

# Grade Appeal

## The Graduate School The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

I. Student Information: Please read the policy on the reverse side and complete the following information.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ UTC ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_

Current admission classification: \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Number of Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Professor: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for grade appeal:     unfair grade     arbitrary grade     malicious grade

I authorize the release of my academic records to Graduate Council.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### II. Request for Grade Appeal

We acknowledge that the first two steps of the appeal procedure (consultation with the professor and department head/director) have been followed in a timely manner. We are familiar with the nature of the appeal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Head

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### III. Recommendation of Grade Appeals Committee

Recommendation made\*: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of The Graduate School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Copies to: \_\_\_\_\_

I accept the recommendation of the committee.

yes     no

yes     no

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Member's Signature

\*If the student and/or faculty member rejects the recommendation of the Grade Appeals Committee, the appeal documents will be forwarded to the UTC Chancellor.

## Grade Appeals Procedure for Graduate Students

### Grounds for Appeal

Each faculty member has the prerogative and responsibility to determine in accordance with his or her best judgment the grade for each student. Whenever a student feels that his/her rights and interests have been seriously jeopardized by unfair, arbitrary, or malicious exercise of faculty grading prerogatives, he/she may appeal a grade. Failure to receive the grade desired or expected is not sufficient reason to appeal a grade. If at any step in the appeals process the University fails to respond to the student within the time specified, this shall be treated as a denial of the appeal and the student may proceed to the next step of the process.

### Appeal Process

The appeal procedure is designed to provide graduate students with a clearly defined method for appealing a grade which is deemed to have been assigned unfairly, arbitrarily, or maliciously. The following procedure is to be followed for all grades (including comprehensive examinations) that are included on a student's transcript. In all cases the instructor shall be presumed to have assigned the proper grade and the student appealing shall have the burden of proof to the contrary.

- Step 1. The student shall contact the instructor within five working days after grades are available to students. If an agreement is reached, the appeal process ends.
- Step 2. If the student does not receive a response from the instructor or if the complaint is not resolved, the student must contact the department head or director within ten working days from the date grades were available to students. The department head/director will attempt to resolve the complaint in consultation with the instructor and the student individually or together. Within five working days of the ~~initial~~ contact by the student, the department head/director will notify or confirm in writing to the student the results of this consultation. The department head/director will also notify the graduate coordinator of the program in which the student is enrolled. If an agreement is reached, the process ends. If the department head/director is the instructor of the course involved in the complaint and the problem cannot be resolved through Step 1, the department head/director will notify the student in writing of his/her decision, and the student may proceed with Step 3.
- Step 3. If an agreement is not reached at the departmental level and the student wishes to appeal, the student must obtain, complete, and return to the Graduate School office a grade appeals form within ten working days after being mailed notification or confirmation by the department head of the departmental decision. The form includes a place for the signature of the department head or director indicating that the first two steps have been followed, the signature of the dean of the appropriate college or school, a request for a hearing before the Grade Appeals Committee, and supporting information to justify the student's appeal.
- Step 4. The Dean of The Graduate School will arrange a Grade Appeals meeting to be held within ten working days after receiving the Grade Appeals form. Present at the meeting will be the Grade Appeals Committee (the Chair of the Graduate Council and three members of the Council), the student, the faculty member, the dean (or his/her designated representative) of the college or school in which the appeal originated, the Dean of The Graduate School, and up to two non-voting faculty members of the department affected. The student will be given time to present his/her case with a question-answer period following. The faculty member will then present his/her response followed by another question-answer period. The student and faculty member may be present during both presentations and during both question-answer periods, and both presentations must adhere to the issues covered in the written appeal. When the committee deems it has sufficient information to determine the case, the student, faculty member, and visiting members of the department will be asked to leave, and the committee will begin its deliberation and make its decision. If the committee decides that additional information is needed, the chair may request such information orally or in writing before the committee makes a decision.
- Step 5. The committee will recommend that 1) the grade previously assigned be upheld; or 2) the faculty member be asked to change the grade; or 3) the grade of I be assigned until completion of specified requirements agreed upon by faculty and student. The Dean of The Graduate School will send a copy of the recommendation to the student, the faculty member, the graduate coordinator, the department head/director, and the dean. Within ten working days after being mailed the recommendation, the student and faculty member must each notify the Dean of The Graduate School of an intention to accept or reject the recommendation. If both faculty and student agree to accept the recommendation of the committee, the process ends. If that recommendation includes a grade change, the faculty member will initiate the necessary change with the Records Office and notify the Dean of The Graduate School that the change has been submitted. The graduate dean will then notify the student of the change.
- Step 6. If either the student or faculty rejects the recommendation and wishes to continue the appeal process, the Dean of The Graduate School will notify the faculty member as well as the graduate coordinator, the department head or director, and the dean. The Dean of The Graduate School will then submit all materials to the Chancellor who may request additional information/materials from either/both parties. The Chancellor's decision is final, and a copy of that decision will be mailed to the student, the faculty member, the graduate coordinator, the department head/director, the college dean, and the Dean of The Graduate School.

A copy of the Graduate Student Grade Appeals Form, the results of the hearing, and the chancellor's decision (if applicable) will become a part of the student's file. A permanent record of all grade appeals reviewed by the Grade Appeals Committee shall be maintained in the of Graduate School office.