

## **Grievance Procedures (Academic)**

An academic grievance involving dissatisfaction with the quality of instruction or with the performance of an instructor is referred to as a Review of Instruction. A grievance involving dissatisfaction with a grade is considered a Grade Appeal. A grievance regarding a charge of academic dishonesty, which includes, but is not limited to plagiarism, is referred to as an Academic Dishonesty Appeal. Procedures for addressing each type of grievance are outlined below. "Working days" are defined as days when the university offices are open. All email communication will be sent to the students' Union email account.

### **Review of Instruction**

Before initiating a formal Review of Instruction, a student who is dissatisfied with the quality of instruction or with the performance of an instructor should discuss his or her concerns with the instructor. In the event that the issue is not resolved in consultation with the instructor, the student may initiate a formal Review of Instruction. A formal Review of Instruction must be filed within 60 working days of the posting of the final grade for the course and must follow the sequence noted below.

A formal Review begins with the student emailing a detailed written report of his or her concerns to the instructor's department chair or to the dean if the chair is the student's instructor. Within this report the student must identify his or her concerns and provide appropriate documentation to support each concern. After receiving an email response from the chair (or dean), the student may elect to email the written report to additional administrators, as needed, in the following sequence: the dean of the college or school, the Dean of Instruction, and the EVPAA. The student may not advance the report to the next level until he or she has received an email response from the administrator being addressed. Each administrator will attempt to provide the student with a written response within 10 working days from the sent date of the student's email. The student has 10 working days from the sent date of one administrator's email to submit the report to the next level.

Written responses will be kept in a file other than the faculty member's personnel file.

### **Grade Appeal**

A student may initiate a grade appeal when there is legitimate reason to believe that the grade does not accurately reflect the quality of his or her academic work in the course or that the grade was determined in a manner inconsistent with the course syllabus. Before initiating a formal appeal, the student should confer with the instructor regarding how the grade was determined. In the event that the issue is not resolved in consultation with the instructor, the student may initiate a formal appeal of the grade beginning at the instructor level. The levels of appeal are noted below. Except as noted, levels cannot be bypassed. If this appeal also includes Review of Instruction, then the Grade Appeal procedure is the default process for appeal.

**Instructor Level:** The student must email a request to the instructor within 60 working days of the posting of the final grade for the course. In addition to requesting a review of how the grade was determined, the student should include specific reasons for his or her dissatisfaction. The request should be sent to the instructor's Union email address and copied to the instructor's department chair. The instructor will attempt to provide an email response copied to the department chair within 10 working days of the sent date of the student's email.

**Chair/Advisor Level:** The student may continue the appeal process by emailing a request for a review of the grade to the instructor's department chair and to the student's faculty advisor, who together will serve as the review committee. This request should be sent to the Union email address of the chair and faculty advisor within 10 working days of the sent date of the instructor's response. The chair and the faculty advisor, serving as the review committee, will provide an

email response to the student with copies sent to the instructor and the instructor's dean. In the event that either the chair or the faculty advisor is also the course instructor, the other person on the review committee will select the second member. The second member should be a faculty member within the course instructor's academic department. In the event that one of the faculty members holds all three roles, the student should begin the process at the dean's level.

**Dean's Level:** Either the student or the instructor may appeal the review committee's decision to the instructor's dean. (Student in the MAIS program should direct the appeal to the MAIS Program Director). This email request should be sent to the dean's (or MAIS Program Director's) Union email address within 10 working days of the sent date of the review committee's response. The dean will attempt to provide an email response to the instructor and/or student with copies sent to the instructor's chair, and the Dean of Instruction within 10 working days of the sent date of the instructor/student's request.

**Faculty Affairs/Graduate Appeal Committee Level:** Within 10 working days of the sent date of the dean's response, the student or the instructor may email a written request to the Dean of Instruction calling for a review of the grade by the Faculty Affairs Committee (undergraduate) or the Graduate Appeals Committee. The Dean of Instruction will request a meeting of the appropriate committee for the purpose of reviewing all documentation related to the appeal. The committee will provide an email response to the instructor and the student with copies sent to the instructor's chair, dean and Dean of Instruction.

**Administrative Level:** Within 10 working days of the sent date of the committee's response, either the student or the instructor may submit an email request for a hearing before the Dean of Instruction. Requests for subsequent hearings before the EVPAA must be received within 10 working days of the previous hearing. The decision rendered by the EVPAA, in consultation with the EVP-Provost and President, is final.

All documents relating to the above procedure will be retained in the student's file kept in Academic Center.

For more information concerning the privacy of grade records, see the handbook section entitled "Confidentiality of Student Records."

### **Academic Dishonesty Appeal**

Union University upholds the highest standards of honesty. Students are to refrain from the use of unauthorized aids during testing (including but not limited to technology devices such as digital cameras, cell phone cameras, pen-based scanners, translation programs, and text-messaging devices), to refuse to give or receive information on examinations, and to turn in only those assignments which are the result of their own efforts and research. Failure to provide correct documentation for material gleaned from any outside source, such as the Internet or any published/unpublished work, constitutes plagiarism, a form of cheating subject to strict disciplinary action. Faculty are responsible for discouraging cheating and will make every effort to provide physical conditions which deter cheating and to be aware at all times of activity in the testing area. Students who become aware of cheating of any type are responsible for reporting violations to the course instructor.

Any student found guilty by the instructor of cheating will be subject to disciplinary action by the instructor. If the student is an undergraduate, the instructor will file a report of the incident and the intended disciplinary action with the student and with the Dean of Instruction. Incidents involving graduate students will be filed with the student's dean or with the MAIS Program Director. Copies of all incidents will also be filed in the Office of the Senior Vice President for Student Services and Dean of Students.

If the student deems this action unfair, he or she may file an appeal with the administrator with whom the report was filed. The administrator will convey the results to the student and to the instructor by email (copied to the Office of the Senior Vice President for Student Services and Dean of Students).

If either the student or the instructor involved deems the administrator's action unsatisfactory, within 10 working days of the sent date of the email conveying the results he or she may email the Dean of Instruction to request a hearing before the Faculty Affairs Committee (undergraduate) or the Graduate Appeals Committee. (For undergraduate appeals, the President of the Student Government Association will also sit on this committee.) The committee will convey its decision to the student and to the instructor by email. The decision of this committee will be final upon approval by the EVPAA in consultation with the EVP-Provost and the President. If this appeal also includes Review of Instruction, then the Academic Dishonesty procedure is the default process for appeal.