

## Grade Appeals A3.14h

### Written Exam Item Challenges

Faculty complete an examination review process using statistical analysis to determine if any grade adjustments are required. Exam item challenges outside of this process are not accepted.

### Academic Course Grade Appeals

Students and course directors occasionally disagree on final course grades. Sometimes this is the result of a mathematical error on the part of the course director; an issue that can readily be resolved by the student taking the relevant exam to the course director or otherwise pointing out the error. The course director then acts to correct the erroneous grade. Sometimes the student and the course director disagree on a substantive issue, such as the evaluation of an exam answer or the course letter grade. The student should first think through the grade and ensure that they can identify the nature of the disagreement clearly. The student should then make an appointment with the course director and discuss the issue. In this way almost all disagreements can be resolved.

The following procedure is for those more unusual cases in which further discussion cannot resolve the problem, and the student feels that their final grade was incorrectly awarded. The student should note that the formal academic appeal process is not an open review of all grades assigned within a course, nor is it the correct time or place to debate the relevance of course material/assessments as outlined in the syllabus or other course related documents. The formal academic appeal is an examination of whether proper procedures were followed in the awarding of the grade. These steps (listed below a-f) must be initiated by seven calendar days (excluding days when the university is closed) after the end of any semester in the MSPAS program.

- a. The student should provide a written appeal statement to the course director outlining the basis of the appeal, including all objective information within seven (7) calendar days after the end of any semester in the MSPAS program. This statement should contain all the pertinent information including steps already taken by the student. A copy should be submitted to the PA Program Director. The course director will consider the statement and respond in writing within seven (7) calendar days (excluding days when the university is closed) to the student with a copy forwarded to the PA Program Director.
- b. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course director, the student should submit in writing a request for review by the PA Program Director or designee within three (3) calendar days of the date of the response of the course director. At this time, the student may also submit any additional information for review by the Program Director or designee.
- c. The course director will be offered the opportunity to provide any additional written information regarding the appeal to the Program Director or designee.
- d. On the basis of the information provided, the Program Director or designee will make a decision on the following basis:
  1. Were the grading procedures used in the course clear and consistent for the course in general?

2. Did the instructor fairly apply the grading procedures in the case of the student who has filed an appeal?
  - e. The Program Director or designee will make a decision and notify the course director and the student of their decision. If the review finds that the procedures were clear and consistent and were applied fairly in the case of the student who has filed an appeal, this information will be given in writing to both the student and the instructor. If the review finds that the student was not fairly graded, the Program Director or designee will contact the faculty member in question to request that the student's work be re-graded in a way that eliminates the unfairness. A third possibility is that the review may show some ambiguity about fairness and the Program Director or designee may request further discussion between the student and instructor to resolve the issue. In the case where the Program Director is the course director, evaluation will be completed by the Associate Program Director.
  - f. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the steps above, the student may file a final appeal with the Dean's office on procedural grounds only. This final appeal will review the above aforementioned steps, to determine whether or not all steps were completed appropriately by all parties.
  - g. This final appeal, only on procedural grounds, would be determined by the Dean of the Rowan-Virtua SOM or designee, and submitted directly to the student and cc'd to the Program Director.
  - h. The entire process, as outlined in steps a-g must conclude within thirty (30) days from the end of the previous semester.