage system.
- B. The measures implemented by the District shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, password protection for all student grade data bases, locking mechanisms for computer stations from which student grade data bases can be viewed, and strict limits on the number of persons who are authorized to change student grades.
- C. Persons authorized to change grades shall be designated by the Dean of Enrollment Services. No more than five District employees may be authorized to change student grades. Only regular full-time employees of the District may be authorized to change grades. Student workers shall not have access to grade records, and student workers may not change grades at any time.
- D. Any person who discovers that grades have been changed by someone other than the persons authorized to do so shall notify the Director of Admissions and Records immediately. The Director of Admissions and Records shall immediately take steps to lock the grade storage system entirely while an investigation is conducted.
- E. If any student's grade record is found to have been changed without proper authorization, the District will notify 1) the student; 2) the instructor who originally awarded the grade; 3) any educational institution to which the student has transferred; 4) the accreditation agency; and 5) appropriate local law enforcement authorities.
- F. Whenever a grade is changed for any reason, corrected transcripts will be sent to any educational institution to which a student has transferred.
- G. Any student or employee who is found to have gained access to grade recording systems without proper authorization, or who is found to have changed any grade without proper authority to do so, shall be subject to discipline in accordance with District policies and procedures.
- H. Any person who is found to have gained access to grade recording systems without proper authorization, or who is found to have changed any grade

without proper authority to do so, shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the college where the incident occurred.

Also see BP/AP 3310 Records Retention and Destruction, BP/AP 4230 Grading and Academic Record Symbols, BP 4231 Grade Changes, BP/AP 5040 Student Records, Directory Information, and Privacy; and AP 5530 Student Rights and Grievances.

Approved: No date

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