



## **GRADE APPEAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### POLICY

- 1.01 It is the responsibility of the faculty members of the Oklahoma State University (OSU) College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) to communicate to students early in the term a clear statement of the grading practices and procedures that will be used to determine the student's final grade. If a student believes those practices and procedures were not consistently and accurately followed when the faculty member determined the student's final grade, the student has the right to appeal the grade if informal discussions fail to resolve the issue. The basis for filing a grade appeal in any course is limited to fundamental fairness in treatment of the student by the instructor as specified by the course syllabus and in light of grading of the student by the instructor relative to other students in the same course and section.
- 1.02 The deadline for filing grade appeals is no later than four (4) months after the date the grades are officially due in the Registrar's Office or six (6) weeks after the student begins a new semester, whichever comes first. All calendar dates are included in calculating the filing deadline.
- 1.03 When a student files a grade appeal, the process is not an adversarial process. The policy is intended to provide a forum in which honest differences of opinion may be discussed rationally and peacefully.
- 1.04 The burden of proof rests with the student. The burden of proof shall be a preponderance of the evidence.

### PROCEDURES

- 2.01 To appeal a final course grade and where allegations of academic dishonesty or misconduct are not involved, the student must adhere to the following procedures:
  - a. Prior to filing a grade appeal, students are expected to seek resolution through informal means. Students should begin the informal process by discussing the matter directly with the Instructor or Course Director. If the attempt to resolve the matter is successful, no further progression through this policy is warranted.
  - b. If an attempt at informal resolution is not successful, the student must complete and submit a Grade Appeal Form to initiate the formal appeals process. Grade Appeal Forms are available to students in the Office of Student Affairs or on the OSU COM website under [Academic Policies, Forms and Handbooks](#). To complete the form, the student must discuss the grade appeal with and obtain signatures from the Instructor, Course Director, Unit Dean, and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. If during these discussions it becomes clear that a grade change is necessary, the Instructor, the Course Director, the Unit Dean, or the Associate Dean can submit a Change of Grade Form to the Registrar.
  - c. The student must submit the Grade Appeal Form to the Assistant or Associate Dean of Enrollment Management with a written description of the grounds for the appeal. The description of the appeal must set forth:
    - i. A full description of the complaint;
    - ii. The rationale for considering the decision to be in error; and
    - iii. The specific remedy requested.

- The Assistant or Associate Dean of Enrollment Management verifies completion of the form and all other supporting documents before assembling a Grade Appeal Board (the “Board”). If a student has conferred with and delivered the appropriate form to a faculty member, but the faculty member has not returned the form within five (5) business days, the Board may hear the case without that faculty member’s signature. In such a case, the Board should hear the case without prejudice, and the Board should not restrict the rights of the faculty member to present testimony and evidence before the Board.
- d. The Assistant or Associate Dean of Enrollment Management, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Clinical Education, Associate Dean for Basic Sciences, and the Student Senate President, will appoint a Grade Appeal Board after a student properly files a grade appeal. The Board will consist of two (2) basic science faculty, two (2) clinical faculty, and two (2) students. To afford due process, the Assistant or Associate Dean of Enrollment Management should pay careful attention to assembling an objective committee. The student filing the appeal has the right to refuse up to five (5) Board member appointments. At the first Board meeting, the Board will elect one (1) faculty member to serve as Chair. The Chair will vote only in case of a tie vote.
  - e. The Chair may schedule meetings of the Board to discuss the appeal prior to formal hearings. A quorum must be present to convene an official meeting. Quorum is met when fifty percent (50%) or more of the membership is present.
  - f. The Chair schedules hearings for the student and faculty. The student and faculty must be provided with at least three (3) days’ notice prior to the hearing date, unless they waive such notice in writing. Appointments for hearings are confirmed by electronic mail (email) at the parties’ official university email addresses. Hearings are generally held on the same day but never simultaneously to avoid confrontation between student and faculty. The Board may not hold a hearing unless at least five (5) of the six (6) Board members are present. Any student who fails to appear at the designated hearing date, place, and time will waive his or her right to the appeal. Parties who are not available on campus to attend the hearing may appear by video or telephone. The Board must conclude the hearing process within thirty (30) calendar days after the student filed the appeal.
  - g. With prior notification through the Board Chair, the student and faculty have the right to present witnesses such as an advisor, student, faculty member, or other person to provide evidence to the Board to assist in establishing the factors of the case. The student and each faculty member may each request up to three (3) witnesses. The student and faculty must provide the Chair with a list of any witnesses he or she plans to call to the hearing at least two (2) business days before the hearing date. The Board has the option of calling additional witnesses if it votes to do so. Witnesses, if any, may be present only during their testimony. The student may be accompanied by an advisor or attorney during the hearing, but the advisor or attorney may not speak for the student during the hearing.
  - h. Faculty are required to produce evidence relevant to the grade appeal. Faculty are expected to do this by returning relevant projects or exams to the student within two (2) business days of the student requesting it. If the faculty returns work, the student must be provided a reasonable opportunity to obtain it. The student is also required to return the work within two (2) business days of the Board rendering its decision.
  - i. The Board must provide notice of its decision within three (3) business days after the final hearing date to the student, the Instructor, the Course Director, the Unit Dean, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and the Assistant or Associate Dean of Enrollment Management. Appeal Board decisions must be communicated via official university email addresses. All Appeal Board decisions are final and binding. When the Board votes to alter a grade, the Chair must send the decision to the Office of the Registrar to effect a grade change.

- j. There are cases when a student's appeal may be applicable to other students in the course (e.g., the Board determines more than one answer to an exam question is correct). If the Board votes to uphold a student's appeal and the Board determines that other students would be impacted by the issue it considered, the Course Director must meet with the Board within five (5) business days after it issues its decision to determine how to adjust grades for other affected students. If the Board and Course Director agree how to adjust grades for other students, the Course Director will adjust grades accordingly. If the Board and Course Director do not agree how to adjust grades for other students, the Board will recommend how the Course Director should adjust grades to the Dean or designee. The Dean or designee will decide whether to enforce the Board's recommendation or defer to the Course Director.