

University of Connecticut  
Senate scholastic Standards Committee  
Report to the University Senate  
October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Presentation  
November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Vote

Appeals of Assigned Course Grades: Senate By-Laws

A. Background:

The most significant change will be to reduce the initial grade appeal deadline from six months to ten days to facilitate grade reviews in a timely manner. This is of particular importance to students who need a grade for continuation of financial aid, for continued status as a student, and for application to jobs and/or internships. In this era of rapid electronic communication, six months seems an unnecessary delay.

The clarifications include:

- Pointing students to section E.7 so that students understand the accepted criteria for grade changes – a computational error, clerical error, and the discovery of overlooked components in a student’s body of work.
- Greater specificity at each level of the process.
- Provisions for contingencies on the part of those involved that might delay the process.
- Clarification of the process at the level of the Faculty Grade Change Review Committee (FGCRC) at each school or college, particularly that, in pressing circumstances, the Deans/Dean’s Designee may appoint an ad hoc review committee if the FGCRS is unavailable, e.g., summer recess.

B. Current Relevant By-Laws

*E.7 Change of Course Grades*

*E.8 Appeals of Assigned Course Grades*

*E.7 Change of Course Grades*

*-provided for information purposes only-*

Grades are part of the student’s permanent record; they should never be changed for reasons unrelated to courses requirements or quality of work. Once the grade has been submitted, an instructor may neither accept additional work nor give additional examinations.

Instructors should change grades for the following reasons: a computational error, clerical error, and the discovery of overlooked components in a students’ body of work. In cases when the instructor concludes that a course grade ought to be changes, the instructor determines a corrected grade and initiates the grade change process. The head of the department or program offering the course and the dean of the school or college in which the course is taught will be notified of a grade change to ensure consistency with the By-Laws.

*E.8 Appeals of Assigned Course Grades  
-provided for information purposes only-*

If a student believes that an error in grading has occurred, the student may request (within six months of the final grade being posted) that the instructor to review the grade. If the student cannot contact the instructor, then the student should contact the department head. When the course is in a non-departmentalized school or college, the student should contact that dean or the dean's designee.

If the instructor agrees that a grade change is justified, the instructor will initiate the grade change using procedures described by the Registrar.

If the instructor believes that the original grade is correct, the student has 30 days to appeal the decision to the head of the department in which the course is taught. The department head will seek input from the instructor and the student to determine his/her opinion related to the merits of the grade appeal.

If after this review, the instructor and the department head agree that a grade change is justified, the instructor will initiate the grade change according to the procedures described by the registrar.

If the instructor and the department agree that a grade change is not justified, the department head shall notify the student in writing with a copy to the instructor. If the student is dissatisfied with the appeal decision, the student has 10 working days to request, through the dean of the school or college in which the course is taught, a review by the Faculty Grade Change Review Panel (see below).

If the department head thins that a grade change is justified but the instructor does not agree, the department head shall request, through the dean of the school or college in which the course is taught, a review by the Faculty Grade Change Review Panel. The department's head request shall be made within 10 working days of completion of the grade appeal review.

Faculty Grade Change Review Panel. The Faculty Grade Change Review Panel, hereafter referred to as the Faculty Review Panel, shall be composed of three full-time faculty members appointed by the dean of the school or college in which the course is taught. The Faculty Review Panel shall convene a hearing within 10 working days of notification of a case. Both the appealing student and the course instructor should be present at the hearing. The student shall be afforded an opportunity to state the grounds on which he or she is appealing the grade. The instructor will be afforded an opportunity to document the basis on which the grade was awarded. Both parties may present supporting evidence and/or request testimony of others. The Faculty Review Panel may request input from the department head.

If the Faculty Review Panel recommends a grade change, it is authorized to execute the change by sending to the Registrar a change of grade request signed by all members of the Faculty Review Panel. The Faculty Review Panel will send a written report of the decision to the instructor, the student, the department head, and the dean of the school or college offering the course within 10 days of the decision. The decision of the Faculty Review Panel shall be considered final.

C. Proposal to Senate: Motion

We propose to amend the By-Laws, Rules and Regulation of the University Senate as follows with deleted items in strikethrough and new language underlined. By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the University of Senate II.E.8.

### II.E.8

The policy deadlines herein may be extended, depending on the current level of the appeal, by the dean/dean's designee or the Faculty Grade Change Review Committee (FGCRC, defined below) due to extenuating circumstances on the part of the student or the instructor.

In a non-departmentalized school or college, the dean or the dean's designee will serve in the role outlined for the department head. For INTD courses, the department head of the lead instructor of the course and the corresponding dean or dean's designee will serve the roles outline for department heads and deans and their designees. For UNIV courses, the UICC chair will function in place of the department head, and further appeals will directed to the Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs, who will act in place of a dean.

All steps in this process taken by the student, instructor, department head, and the FGCRC must be in writing.

#### Grade Appeal Procedure

If a student believes that an assigned course grade is in error ~~error in grading has occurred~~, the student has ten (10) working days from the posting of the grade or the last day grades are to be posted, whichever is later, to ask ~~may request (within six months of the final grade being posted)~~ that the instructor to review the grade. ~~If the student cannot contact the instructor, then the student should contact the department head. When the course is in a non-departmentalized school or college, the student should contact that dean or the dean's designee.~~ Allowable reasons for a grade change request are defined in current By-Laws (E.7 above) and comprise "...computational errors, clerical errors, and the discovery of overlooked components in a student's body of work."

If the Instructor does not respond to the student within five (5) working days (or sooner if extenuating circumstances merit a more expedited review), the student should contact the department head in which the course is offered.

If the instructor agrees that a grade change is justified, the instructor will initiate the grade change using procedures described by the Registrar.

If the instructor ~~believes that the original grade~~ notifies the student that the original grade is correct, the student has ~~ten (10) working 30~~ days to appeal the decision to the head of the department in which the course is ~~offered taught~~. The department head will seek input from the instructor and the student to determine ~~his/her opinion related to~~ the merits of the grade appeal and provide a decision within ten (10) working days from date of the appeal.

If after this review, the instructor and the department head agree that a grade change is justified, the instructor will initiate the grade change according to the procedures described by the registrar.

If the instructor and the department agree that a grade change is not justified, the department head shall notify the student in writing with a copy to the instructor. If the student is dissatisfied with the appeal decision, the student has ten (10) working days to request, through the dean of the school or college in which the course is taught, a review by the Faculty Grade Change Review Committee ~~Panel~~ (see below).

If the department head thinks that a grade change is justified but the instructor does not agree, the department head shall request, within ten (10) working days, through the dean of the school or college in which the course is taught, a review by the Faculty Grade Change Review ~~Panel~~Committee. ~~The department's head request shall be made within 10 working days of completion of the grade appeal review.~~

#### Faculty Grade Change Review ~~Panel~~Committee

Each school or college shall appoint a standing Faculty Grade Change Review Committee (FGCRC) composed of a minimum ~~The Faculty Grade Change Review Panel, hereafter referred to as the Faculty Review Panel, shall be composed of three full-time faculty members appointed by the dean of the school or college in which the course is taught or assign the responsibilities of grade appeals to a standing committee within the school or college. If, due to exigency, a grade appeal must be resolved and the standing committee is not available, the dean or the dean's designee of the school or college will convene an ad hoc~~ FGRC of three full-time faculty members to hear the appeal.

The FGRC should perform an administrative review to determine if there are sufficient grounds to proceed with an appeal hearing. If so, the ~~Faculty Review Panel~~FGCRC shall convene schedule a hearing within ten (10) working days of notification of a case. ~~Except under extenuating circumstances approved by the FGRC,~~ Both the ~~appealing student~~ appealing the grade and the course instructor ~~should~~must be present, either in person or via electronic communication, at the hearing. The student will speak first and shall be afforded an opportunity to state the grounds for the grade appeal on which he or she is appealing the grade, followed by the instructor's response. ~~The instructor will be afforded an opportunity to document the basis on which the grade was awarded.~~ Both parties ~~may~~must present supporting evidence related to the grade appeal and/or ~~may~~ request testimony of others. ~~The Faculty Review Panel~~FGCRC may request input from the department head.

If the Faculty Review Panel recommends a grade change, it is authorized to execute the change by sending to the Registrar a change of grade request signed by all members of the Faculty Review Panel. ~~If the FGRC agrees (by a majority vote) that a grade change is warranted, the FGRC chair will send a grade change notification to the registrar. If, however, the FGRC does not agree that a grade change is warranted, the instructor's grade stands. The FGRC's decision shall be considered final. The Faculty Review Panel~~FGCRC will send a written report of the decision to the instructor, the student, the department head, and the dean of the school or college offering the course within ten (10) days of the decision. The decision of the Faculty Review Panel shall be considered final.

#### D. Clean copy

##### *II.E.8*

The policy deadlines herein may be extended, depending on the current level of the appeal, by the dean/dean's designee or the Faculty Grade Change Review Committee (FGCRC, defined below) due to extenuating circumstances on the part of the student or the instructor.

In a non-departmentalized school or college, the dean or the dean's designee will serve in the role outlined for the department head. For INTD courses, the department head of the lead instructor of the course and the corresponding dean or dean's designee will serve the roles outline for department heads and deans and their designees. For UNIV courses, the UICC chair will function in place of the department

head, and further appeals will be directed to the Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs, who will act in place of a dean.

All steps in this process taken by the student, instructor, department head, and the FGCRS must be in writing.

### Grade Appeal Procedure

If a student believes that an assigned course grade is in error, the student has ten (10) working days from the posting of the grade or the last day grades are to be posted, whichever is later, to ask the instructor to review the grade. Allowable reasons for a grade change request are defined in current By-Laws (E.7) and comprise "...computational errors, clerical errors, and the discovery of overlooked components in a student's body of work."

If the Instructor does not respond to the student within five (5) working days (or sooner if extenuating circumstances merit a more expedited review), the student should contact the department head in which the course is offered.

If the instructor agrees that a grade change is justified, the instructor will initiate the grade change using procedures described by the Registrar.

If the instructor notifies the student that the original grade is correct, the student has ten (10) working days to appeal the decision to the head of the department in which the course is offered. The department head will seek input from the instructor and the student to determine the merits of the grade appeal and provide a decision within ten (10) working days from date of the appeal.

If after this review, the instructor and the department head agree that a grade change is justified, the instructor will initiate the grade change according to the procedures described by the registrar.

If the instructor and the department head agree that a grade change is not justified, the department head shall notify the student in writing with a copy to the instructor. If the student is dissatisfied with the appeal decision, the student has ten (10) working days to request, through the dean of the school or college in which the course is taught, a review by the Faculty Grade Change Review Committee ~~Panel~~-(see below).

If the department head thinks that a grade change is justified but the instructor does not agree, the department head shall request, within ten (10) working days, through the dean of the school or college in which the course is taught, a review by the Faculty Grade Change Review Committee.

### Faculty Grade Change Review Committee

Each school or college shall appoint a standing Faculty Grade Change Review Committee (FGCRS) composed of a minimum of three full-time faculty members or assign the responsibilities of grade appeals to a standing committee within the school or college. If, due to exigency, a grade appeal must be resolved and the standing committee is not available, the dean or the dean's designee of the school or college will convene an *ad hoc* FGCRS of three full-time faculty members to hear the appeal.

The FGCRS should perform an administrative review to determine if there are sufficient grounds to proceed with an appeal hearing. If so, the FGCRS shall schedule a hearing within ten (10) working days of

notification of a case. Both the student appealing the grade and the course instructor must be present, either in person or via electronic communication, at the hearing. The student will speak first and state the grounds for the grade appeal, followed by the instructor's response. Both parties must present supporting evidence related to the grade appeal and/or may request testimony of others. The FGCRS may request input from the department head.

If the FGCRS agrees (by a majority vote) that a grade change is warranted, the FGCRS chair will send a grade change notification to the registrar. If, however, the FGCRS does not agree that a grade change is warranted, the instructor's grade stands. The FGCRS's decision shall be considered final. The FGCRS will send a written report of the decision to the instructor, the student, the department head, and the dean of the school or college offering the course within ten (10) days of the decision.

#### E. Major Changes

- Changing the timeline for student appeals from 6 months to 10 working days
- Charging each college to establish and staff a Faculty Grade Change Review Committee (FGCRS) with three full-time faculty.
- All steps in the process must be documented in writing.
- A student has 10 days instead of 30 days to appeal to the department head after a faculty's decision denying a grade change.
- Providing the dean or the dean's designee of the school or college in which the class is offered, an administrative review of the merits of the student's grade appeal before sending the case to the FGCRS.
- If due to an exigency, the dean or the dean's designee of the school or college in which the class is offered may convene an *ad hoc* FGCRS of three full-time faculty to hear the appeal.
- Outlining a procedure for grade appeal in UNIV and INTD classes.
- Requiring the student and instructor to be present at the appeal, or via electronic communications.