

## General Introduction

There are four types of appeals that are available for both undergraduate and graduate students with regards to their academic performance:

- A. A request for review of an assigned grade for written work, such as examinations, projects or assignment marks
- B. A process appeals involving possible deviations from course outlines, or the calculation of class participation or other subjective grade components
- C. Appeals related to the conversion grade process from international exchange partners
- D. All other appeals based on something other than those listed above.

All appeals must be written, and can be submitted in either hard copy or via email.

The corresponding procedures are different for each category and may be different within each academic degree program. The procedures described in this policy supplement the appeal policies and procedures determined by Senate and laid out in the University of Victoria Calendar, and guide the Gustavson School of Business in those areas where the Calendar is silent, or the process is left to the discretion of the School.

This policy does not apply to appeals of grades, process or situations at other institutions or related to Co-op activities or work terms. Students with appeals at other institutions must follow the appeal procedures at those other institutions. Students with appeals related to Co-op issues should refer to the policies and procedures of the Cooperative Education Programs.

## A. Procedures for Review of an Assigned Grade

- i. Students must first approach the instructor and attempt to resolve questions about grades received for assignments, tests or examinations. This can be done through an informal discussion with or a written appeal to the course instructor.
- ii. Verbal or written appeals should be initiated by the student and received by the instructor within 10 business days of the posting of the course's final grade. The instructor must respond to the student with a final decision within 10 business days of first being notified.
- iii. If the matter cannot be resolved, the student may appeal to the appropriate Academic Program Director. There are no formal procedures at this level. However, the student should inform the instructor before taking such action and should be prepared to provide all relevant material. After initial discussions, the Academic Program Director may request that the appeal be submitted in writing along with the relevant material.

- iv. The Academic Program Director will inform the instructor and the student about his or her findings. If the Academic Program Director chooses not to address the student's concern, undergraduate students may then appeal to the Dean, and graduate students may then appeal to the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- v. Students who are not satisfied with the results from these steps may undertake a formal request for the review of a grade.

### **Formal Request for Grade Review**

Reviews of assigned grades in the Gustavson School of Business are governed by the following regulations. Re-grade requests cover only written work submitted by students as part of the final course grade. Students may only request re-grades of written work after their final course grade has been submitted by the instructor, approved by the Academic Program Director and submitted to the Undergraduate or Graduate Records office, as appropriate. Students may not request a formal re-grade of written work while the course is still in progress.

The responsibilities of the **student** requesting a formal grade review are:

- Before applying for a formal review of an assigned grade, the student must meet with the appropriate Academic Program Director (in absence of the Academic Program Director, the student should meet with the Associate Dean, Programs). The Academic Program Director will evaluate the request to ensure that it meets the necessary conditions for being considered a re-grade request. The Academic Program Director then advises the student about the process for this request.
- The Academic Program Director will require that the student make every reasonable effort to meet with the instructor to review his/her performance on the course elements in question, if this has not already been done. If, after taking reasonable steps to resolve the issue with the instructor, the student still believes that the grade was calculated in error, then the student must file a formal request for a grade review.
- A request for review of a final grade, including the grade review fee of \$25.00 must normally reach the university's Records Office within 21 business days after the release of grades.
- The applicant must identify which course element is the subject of the re-grade request and prepare a written statement clearly outlining the grounds for believing that the grade awarded should be raised. In other words, the student must provide a valid reason for requesting a re-grade of the course element. Reasons other than academic performance or error in calculating a grade are usually not accepted for grade review. In such cases, the student is referred to Section B or C below, as appropriate.
- If the grade review includes written work returned to the student by the instructor, then the student must make that work available (the original work submitted – not a copy) to the appropriate Academic Program Director.

Upon receipt of a request for a grade review from Records Services, the **School's** responsibilities are:

- The applicable Academic Program Director will advise the instructor that there has been a request for a formal grade review. In the case of an appeal of a final examination or paper grade, the instructor is responsible for producing a masked copy of the item(s) to be reviewed – meaning the student's name, student number and any other identifying information be concealed, in addition to concealing the actual grade received, and any grading marks or comments made on the original copy. The instructor will also provide the answer key, or solution, used as the basis of evaluating performance. The instructor may also provide, where applicable or appropriate, written work of other students (masking the students' names) to be used as a basis for comparison (the Registrar will provide copies if exams are stored with that unit). All of this information will be turned over to the Academic Program Director.
- The Academic Program Director will select a faculty member qualified to evaluate the work and will deliver all pertinent materials to that reviewer. If no such person is available within the School or the University, the Academic Program Director may select a qualified reviewer from another university to perform the grade review. Wherever possible, every effort should be made to complete the grade review within 14 business days from receipt of the grade review request.
- Upon completion of the grade review, the selected faculty member will provide the Academic Program Director and the Associate Dean, Programs with a written synopsis of the review together with the grade as determined by the review.
- The Academic Program Director will forward such information to UVic Record Services, who then formally advises the student as to the outcome of the grade review process. The grade determined by means of the review will be recorded as the official grade, regardless of whether it is the same as, or higher or lower than, the original grade. If the review results in a change to the final course grade, the new grade will be reported as a grade change to the Registrar. The grade review decision is final and no further appeal of the grade is possible.

The School also points out the limits to the review that can be conducted. We can only review the appropriateness of marks given for written work. While we can review the marking, we cannot reach a conclusion as to whether the content was fair by looking at the list of topics on the course outline. That decision falls within the academic judgment of the instructor and would be impossible to assess by someone not intimately familiar with the course content and context.

## **B. Procedures for Appeals of the Grading Process**

This section describes the process for resolving student grade appeals that are based on the process of grading rather than the evaluation of specific written work. Process appeals in the Gustavson School of Business are governed by the following regulations:

- i. A student who wishes to launch a process appeal should first bring that request to the instructor of the course. Whenever possible, it is preferable to resolve these issues informally between the student and the instructor. The student and instructor are free, at this stage, to

decide how to resolve the problem. If a grade change results, the instructor should report that change as s/he would any other grade change.

- ii. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction by discussing it with the instructor, a more formal process will begin. The applicant must state clearly, in writing, the grounds for believing that a process has been violated or applied improperly, or that a process was inappropriate. The written explanation should include a description of the problem, the remedy sought and any other relevant information. Reasons must be based upon the violation of a procedure, rather than marks awarded for a written assignment (which would fall under Section A. above).
- iii. This request for a process appeal must normally be delivered to the relevant Academic Program Director within 21 business days after the release of grades. The Academic Program Director will evaluate the request to ensure that it meets the necessary conditions for being considered a process appeal. If the appeal is deemed NOT to be a process appeal, the Academic Program Director will advise the student as to alternatives that might be available (i.e., situational or re-grade appeal).
- iv. A student's appeal of an instructor's grading process may reveal that there were systematic errors or inappropriate methods used to determine grades across one or more classes. The Academic Program Director should consider whether all grades should be reviewed and adjusted in light of what is discovered in addressing one student's grading process appeal.
- v. Resolution may lie within the authority of the Program. If it does not, then the Academic Program Director shall forward the appeal to the Associate Dean, Programs for further action. If not satisfied with the outcome, the student is eligible to appeal, in writing, to the Dean.

The School also points out the limits to the review that can be conducted. A third party cannot determine the accuracy of a mark assigned for participation, presentations, or other non-written work. It can, however, determine whether the mark was consistent with the stated standards. They can also ensure that there were reasonable coexistent records of that component, and that those records were used consistently to assess the component. Thus, the Academic Program Director or the Dean can review whether the marking process was substantiated and fair, and the marks consistent with stated standards.

### **C. Procedures for Appeals of Grade Conversion Process from International Exchange Partners**

This section describes the process for appealing grade conversions for outgoing exchange students when they return to Victoria. Note that this does not include appeals for grades assigned by an international partner, but only covers the process of the conversion of assigned grades to University of Victoria standards. Appeals of this nature in the Gustavson School of Business are governed by the following regulations:

- i. A student who wishes to launch a process appeal should first bring that request to the Manager, International Exchange. Whenever possible, it is preferable to resolve these issues informally between the student and the Manager. The student and Manager are free, at this stage, to decide how to resolve the problem. If a grade change results, the Manager should report that change as s/he would any other grade change.
- ii. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction by discussing it with the Manager, a more formal process will begin. The applicant must state clearly, in writing, the grounds for believing that a process has been violated or applied improperly, or that a process was inappropriate. The written explanation should include a description of the problem, the remedy sought and any other relevant information. Reasons must be based upon the violation of a procedure.
- iii. This request for a process appeal must normally be delivered to the Associate Director of International Programs within 21 business days after the release of grades. The Associate Director of International Programs will evaluate the request to ensure that it meets the necessary conditions for being considered a process appeal. The Associate Director will respond with a final decision within 10 business days of the submission of an appeal.
- iv. A student's appeal of the conversion process may reveal that there were systematic errors or inappropriate methods used to convert grades across one or more groups. The Associate Director of International Programs should consider whether all grades should be reviewed and adjusted in light of what is discovered in addressing one student's grading process appeal.
- v. Resolution may lie within the authority of the Associate Director of International Programs. If it does not, then the Associate Director of International Programs shall forward the appeal to the appropriate Academic Program Director and the Director of International Programs jointly, who will consider the appeal together. Wherever possible, every effort should be made to complete the review within 10 business days from receipt of the review request.
- vi. If the student still disagrees with the decision taken, the matter may be appealed to the Associate Dean, Programs for further action. If not satisfied with the outcome, the student is eligible to appeal, in writing, to the Dean. In each case, wherever possible, every effort should be made to complete the review within 10 business days from receipt of the review request.

The School also points out the limits to the review that can be conducted. The student before exchange is presented with and signs off acknowledging the grade conversion approach used by the School. Thus the appeal is based on whether the process for converting the grades is consistent with the stated standards. The review ensures that the same standards and approach are used consistently to convert the grades. Thus, the Academic Program Director or the Dean can review whether the marking process was substantiated and fair, and the conversion consistent with stated standards.

## **D. Policy for Appeals of Other Issues (Situational Appeals)**

This section describes the process for resolving non-grade appeals that cover specific situations where the student is not appealing an assigned grade (either for a course component or the course as a whole) OR a grading process. Appeals of this nature in the Gustavson School of Business are governed by the following regulations:

- i. The applicant should appeal directly to the pertinent Academic Program Director. The applicant must state clearly, in writing, the circumstances giving rise to the appeal. The written explanation should include a description of the problem, the remedy sought, and any other relevant information. The Academic Program Director will evaluate the request to ensure that it meets the necessary conditions for being considered a situational appeal. If the appeal is deemed NOT to be a situational appeal, the Academic Program Director will advise the student as to alternatives that might be available (i.e., process or re-grade appeal).
- ii. Resolution may lie within the authority of the Academic Program Director. If it does not, or if the Academic Program Director is unable to resolve the matter to the student's satisfaction, then the Academic Program Director should forward the appeal to the Associate Dean, Programs for further action.
- iii. If not satisfied with the outcome, the student is eligible to appeal, in writing, to the Dean.
- iv. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of this internal procedure, s/he is referred to the undergraduate or graduate Student Appeal Procedures in the University Calendar.