

Faculty of Social Sciences Procedures for Review of an Assigned Grade: Undergraduate and Graduate Students

This policy addresses cases in which a student believes that there has been a mistake or unfairness in the assignment of a grade. Students who are seeking to have a grade revised on grounds that their academic performance was impaired by injury, family or personal affliction, or illness should consult the “Academic Concessions” section of the Undergraduate Calendar.

1. Any student wishing clarification about an assigned grade or who believes that an assigned grade should be reviewed, either for a whole course or a portion of it, shall first discuss the matter with the instructor who will determine whether review of the work in question is warranted. It is the student’s responsibility to first notify the instructor in writing. This notification should take place normally within 14 days of the grades being available for the portion of the course that is in question.

1.1 Students seeking review of a grade should note that the grade determined by the instructor’s review will be applied regardless of whether it is the same as, higher than, or lower than the original grade.

1.2 If the instructor determines that the grade should be changed before the final course grades have been submitted, the new grade will be applied by the instructor.

1.3 If the instructor determines that the grade should be changed after the course grades have been submitted, the instructor will complete a change of grade form to be approved by the Chair or Director of the academic unit offering the course and the Dean of the academic unit’s Faculty.

2. If the instructor determines that review is not warranted, or if review by the instructor confirms or lowers the original grade, and if the student believes there are reasons for reviewing the instructor’s decision, then the student can appeal to the Chair or Director of the academic unit offering the course. This appeal must be made in writing, stating clearly the grounds on which the student believes the grade should be reviewed. If the Chair or Director is the instructor of the course for which the grade is questioned, then a designate will be appointed by the Dean’s office to handle the appeal.

3. If the Chair or Director (or designate) believes the grounds on which the student is requesting further review to be reasonable:

3.1 The Chair or Director shall inform the student that the student’s request for further review has been accepted, and that in accordance with university policy, the grade determined by the review will be recorded as the official grade regardless of whether it is the same as, higher than, or lower than the original grade.

3.2 For the grade review to proceed, the student must confirm by email to the Chair or Director their understanding the grade determined by the review will be recorded as the official grade regardless of whether it is the same as, higher than, or lower than the original grade.

3.3. The Chair or Director shall initiate a review of the assigned grade using the following procedures:

3.3.1 The Chair or Director will appoint a second instructor (preferably an experienced faculty member who has recently taught the course or one closely related to it) to review the grade assigned.

3.3.2 The original instructor shall provide:

(a) a course outline, (b) a description of the assignment(s) in question, if not included in the course outline, (c) an explicit statement on how grades were determined and what assessment techniques were used in the course, (d) (f) any other relevant information as requested by the Chair or Director.

3.3.3 Students do not have the option to rewrite, edit, or in any other way change their papers prior to the review process.

3.3.4. The reviewer is expected to come to a final mark without consultation with the original marker.

3.3.5 Where possible, the student should not be identified (i.e., name, student number) to minimize risk of bias. The reviewer shall then submit to the Chair or Director (or the person appointed to handle the appeal in 3.3.2 above) an independent evaluation of the grade.

3.3.6 If the evaluation is different from that of the initial instructor, then the Director may consult (if necessary) with both instructors and/or seek further opinion before deciding the final grade to be awarded. This revised grade shall be recorded as the official grade regardless of whether it is lower, the same, or higher than the original grade.

4. If the Chair or Director does not find grounds for a review of the grade:

4.1 An undergraduate student has the right to formally request a review of grade through Undergraduate Records and Graduation Services, as set out in the Calendar <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar>.

4.2 A graduate student has a right to formally request a review of the grade through the Faculty of Graduate Studies. <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar>. (This is a formal request for a grade review to be conducted by the school.)

5. Appeal processes beyond the level of the academic unit:

5.1 If an undergraduate student still believes there is grounds for review of the assigned grade, the student can appeal to the Associate Dean of Academic Advising for the Faculties of Humanities, Science and Social Sciences . The Associate Dean's review will attend to fair implementation of academic policies and procedures. The Associate Dean will not consider an appeal where the sole question in a student's appeal is a matter of academic judgment (for example, the academic merit of the assigned work).

5.2 A graduate student who believes there is grounds for review of the final grade by an academic unit has the right to formally request a further review of the grade through the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Dean of Graduate Studies will not consider an appeal where the sole question in a student's appeal is a matter of academic judgment.

5.3 The final level of appeal for graduate and undergraduate students is the Senate Committee on Appeals (see Senate Committee on Appeals Procedural Guidelines – Office of the University Secretary <http://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/assets/docs/scommittees/AppealsTORDecember2013.pdf>). The Senate Committee on Appeals will not consider an appeal where the sole question is a matter of academic judgement.

Materials submitted for an appeal to the Associate Dean of Academic Advising for the Faculties of Humanities, Science and Social Sciences:

- A statement of rationale for the appeal (i.e. on what basis do you the student believe there has been unfair implementation of academic policies and procedures at the school level)

- A complete timeline including a sequence of events and a list of key documents
- Any supporting documentation relevant to the appeal (e.g. course syllabus/requirements, course evaluation components/feedback, emails & correspondence between the instructor and student)
- A copy of the final decision that you are appealing
- A statement of the outcome that you are seeking