

UMBC UGC Program Changes & Other Request: Proposed Undergraduate Grade Appeal Procedures

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Specifics (see instructions):

The attached Undergraduate Grade Appeal Procedures are being proposed to replace the existing Arbitrary and Capricious Grading Policy.

Rationale (see instructions)

Having consulted with the Academic Standards Executive Committee, the Undergraduate Program Directors, and the Council of Deans there is general consensus that the current Arbitrary and Capricious Grading Policy language is problematic in a variety of ways and that a revision will better serve UMBC. In drafting the revised Undergraduate Grade Appeal Procedures, six broad themes are addressed:

Specific revision rationales:

1. The revised procedure provides for a process for student and faculty for “grade appeal procedure” for final grades rather than specifying “capricious and arbitrary” grades are appealable.
2. The current policy allows for the “Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (a position that does not exist) the authority to, “take any action which he or she believes would bring about substantial justice.” The revised procedure removes the authority of a single administrator for grading decisions.
3. The current policy does not allow for the awarding of a *letter grade* which penalizes the student in cases where a grade appeal is upheld and the original letter grade was incorrect. The revised procedure allows changes in final course grades to be determined by a committee of faculty peers.

Format and Organization – The proposed grade appeals procedures are written as a *procedure versus a policy* to be in compliance with the [BOR Policy – III. 1.20](#). The draft procedures are divided into three clearly defined sections:

- 1) Review at the course/department level
- 2) Review at the college level
- 3) Institutional review by the Campus Grade Review Panel

Terminology – The proposed document includes a definitions section to provide greater clarity.

Differentiated Roles and Responsibilities – The proposed document clearly describes the roles, expectations, and timelines for the student and the institutional representatives (faculty member, department chairperson, dean, vice provost, campus grade review panel, and the assistant vice provost).

Institutional Record Keeping Added – The proposed document includes a process for maintaining an institutional record of grade appeals and decisions. For purposes of Middle States accreditation, grade appeals are considered a matter of interest to the university when an allegation is filed in writing with the dean.

Revised Timeline – The proposed timeline is clearly defined and all steps are contained within one full semester not to exceed 16 weeks and five days from the posting of the final grade. This proposed timeframe provides students and institutional representative's time to reflect meaningfully. The revised timeline also aligns with the grade posting deadlines. Establishing a set grade appeal time frame will also allow UMBC to establish policies for original record retention required by faculty.