



**SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING**

Approved by SSE Curriculum Committee: November 15, 2022

Effective Date:

**TEMPORARY POLICY ON FINAL COURSE GRADE
APPEALS**

PURPOSE: To establish the policy and procedures by which the School of Science and Engineering will handle grade appeals by its student body.

SCOPE: Applies to all full-time and part-time graduate and undergraduate students taking courses in the School of Science and Engineering (SSE). This policy remains in effect until the academic year following the adoption of a permanent policy on grade appeals by the SSE.

DEFINITIONS: Any definitions used in this document are consistent with the definitions found in the University Grade Appeal Policy.

POLICY

I. General

This School of Science and Engineering policy falls within a hierarchy of laws, statutes, and rules. College policies are subject to compliance with laws and regulations instituted by higher governing authorities as follows:

- A. Federal laws and regulations
- B. State laws and administrative rules
- C. University policies and procedures
- D. School of Science and Engineering policies and procedures

This grade appeal policy supplements, and is consistent with, the University Grade Appeal Policy

(https://catalog.slu.edu/?_ga=2.231256671.1357063757.1667408043-1247364727.1534961435)

II. Statute of Limitations

All appeals must be initiated by the student within 90 days of the date the grade was posted. Appeals will be automatically rejected after the 90 day deadline. Exception: Graduating students must initiate a grade appeal within 30 days of the date that the course grade was posted. The entire appeals process must be completed within one calendar year of the initiation of the appeal (per SLU policy).

Final grade appeals follow the procedures of the college/school of the course. In cases of cross-listed courses, the procedures of the college/school of the primary department of the course are followed.

III. Applicability

The following procedures are available only for review of alleged capricious grading and not for review of the judgment of an instructor in assessing the quality of a student's work. Students may appeal a grade only for one or more of the following reasons:

- A. Miscalculation of grade.
- B. The assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than performance in the course.
- C. The assignment of a grade to a particular student by more exacting or demanding standards than were applied to other equivalent students in that section.
- D. The grade assigned results from different standards than the criteria for performance and evaluation outlined in the course syllabus.

IV. Student's Right of Fair and Equal Evaluation

The assessment of the quality of a student's academic performance is one of the major professional responsibilities of university faculty members and is solely and properly their responsibility. It is essential for the standards of the academic program at Saint Louis University and the integrity of the degrees conferred by this University that the professional judgments of faculty members are not subject to pressures or other interference from any source.

It is necessary, however, that any semester grade be based on evidence of the student's performance in a course, that the student have access to the evidence, that the instructor be willing to explain the basis upon which the grade was determined, and that a grade be determined in accordance with announced guidelines.

V. Appeal Procedures

All appeals must be completed within the timelines outlined in Section II.

- A. The student shall confer with the instructor (in person or in writing), informing the instructor of questions concerning the grade and seeking to understand fully the grounds and procedures the instructor has used in determining the grade. The aim of such a conference is to reach mutual understanding about the grade, the process by which it was assigned, and to correct errors, if any, in the grade.
- B. If, after consultation with the instructor, the student believes that a grade is capricious, as noted in Section III. above, the student, with supporting documents, will confer with the Chair of the department in which the course was offered. The Chair will consult with the instructor and the student separately or together in an attempt to reach a resolution of the matter. The appeal process terminates here if a resolution is reached. If the instructor is the Chair of the department, the matter should be referred to the Dean through the appropriate SSE Associate Dean for Undergraduate or Graduate Education and following the process in D below. This step typically should take no more than two weeks.
- C. If the matter remains unresolved after consultation with the chair, the student will submit a written appeal request with supporting evidence to the Chair. The Chair will convene an intra-departmental grade appeal committee consisting of the Chair and two faculty members from the department who are otherwise uninvolved with the appeal.
 - 1. The student's written appeal request will be considered, and the instructor will also respond to the student's petition in writing.
 - 2. The grade appeal committee will interview both the instructor and the student and consider any supporting evidence.
 - 3. Subsequently, the committee will recommend either that the grade was not assigned capriciously and shall stand, or that the grade may have been assigned capriciously and the matter merits further consideration.
If the committee decides that the grade has been assigned capriciously, the chair must inform the instructor to reconsider the assigned grade or appeal the decision following the process in step D.
 - 4. The recommendation of the departmental grade appeal committee will be communicated to the student, the instructor, and the appropriate SSE Associate Dean for Undergraduate or Graduate Education by the Department Chair.
 - 5. The appropriate SSE Associate Dean for Undergraduate or Graduate Education will communicate the outcome of the appeal to the Dean.
 - 6. If the student and the instructor agree with the recommendation of the departmental grade appeal committee and the department chair, the appeal process terminates. If there is a disagreement, then the process listed in (D) below must be followed.

This step typically should take no more than four weeks.

- D. If the matter has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the student and/or the instructor, either may petition the Dean through the appropriate SSE Associate Dean for Undergraduate or Graduate Education to convene an ad hoc grade appeal subcommittee.
 - 1. Such a committee will consist of two faculty members of the School of Science and Engineering from outside of the instructor's department and the Dean or his/her representative.
 - 2. This subcommittee shall recommend to the Dean either that the grade should stand, or that it should be changed; and shall notify both the student and the instructor of its recommendation.

3. The Dean shall then render a decision and notify all parties of his or her action. The decision of the Dean is final and neither the student nor the faculty member may request further appeals.
 4. A written record should be kept at all stages of the appeals process.
This step typically should take five weeks.
- E. For any appeal case involving an intra-departmental grade appeal committee and/or the Dean, written records of all stages of the process should be kept in the Dean's office.

VI. Protection of the Instructor's Rights

The decision of a grade appeal subcommittee will neither be used as a cause for any disciplinary action nor dismissal of a tenured faculty member or a non-tenured faculty member before the expiration of a contract period. Nor shall a decision, by itself, be a basis for any other disciplinary action. Any disciplinary actions shall be in accordance with regular University procedures as described in The Faculty Manual (https://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/faculty-manual/faculty-manual_current.pdf).

All evidence considered by a grade appeal subcommittee shall be made available to any body that may be considering disciplinary action concerning an instructor whose grading has been found by a grade appeal subcommittee to be capricious. That body shall make an independent determination based upon its own consideration of all evidence, irrespective of the findings of the grade appeal subcommittee.