Grade Appeal Policy

1.00 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the guidelines and standards for appeal by a student of a course grade; it has been established with the intent that appeals be addressed in a prompt and timely manner. This policy is intended to reflect the University's commitment to the principles, goals, and ideals described in the CSUMB Vision Statement and to its core values.

2.00 Responsibility for Grading

Instructors of record have the sole right and responsibility to provide clear grading criteria, careful evaluation, and timely assignment of course grades. There is a presumption that grades assigned are correct. It is the responsibility of students appealing an assigned grade to demonstrate otherwise.

3.00 Student Right to Appeal

Students shall have the right to appeal the final course grade issued by an instructor(s) if the student has reason to believe that the grade is based on any of the grounds set out in section 4.00 of this policy. Grades assigned due to student misconduct are not eligible for appeal, consistent with the grounds and procedures set out in the CSUMB Academic Integrity Policy, the Code of Student Conduct, and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

Prior to filing a grade appeal, the student shall make every attempt to resolve the grade dispute with the instructor through the Departmental review process described in section 5.1.1.

4.00 Grounds for Appeal

The course grade assigned by the instructor of record is to be considered final. If a student believes that the final grade issued is based on instructor or clerical error, prejudice, capriciousness, arbitrariness, or is not in alignment with established grading criteria in the course syllabus, the student may file an appeal, but only after the process described in section 5.1.1 has been exhausted.

Allegations of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation affecting grade assignments shall be referred to the campus Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Administrator and be
processed in accordance with CSU Executive Order 1097, which states:

...the Campus grade appeal procedure shall be placed in abeyance until such time as the campus and any appeal processes under Article VI and/or Article VII have concluded. The final determination under this executive order regarding whether Discrimination, Harassment or Retaliation occurred will be provided to the Campus grade appeal committee. The committee shall be bound by such determination when considering the grade appeal request under Executive Order 1037.

5.00 Appeal Process

Current and former students seeking to appeal an assigned grade shall initiate the process as described below in section 5.10.

5.10 Departmental Review

The student shall contact the instructor and attempt to bring resolution to the grade dispute. The student may seek assistance from the Department Chair in his/her attempt to resolve the dispute. However, by the end of the 30th calendar day of the subsequent semester, if the student is unable to reach resolution of the grade dispute at the departmental level, the student may submit an appeal of the grade to the University Grade Appeal Committee, as described in section 5.20.

5.1.1 Guidelines

The following steps are meant to provide guidance to students endeavoring to resolve grade disputes at the department level.

1. The student will make an appointment with the faculty of record for the explicit purpose of appealing the grade. At that time, the student should be prepared to submit evidence in support of his/her claim.

2. If the student is unable to resolve the grade dispute with the faculty member, the student will make an appointment with the Chair of the Department to discuss the disputed grade. The Chair will assist the student in his/her efforts to resolve the grade dispute.

   If the instructor(s) is no longer on campus, the student shall attempt to resolve the grade dispute with the Department Chair. In this instance, the Department Chair shall have the authority to approve a change of grade.

3. In cases where the faculty of record is also the Department Chair, or in cases where the Department Chair is unsuccessful in assisting the student to reach a resolution, the student will make an appointment with the College Dean, who will assist the student in his/her efforts to resolve the grade dispute.

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1 Students who appeal grades assigned during spring or summer sessions shall do so in the fall semester; students who appeal grades assigned during fall or winter sessions shall do so in the spring semester.
5.20 University Review

5.2.1 Initiating the University Review
A student shall initiate a University review as soon as the Departmental resolution to the
dispute has failed and no later than 30 calendar days after the start of the beginning of the
subsequent semester (or term in the case of non-semester programs).

5.2.2 Grade Appeal Form
The University Review shall commence when the student presents a written appeal to the
Associate Vice President for Academic Programs and Dean of Graduate and
Undergraduate Studies (hereafter, AVP/Dean).

A form on which the appeal may be written is available from the Office of Undergraduate
and Graduate Studies and on the CSUMB policy web site.

5.30 Review of the Appeal

5.3.1 University Grade Appeal Committee
The University Grade Appeal Committee (hereafter, the committee) is convened by the
AVP/Dean, once in the fall and once in the spring semesters as needed. The AVP/Dean
is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the committee.

The committee will be composed of three faculty members, identified by the Academic
Senate, and two students, identified by Associated Students. Committee members shall
serve for one academic year. Pursuant to Executive Order 1037, the appeal process will
proceed in a timely way and the authority of the committee shall be limited to actions that
are consistent with other campus and system policies.

5.3.2 Preliminary Review of Grade Appeal
The committee will meet each fall and spring semester to determine if the grounds for the
appeal presented by the student are consistent with section 4.00 of this policy. If the
committee finds that there are insufficient grounds for appeal, the original course grade
remains final.

If the committee finds that there are sufficient grounds for appeal, the committee shall
conduct a hearing within three weeks. The hearing will be scheduled at a time when the
student and the instructor are able to appear. Both parties may submit evidence to the
AVP/Dean no later than one week in advance of the hearing. The AVP/Dean will
distribute all materials to the committee in advance of the hearing.

5.3.3 Hearing the Appeal
The student and the instructor will present evidence to the committee regarding the grade
dispute. Evidence may include graded student work and witnesses. If the student does not
appear for the hearing, the committee may put the appeal aside, in which case the original
grade will stand as final. If the instructor does not appear for the hearing, the committee
may decide to proceed with the appeal hearing.
5.3.4 Grade Appeal Committee Vote
The committee shall determine findings and take a vote regarding the resolution of the appeal. The vote may authorize the entry of a change, where appropriate, to the final course grade in the student's academic record. The vote of the committee is final. A report of the hearing, the evidence, the findings, and the vote of the committee will be submitted to the AVP/Dean within one week.

5.3.5 Notification
The AVP/Dean shall immediately notify the student, the instructor, the Department Chair, and the Academic Dean of the decision.

5.3.6 Compliance
In cases where a grade change is not approved, the AVP/Dean will maintain the associated files.

In cases where a grade change is approved, the AVP/Dean shall send a formal grade change request to the Office of the Registrar, specifying the new grade. The request shall include the Grade Appeal form and any evidence used in the grade appeal process.

In compliance with the CSUMB policy on Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), this report shall be maintained in the Office of Records and Registration.

5.3.7 Filing of Grade Appeal
The filing of, or outcome from, a University grade appeal shall have no bearing on the Faculty Personnel Action File.

6.00 Annual Report
The AVP/Dean shall report to the President of California State University, Monterey Bay and the Academic Senate each fall the number of appeals heard in the previous academic year.

7.00 Continuous Renewal
This policy shall be reviewed in ten years from its effective date to determine its effectiveness. It may be revised prior to that time as needed.

President Eduardo M. Ochoa

Effective Date: 8-10-2015

Certification of Process
Reviewed by: Matriculation Committee, Policy Facilitation Team, Educational Planning and Policy Committee, Academic Affairs Council, Deans and Provost, Student Affairs Leadership Team, Associated Students, and the Academic Senate.
STUDENT GRADE APPEAL FORM

Name: 

Student ID: 

Cell Phone: 

Email: 

Street Address: 

City: 

State: 

Zip: 

Course Prefix 
and Number: 

Course 
Title: 

Instructor: 

Term Course 
Was Taken: 

5 Digit 
CRN Number: 

Student’s Statement
Following the provisions of the Student Grade Appeal Policy, I appeal the grade of _____ received in the course cited above. The basis for this appeal is: (write within the box below and attach evidence to support your claim)

I have read the Grade Appeal Policy. I have followed the process outlined in the Student Grade Appeal Policy and have been unable to reach a satisfactory resolution of my appeal working with the Department and College.

__________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________
Student Signature Date Faculty Signature Date

Faculty signature indicates that all attempts were made by both parties to resolve the grade dispute within the Department and/or College and only acknowledges that the student intends to file an appeal.

__________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________
Department Chair Signature Date 

Chair’s signature indicates that all attempts were made by both parties to resolve the grade dispute within the Department and only acknowledges that the student intends to file an appeal.

__________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________
Dean Signature Date 

Dean’s signature indicates that all attempts were made by both parties to resolve the grade dispute within the College and only acknowledges that the student intends to file an appeal.

Submit this form to the AVP for Academic Programs and Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies no later than 30 calendar days from the beginning of the semester following the semester in which the disputed grade was assigned and after the Departmental Review process has been exhausted. Failure to meet this deadline shall conclude the appeal.
Memorandum from Policy Facilitation Team

To: President Eduardo M. Ochoa
Date: July 27, 2015
Subject: Policy Recommendation
From: Provost Bonnie Irwin
Policy: Grade Appeal

The Provost, along with the Policy Facilitation Team, recommends that the substantively revised Grade Appeal Policy be approved.

[Signature]
Provost Bonnie D. Irwin

10 Aug 2015
Date