

## COURSE GRADE APPEAL INSTRUCTIONS

The **Student Course Grade Appeal Policy** explains which procedural steps you must take to solve the grade dispute, how to document your case, and how to submit your case electronically for consideration by the Student Grade Appeals Committee (SGAC).

**Please read the Student Course Grade Appeal Policy** before you start the grade appeal process summarized in the flowchart below. This flowchart is meant to give an overview of the process – it does not replace the policy.

### Structure of the Grade Appeal Process:

The grade appeal process has two phases: the **Informal Resolution Process** (a series of conversations) and the **Formal Grade Appeal** (documents to file). In cases where the **Informal Resolution Process** does not result in a resolution of the dispute, a **Formal Grade Appeal** may be filed. **Before** you file a Formal Grade Appeal, you **must** demonstrate that you tried to solve the disagreement “informally”, i.e, by contacting your instructor, and, if this conversation did not solve the dispute, by contacting the administrators to whom your instructor reports (Chair of the Department/Program, and Dean of the College – see flowchart below). These administrators will try to help you solve the situation; if there is still no resolution, they can explain next steps, and answer questions you may have about the grade appeal process and policy.

Find out if you have grounds for a grade appeal:

**Advice:** try to get this done at the start of the semester, so you give yourself enough time to complete the next steps of the process.

**Read the Student Course Grade Appeal Policy, in**  
particular sections  
IV. Jurisdiction  
VI.C.1. Basic Guidelines for Grade Appeals  
and  
the Appendix A “(Step 3) FORMAL GRADE APPEAL FORM”

### Deadlines for the Informal Resolution Process and the Formal Grade Appeal

| <b>For courses taken during the previous fall and winter session:</b> | <b>Deadline for completion:</b> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Last day to complete the Informal Resolution Process                  | March 15                        |
| Last day to complete the Formal Grade Appeal                          | March 29                        |

| <b>For courses taken during the previous spring and summer session:</b> | <b>Deadline for completion:</b> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Last day to complete the Informal Resolution Process                    | October 15                      |
| Last day to complete the Formal Grade Appeal                            | October 29                      |

## GRADE APPEAL PROCESS:

The following steps are **REQUIRED**; please take them in the order given below, and give yourself ample time to complete them before the deadline:

## INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS:

### Advice:

try to have these three conversations (steps 1-3) within the month preceding the deadline (in February / September); the last day to complete the informal resolution process is March 15 / October 15. Make sure you document your attempts to have these conversations. If the informal resolution process fails and you decide to file a formal grade appeal, the completed "Informal Resolution Process Log" **must** be submitted as part of the formal grade appeal (see below).

Step 1: Consult with the **faculty member(s)** involved to try to reach an agreement – keep all emails.

### Advice:

print the "**Informal Resolution Process Log**" (Appendix A of the policy) to keep track of your emails and conversations.

Step 1  
checkmark  
here if done:

if no agreement has been reached,

Step 2: Consult with **department chair** or **program director** – keep all emails.

(Grade appeals involving administrators who have served as the instructor for the course should be directed to the Student Grade Appeal Committee (SGAC) after Step 1.)

Step 2  
checkmark  
here if done:

if no agreement has been reached,

Step 3: Consult with **dean of the college** or **administrative director** – keep all emails

Step 3  
checkmark  
here if done:

if no agreement has been reached,

→ **re-read the Student Course Grade Appeal Policy** 😊

**Read Policy:**  
checkmark  
here if done:

## FORMAL GRADE APPEAL PROCESS:

**Advice:** don't wait until the last minute (March 15 / October 15) to ask for access

**Advice:** If you decide to file a formal appeal, contact the Academic Senate Coordinator and submit the "Informal Resolution Process Log" (step 2 of the Formal Grade Appeal Process) **as soon as** you have completed the informal resolution process, i.e., by or before March 15 / October 15. Do not file the "Informal Resolution Process Log" unless you have completed the three conversations required in the informal resolution process.

**Advice:** steps 3 and 4 are time-consuming, make sure you give yourself enough time to fill out the form and compile the documentation. Make sure you follow the correct format defined in the policy (last page). The deadline for submission is March 29 / October 29.

To start the formal grade appeal process, email the **Academic Senate Coordinator** at [academicsenateoffice@csusm.edu](mailto:academicsenateoffice@csusm.edu) who will give you access to the SGAC online Moodle container to upload your grade appeal.

Before filing a formal grade appeal, students must complete all three steps of the informal resolution process above. **Failure to complete the Informal Resolution Process will result in the rejection of your case.**

Prepare your file:  
prepare the documents for step 1-4 below **well in advance of the deadline** (templates of all forms mentioned below are attached to the policy and available in the online Moodle container):

Step 1:  
download and sign the **Agreement to Follow the Student Course Grade Appeal Policy** and the **Acknowledgement and Release** statement.

Step 2:  
download and fill out the **Informal Resolution Process Log** and compile your **Supporting Documentation** (examples: email communications with the instructor, chair, and dean of the College).

Steps 3 and 4:  
download and fill out the **Formal Grade Appeal Form** and compile your **Supporting Documentation** (examples: Syllabus; Graded assignments; Graded quizzes, tests and exams) – make sure you follow the recommended format for submitting the Supporting Documentation (see last page of policy)

**Scan all the documents (forms and supporting documentation) and upload your file into the SGAC online Moodle container**

**as early as possible, but no later than by March 29 / October 29.**

**Ask for access:**  
checkmark here if done:

Step 1  
checkmark here if done:

Step 2  
checkmark here if done:

Steps 3 and 4  
checkmark here if done:

The online Moodle container has more detailed instructions about the uploading process. It is recommended to upload the documents for Step 1 and 2 well before the deadline of March 29/October 29 – the chair of SGAC needs to review them for completeness (if all the required steps have been taken). If you wait until the last day to upload the materials, but you skipped some of the required steps, **your grade appeal may be rejected** (see policy VI.C.5. Preliminary Screening).

### **NEXT STEPS**

Please read the policy sections VI.C.5-9 for information about what happens after you have uploaded your grade appeal.

The Chair of the Student Grade Appeal Committee (SGAC) will inform you within (7) calendar days if your formal grade appeal will be reviewed by the committee or not (see policy VI.C.5. Preliminary Screening).

If your case moves forward, the SGAC will gather additional information from the instructor and then establish a timeline for resolution of the grade appeal. The time necessary to resolve the case varies (depending if the SGAC needs to consult with a panel of faculty experts, or call for a fact-finding hearing).

### **RESULTS**

At the conclusion of the grade appeal process, the SGAC will make a recommendation, either to reevaluate the grade, or to maintain it (see policy VI.C.8. Recommendation).

\* \* \*