Academic Grievances

The College of Education has established specific academic grievance procedures that will be followed in the event of a grade dispute between a given student and instructor. A student must initiate the grievance procedure the semester immediately following the semester the grade was awarded. The grievance process will be utilized only after the student has conferred with the instructor and department chairperson in an effort to resolve the issue (as indicated on page 3 of the grievance application).

A student may petition a departmental decision concerning a grade to the College of Education Grievance Committee when a final course grade is alleged to have been given by a faculty member in a capricious, arbitrary, or discriminatory manner. Any other classification of grade grievance must be identified and explained by the student.

a. “capricious” means not resulting from a reasonable and announced grading policy and procedure.

b. “arbitrary” means without a sound academic basis or else based primarily upon personal preference or whim.

c. “discriminatory” means differential treatment based upon race, religion, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability or national origin.

Procedural Steps

The steps to be taken in resolving grade disputes are as follows:

1. The student must attempt as soon as is reasonably feasible after receipt of the grade in question, communicate with the instructor in an effort to resolve the issue. If no satisfactory resolution is reached from the communication with the instructor or if the student fails in their attempts to communicate with the instructor, after reasonable effort, the student will then proceed to step 2.
2. A student whose dispute has not been resolved satisfactorily utilizing the directives in step 1 (stated above), should officially submit his/her grievance in writing to the chairperson of the department in which the course is offered. The faculty member of the course will in turn be required to submit a written rebuttal to the student’s grievance. The chairperson will attempt to communicate directly with the instructor and the student in an effort to resolve the grievance. The chair will submit a written summary of his/her findings and submit to the COE Grievance committee along with the student’s grievance application. **NOTE:** When the instructor of the course also serves as department chairperson, the dispute may be filed with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs in the College of Education. In such case, the Associate Dean would assume the responsibilities originally designated for the chairperson as listed above.

3. The College of Education Grievance Committee will review each appeal, speak with both the student and faculty member and/or conduct a hearing if appropriate and necessary in an effort to resolve the academic grievance dispute. Once these procedures have been exhausted the committee will issue written findings and recommendations to the Dean of the College of Education. These findings and recommendations will be forwarded to the Dean as soon as is reasonably feasible once the committee’s decisions have been made.

4. The Dean of the College of Education will review the Grievance Committee findings and recommendations in each appeal in a timely manner. As soon as is reasonably feasible thereafter, he/she will notify the parties to the appeal in writing of his/her decision and also will provide each of the parties a copy of the Grievance Committees’ findings and recommendation(s). If the decision of the committee does not meet a student’s satisfaction, he/she may continue the grievance process at the next level, the Office of Academic Affairs.

5. In the case a College of Education student has a credible grade dispute arising out of a course offered outside of the College of Education, he/she should contact the appropriate College or School to determine the correct procedure(s) for addressing the grade grievance. **The student will be required to abide by the policies and procedures outlined by the specified college or school.**