

## **STUDENT APPEALS COMMITTEE**

**MISSION:** The mission of the Student Appeals Committee is threefold. The first and foremost component of the Committee's mission is to assist students who have reason to believe that they were assigned a course grade unfairly, [or in error, which can be taken care of by the instructor if the student notifies the instructor] to obtain an impartial hearing of their case. The second component of the Committee's mission is to assist the School of Business Administration (SBA), and SBA faculty and students, to resolve appeals. The third component of the Committee's mission is to uphold the University's policies in those cases related to Academic Dishonesty, and to help ensure equity for SBA students.

### **COMMITTEE COMPOSITION AND WORK SCHEDULE**

1. The Committee consists of faculty members elected from the School of Business Administration in accordance with School policies.
2. The Committee members select a Chairperson, or if desired, two co-Chairs.
3. When the Committee consists of an equal number of members, the Chairperson's vote counts as two votes.
4. The Committee will strive to achieve a unanimous recommendation, but in the case of disagreement, the final recommendation will be achieved by a simple majority vote.
5. The Committee works during the fall and spring semesters, between the first day of classes and the first day of the official exam period. Generally, the Committee does not work during finals week, semester holidays, the winter break, or during the summer. However, the Committee may vote to continue work during these periods.
6. In the unlikely event that the Committee is faced with several appeals simultaneously, the Committee may vote to defer to hear some appeals until the following spring or fall semester (whichever comes first). The Committee will give priority to appeals that immediately impact the student's progress in the program. The Committee also reserves the right to have fewer members hear and decide an appeal, but not less than three, and to solicit additional assistance from fellow faculty.
7. No Committee member shall hear an appeal submitted from his or her own student; that committee member shall be recused from hearing that case. The remainder of the Committee shall hear that appeal, and, if necessary, shall select a temporary Chair or appoint an additional faculty member to serve on the Committee for that specific case.

## **POLICIES:**

- 1.** Only letter grades used in calculating the grade point average may be appealed. A student may appeal a course grade only once.
- 2.** The responsibility for determining all grades, and for judging the quality of academic performance in a course, rests with the instructor assigned to the course. The Student Appeals Committee *requires* the student first discuss the course grade with the instructor in order to try to resolve the issue, prior to filing an appeal.
- 3.** A grade can be formally appealed only when there is demonstrable evidence that a student's grade *may* have been influenced by an arbitrary, capricious, or unfair action on the part of the instructor. The Committee does not hear cases in which a student alleges discrimination, or in which 2 or more students are involved (i.e. such as a situation in which two students are alleged to have been involved in a conspiracy to cheat). These cases are handled by the Provost and/or Academic Council. Please refer to the Student Handbook.
- 4.** The burden of proof that such an unfair influence has affected a grade rests with the student who appeals the grade.
- 5.** Information in student records related to any appeal will be released only to faculty and professional staff for authorized university related use. Student confidentiality will be respected in accordance with the University Student Services Index: D-1, Confidentiality of student records.
- 6.** A grade appeal may result in review of all aspects of a student's performance in a course.
- 7.** The Committee will make every effort to provide a *recommendation* to the Dean within 30 days after it has received all the submitted and requested information, and will indicate if the Committee was unanimous.
- 8.** The processing of formal grade appeals is the responsibility of the School of Business Administration. A student may appeal the School's decision in accordance with the University Policies.

## **PROCEDURES FOR FILING AN APPEAL**

The student will complete, sign, and date the Student Appeals Form (at the end of this document), including the Statement and Evidence, and submit it to the Dean of the School of Business Administration within 45 days from the first day of instruction of the fall or spring semester immediately following the term in which the grade was assigned.

## **PROCEDURES FOR HEARING AN APPEAL**

Upon receipt of a formal petition, the process will unfold as follows:

1. The Dean's Office will keep the original petition and will send the copies to the instructor, to the Chairperson of the department involved, and to the School's Student Appeals Committee.
2. The Student Appeals Committee will hold preliminary hearings in order to examine the appeal and to determine if the petition satisfies all the requirements, if the facts described seem to be sound, and if enough supporting evidence is presented. If so, the petition will be recommended for further deliberation. If not, the Student Appeals Committee will either request additional information and clarifications from the student, or decide to reject the petition as groundless. If the petition is rejected at this step, the Student Appeals Committee will notify the Dean of its decision.
3. If the appeal has been granted further consideration, the Student Appeals Committee will request written information about the case from the instructor involved. The Committee will hold what hearings and meetings it deems necessary in order to make a recommendation in the case. When a decision has been made, the Student Appeals Committee will provide a written recommendation to the Dean.
4. As previously noted under the Policies section, the Committee will provide a *recommendation* to the Dean, including supporting materials as deemed necessary, and will also provide copies of the decision to the Chairperson and to the instructor. The processing of formal grade appeals is the responsibility of the School of Business Administration.
5. An appeal of the Dean's decision may be made to the provost, either by the student or by the instructor. The procedure is described in the UHV Student Handbook (the Grade Appeals section).

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON - VICTORIA  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**GRADE APPEAL FORM**

**To the School Dean**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Student Identification:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

PeopleSoft ID \_\_\_\_\_

Major \_\_\_\_\_

Classification \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email No \_\_\_\_\_

**Course Identification:**

Dept. \_\_\_\_\_

Course No. \_\_\_\_\_

Section \_\_\_\_\_

Term \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Received \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that this appeal may result in review of any or all aspects of my performance in the course. My statement and supporting evidence concerning the appeal are attached.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student) (Date)

## STATEMENT AND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The Student Appeals Committee requires you to prepare a *statement* and to provide supporting *evidence* before it can consider your appeal.

Your *statement* consists of your typed answers to the following questions.

Your *evidence* consists of the copies of the course syllabus, the course handouts, the assignment(s) in questions, and all communications related to the appeal, where communications includes all emails between you and the professor, and transcripts of all telephone and face-to-face conversations related to the appeal, reproduced as accurately as you can. If you have deleted email, you may also attempt to reproduce a transcript as accurately as you can. However, please keep in mind that original evidence will generally be considered stronger evidence.

You must provide all the requested evidence in order for the committee to consider your appeal. The Committee may also request additional information before deciding to accept your appeal, or at any time during the appeals process. If the Committee requests additional information, you must provide it, or an explanation, within 14 days, or your appeal will be rejected and will not be reconsidered at a later date.

You may only file **one** appeal for any given course. The Committee will automatically reject any subsequent appeals for the same course. It is your responsibility to provide complete and accurate information when preparing your original appeal and when responding to any Committee requests for clarification or further information.

## QUESTIONS

1. Have you discussed your grade with the instructor?  
*If yes*, when? What was the outcome? What were the reasons given? Please provide any written evidence you may have such as copies of emails, or provide transcripts of all telephone and face-to-face conversations, reproduced as accurately as you can.  
*If no*, **STOP NOW**. The Student Appeals Committee requires you to try to first discuss your grade with your instructor and to try to resolve the issue.
2. Your overall letter grade for this course was calculated based upon several components (such as midterm exam, final exam, project, homework, cases, etc). Please explain in detail why you think the score assigned to one or more of the specific component(s) is incorrect or unjust. Be as specific and complete as possible. Substantiate all your claims by supporting evidence. Please note that the Student Appeals Committee will consider and make recommendations on the requested component(s) only, and as previously mentioned, will only consider or hear one appeal per course.

3. Clearly and carefully state the action or actions that you are requesting, and explain why you believe these are appropriate and just. Please be as specific as possible. Please note that the Student Appeals Committee will either support or deny the particular request made.