



# Ozarka College

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## Academic Appeals

Type: Institutional

Chair: Tina R Wheelis

Members: 6 

Supporting Documents:  0

### **Purpose:**

The Academic Appeals Committee exists to provide students the opportunity to appeal a grade of which they disagree. Academic evaluation on student performance shall be neither prejudicial nor capricious. Students may appeal grades awarded by faculty members by utilizing the procedures below. Faculty members will provide course materials at the beginning of each semester or term that included course requirements and grading procedure.

### **Committee Membership:**

1. The Appeals Committee is appointed by the President at the beginning of the academic year at the time other committees are appointed. The Committee shall consist of two faculty members, and one professional staff person.
2. An alternate faculty member and an alternate professional staff member shall be appointed to fill a vacancy or to substitute in the event an appointee is the faculty member in question or in the event there is a conflict with the faculty member or professional staff in question.

### **Informal Appeal:**

A student who disagrees with their grade shall begin with an informal appeal to the faculty member who awarded the grade in question. The student will explain the reason for their concern, and the faculty member will explain the reason (s) and basis for awarding the grade. The faculty member has the authority and responsibility to determine the grade. If the student is not satisfied with the response of the faculty member the student may continue their informal appeal by contacting the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Once hearing the student's informal appeal, the Vice President will meet with the faculty member. The academic administrator's discussion with the faculty member may include such topics as adherence to course requirements and grading procedures and understanding and consideration of the basis of the appeal by the student. The academic administrator may provide guidance or suggestions to the faculty member and will inform the student of the outcome of the discussion and the decision of the faculty member. If the student is not satisfied with the informal appeal, the student may file a formal appeal.

### **Formal Appeal:**

The formal appeal process consists of the following steps:

1. The student meets with the Vice President of Student Affairs to review the Formal Academic Appeals Process and no later than the end of the 10th class day of the next regular semester following the grade in question (regular semester is Fall and Spring).
2. The Vice President of Student Affairs, during this first meeting, will provide the student with a copy

of the Academic Appeals process and explain the requirements, the timeframe, and the process. Within seven (7) calendar days from the date of the meeting of the student and the Vice President of Student Affairs a written statement requesting an appeals hearing. The statement shall provide the student's rationale as to why the grade should be changed.

3. Within seven (7) calendar days from the receipt of the student's written appeal request, the Vice President of Student Affairs shall forward a copy of the appeal to the faculty member in question and to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
4. Within twenty-one (21) calendar days from the receipt of the students' written appeal request, the Vice President of Student Affairs shall convene the Academic Appeals Committee for the purpose of hearing the appeal. The Vice President of Student Affairs will coordinate the Appeals Hearing with the schedule of the student making the appeal, the faculty member, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. If conflicts in schedule create difficulty in finding a time suitable for all, the Vice President shall give preference to the committee and the student requesting the appeal.
5. The hearing shall be informal and the hearing committee shall provide reasonable opportunities for witnesses to be heard. The hearing shall be closed, unless student request an open hearing. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and Vice President of Student Affairs may attend the hearing as observers.

The hearing shall proceed as follows:

1. The student shall present the rationale for grade change (20 minutes).
2. The faculty member shall present their grading systems and grade rationale if they so choose (20 minutes).
3. The student shall present rebuttal evidence (10 minutes).
4. The faculty member shall have an opportunity for rebuttal argument (10 minutes).
5. The Academic Appeals Committee shall enter executive session and may take the matter under advisement for two class days before rendering a decision.
6. The academic Appeals Committee shall decide by majority vote with all members having an equal vote.
7. The Academic Affairs Committee Chair shall inform the instructor, the student, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Vice President of Student Affairs, and the President, in writing of their decision.

#### **Evidence:**

Evidence shall be handled according to following:

1. Legal rules of evidence do not apply in a hearing under this policy and the hearing officer may admit evidence that is commonly accepted by reasonable persons in the conduct of their affairs. The chairperson shall exclude irrelevant, immaterial, and unduly repetitious evidence. The chairperson shall give effect to the rules of privilege recognized by law and custom.
2. At the hearing the student shall prove that the evidence supports the charges.
3. The instructor (faculty member) may not be compelled to testify.
4. The hearing committee shall decide the issue and appropriate recommendation solely on the basis of admitted evidence.
5. A tape recording shall be made of the hearing under supervision of the Vice President of Academic and Instructional Affairs. Minutes of the hearing shall be made available to all parties involved in the hearing process upon request.

#### **Types of Decisions:**

The committee may impose one of more of the following recommendations:

1. Reevaluation of the complaint by the instructor.
2. Specific change to be implemented by the instructor.
3. Status quo. NOTE: Information about the student reviews, beliefs, and association acquired by the College personnel in the course of their work is confidential and shall not be disclosed to persons other than College officials acting in al official capacity, except with the consent-expressed or implied-of the student, or under legal compulsion.

