Grade Appeals Policy

The grade appeals policy applies to all enrolled students at KIMEP University. It should be followed by any student who believes that a course grade was assigned as a result of mechanical/technical error, deficiency of the online tools, or other improper condition such as prejudice or harassment.

The student must support in writing the allegation that an improper decision has been made and must specify the remedy sought. The burden of proof is on the student, except in cases of academic dishonesty, where the burden of proof is on the instructor. The evidentiary standard is preponderance of the evidence. Under the preponderance standard, the burden of proof is met when the party with the burden convinces the fact finder that there is a greater than 50% chance that the claim is true.

The student may seek the assistance of the program manager, department chair or college dean in pursuing the appeal. The student may have an advisor or friend with him/her during all meetings with faculty members, administrators, and/or committees, who may advise the student but may not speak for the student during the meetings.

Grades are changed only by a university authority upon the decision of the instructor or grade appeals committee.

Grade Appeal Process

Step 1. Informal resolution

The student should contact the instructor to request a grade change within 3 working days after grade be awarded. The student is expected to provide evidence to support the request. The instructor should review the case and give final resolution within two working days.

• If the instructor rejects the request, the student may proceed to Step 2.

• If the instructor is unavailable, the department or program chair shall authorize an extension of time or allow the student to proceed to Step 2.

• If the chair is unavailable, the dean of the college or school shall authorize the extension.

Step 2. Formal Resolution

College/school: If the matter has not been resolved at Step 1, the student should submit Appeal for Grade Change form, which is located on a Student Portal within two working days after the appeal was rejected by the instructor.

The Grade Appeal Form requires a Student to:

• provide information about the purposes, objectives and grading criteria for the Course Grade, as applicable;

• describe which academic assessment(s) and which aspect(s) thereof is (are) being appealed;

• provide a rationale for the requested review of the score/grade;

• provide details of any attempts to resolve the matter with the instructor

• provide original course syllabus (download)

• any documents that may support the student’s position (for example: graded assignments, examinations, medical documentation, statements from other students or faculty, etc.); if some of the student’s work has not been returned to the student by the instructor, the student should include a list of documents that have not been returned to him/her. (download)

The student must therefore make as strong a case as possible by including all the required documents and supporting documents for the claims made. The Grade Appeals Committee reserves the right to ask the student for additional documents. In that case, the student will have one week (seven calendar days) to submit the documents; if the student fails to do so, the Grade

Appeals Committee has the right to deny the appeal as “incomplete”.

Also, the student should be aware that materials submitted will not be returned to him/her; therefore, he/she should keep copies of all materials.

The College Grade Appeals Committee should meet within two weeks after appeal is filed.

The student filing an appeal shall have the opportunity to be heard in person by the committee.

The Committee reviews the case and makes final resolution within 5 working days after the first committee meeting is held.

A simple majority constitutes a decision. The Chairperson casts the deciding vote in the event of a tie. The student is then notified in writing within five days of the Committee decision after signing the minutes of hearings.

Step 3: Appeal to the University Grade Appeals Committee.

If the College committee upholds the instructor’s grade, and the student wishes to further pursue the appeal, she/he must submit the Appeal Pack along with the notification from the College Committee to the office of Vice President of Academic Affairs within one week of the decision of the College Committee. The Vice President of Academic Affairs will create the University Appeal committee.

Final step: consideration of the appeal by the University Grade Appeals Committee

The University Grade Appeals Committee will take one of the following actions after an investigation:

• Deny the appeal, in which case the matter shall be closed.

• Return the appeal to the instructor and Dean of the instructor’s school/college in case if the committee finds that the grading involved an injustice or error. The instructor may make the appropriate change in the grade with the written agreement of the Dean.

• If the instructor disagrees, the Grade Appeals Committee may recommend a grade change to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The VPAA may make the recommended grade change, or issue an “I” (Incomplete). The instructor, the Department Chairperson, and the Dean shall be notified in writing of the Grade Appeals Committee’s recommendation and of the VPAA’s decision. The Dean shall notify the student of the final decision.

• In no case shall a grade be lowered as a result of the appeal to the Grade Appeals Committee.

Student Rights and Responsibilities:

a) Students shall receive timely notification during all steps of the appeals process.

b) The burden of proof is upon the student, the student must therefore make as strong a case as possible by including all the required and supporting documents for the claims made.

Faculty and Administration’s Rights and Responsibilities:

• The Grade Appeals Committee shall notify the instructor, Department Chairperson, and

Dean in writing of any Grade Appeals Committee actions and requests.

• Instructors shall retain all graded student work that has not been returned to the student, until the end of the following regular academic semester. In no case shall an instructor discard the graded work of a student who has filed an appeal.

• Instructors shall provide the Department Chairperson, Dean and/or Grade Appeals Committee with graded student work, a syllabus, or any other documents that may be needed to evaluate the merits of the appeal.