Faculty Senate Resolution Number S-2018-14

To: Joe Bertolino, Ed.D., President, Southern Connecticut State University
From: Maria Diamantis, Ed.D., President, SCSU Faculty Senate

The attached Resolution of the Faculty Senate is entitled:
RESOLUTION Regarding the Grade Appeal Procedure and FORM

This Resolution was approved by Faculty Senate on: May 2, 2018

[X] This Resolution is presented for APPROVAL
[ ] This Resolution is presented for INFORMATION

In accordance with the CSU-AAUP Contract (Article 5.10), "When the Senate makes a written recommendation to the President, the President shall acknowledge and respond to the recommendation in writing within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the Senate’s recommendation."

After considering this resolution, please indicate your action on this form and return it to the President of the Faculty Senate.

Maria Diamantis, Ed.D., President, Faculty Senate

Date

cc: Robert S. Prezant, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

ACTION OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

To: Maria Diamantis, Ed.D., President, SCSU Faculty Senate
From: Joe Bertolino, Ed.D., President, SCSU

Resolution for Approval:
[ ] Resolution APPROVED
[ ] Resolution DISAPPROVED (Provide comments below or attach statement)
Comments

Resolution for Information:
[ ] Resolution NOTED (applies to Informational Resolutions only)
Comments

Joe Bertolino, Ed.D., President, SCSU
Date
Preliminary Information:

In accordance with SCSU educational mission, this policy articulates the procedure and criteria for the appeal of a final course grade. This Grade Appeal Procedure is intended to be fair, equitable and transparent.

The Grade Appeal Procedure consists of three levels:
1) Level 1 – Discussion with instructor
2) Level 2 – Mediation with chairperson
3) Level 3 – University Academic Standing Committee (UASC)

I. Assumptions

A. The award of grades is the responsibility of the instructor of the course.

B. In order to protect fairness in grading as well as to protect academic freedom and promote academic integrity, grade appeals must be based on a claim of palpable injustice. A palpable injustice occurs when a faculty member has been demonstrably inconsistent or unfair to the student. It is a clear and blatant violation of a reasonable evaluation procedure, regardless of whether that procedure is stated or implied. For example, palpable injustice is NOT warranted when other faculty members simply disagree with the grade, would have graded differently, would have rounded off to the next highest grade, or would have preferred a different evaluation procedure. In this case, the issue would be whether or not the faculty member applied the policy appropriately.

C. These procedures apply only to the change of a grade under conditions specified in section 4.2.2.2 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. They may be implemented after a final grade has been submitted or after a request for a late withdrawal has been denied by the instructor.

D. All parties work in good faith to arrive at a resolution during all stages of the process.

II. General Guidelines

A. Grade appeals must be initiated on an individual basis.

B. Grade appeals are made only in the fall or spring semester after the grade is received, hereafter referred to as Appeal Semester. This includes courses taken during summer, winter, or spring break sessions. For courses of an 8-week (or fewer) duration, the grade appeal may be made in either of the next two 8-week semesters directly following the semester in which the grade was received. The deadlines for the 8-week courses appear in parentheses for each level.

C. Graduating students will typically appeal the grade following the established Grade Appeal Procedure. If, however, a graduating student is appealing a grade that prevents the student from graduating, it is recognized that time of graduation may be affected if the established Grade Appeal Procedure is followed. In this case, attempts will be made by the instructor, Department Chairperson, and UASC to resolve the issue in an expedited manner.

D. The week of Spring Break shall not be counted when determining how long the grade appeal has been in process.

E. If the student’s graduation may be delayed due to the appeal process, permission may be given by the Chairperson to take subsequent or required courses within the Department.

F. All parties shall retain all records of the process. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that any agreed upon change to a grade has been implemented by the end of the appeal semester.

III. Required Procedures

A. **Level 1 - Discussion with instructor**
   - Deadlines - end of week 1 of the Appeal Semester for student to submit Grade Appeal Form to instructor;
end of week 2 to reach agreement. (8-week courses - same)
Student attempts to resolve the issue through discussion with the instructor. The student and instructor attempt to settle the matter in good faith. If an agreement is reached to change the grade, the instructor shall submit the grade change form to the Registrar’s Office. If an agreement is not reached by the end of week 2; or if the student has been unsuccessful in contacting the instructor (with the help of the instructor’s Chairperson, if needed); or if the instructor refuses to participate, the student may go to Level 2 by submitting the Grade Appeal Form to the instructor’s chairperson by the end of week 3.

B. Level 2 - Mediation with Instructor’s Chairperson/Program Director
Deadlines – end of week 3 of the Appeal Semester for student to submit Grade Appeal Form to instructor’s chairperson; end of week 5 to reach agreement. (8-week courses, end of week 3 to submit and end of week 4 to reach agreement)

The student completes the Grade Appeal Form and sends it to the chairperson/program director by the end of week 3 (8-week courses, end of week 3). The chairperson/program director shall assist the instructor and the student in an attempt to settle the matter. If an agreement is reached to change the grade, the instructor shall submit the grade change form to the Registrar’s Office. If these parties fail to reach an agreement by the end of week 5 (8-week courses, end of week 4), the student may go to Level 3 by submitting the Grade Appeal Form to the UASC by the end of week 6 (8-week courses, end of week 5).

If the instructor is either unavailable or is chairperson, proceed directly to Level 3.

C. Level 3 – UASC
Deadlines – end of week 6 of the Appeal Semester for student to submit grade appeal form to UASC; end of week 9 for UASC to render decision. (8-week courses, end of week 5 to submit and end of week 7 to reach decision)

The student completes the Grade Appeal Form and sends it to the UASC by the end of week 6 (8-week courses, end of week 5). Upon receipt of the Grade Appeal Form, the UASC shall forward the document to the appropriate instructor’s Dean. The Dean shall monitor the appeal process thereafter to insure that the procedures and schedule are followed.

The UASC shall render its decision following consultation with the instructor, student, and others whom it deems appropriate by the end of week 9 (8-week courses, end of week 7). The student, instructor, department chair/director, and the relevant Dean shall be notified in writing of the committee’s decision, which shall include a written rationale. The UASC shall notify the Registrar if a grade change is required. The decision of the UASC shall be final, unless the Dean determines that a procedural violation has occurred (see, for example III. D. Deadlines and deadline extensions). In such an instance, the matter shall be returned to the UASC for its reconsideration.

D. Deadlines and deadline extensions

1. “By the 2nd week” means 2 weeks (14 calendar days) into the semester, starting with the 1st day of classes. Other deadlines are to be interpreted similarly.

2. A Dean of the appropriate school may extend any grade appeal deadline only at the student’s request and only if the student provides written evidence that physical or mental incapacitation led to the missed deadline. The request must be made, in writing, no later than the end of the first week of classes following the original grade appeal semester.

IV. Interpretation

This section may not be invoked with respect to the interpretation of any item of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. If an issue develops concerning interpretation of this Document whether initiated by the Senate, a faculty member, or any member of the administration, a binding decision on such an issue shall be made:

A. by agreement between the President of the University and a majority of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate or, failing to obtain agreement on an issue by this method;

B. by a committee consisting of one member selected by the Senate Executive Committee, one selected by the President of the University, and one selected by the first two committee members, who, by a two-thirds vote shall decide such an issue.
V. Implementation and Amendment

A. This document shall take effect upon approval by a two-thirds vote of the Faculty Senate with the concurrence of the President of the University.

B. This document may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Faculty Senate with the concurrence of the University President.

Notes:
1. By grade is meant any of the grades specified in the University Undergraduate or Graduate Catalogs.
2. Semester means the January to May or the August to December sessions of classes.
Southern Connecticut State University

Grade Appeal Form

Name: (Last) ___________________________ (First) ___________________________ (M.I.) _____

Student ID: ___________________________

Course Department Code: __________ Course Number: __________ Section: ________

Semester course taken: (circle) FALL SPRING WINTER SUMMER

Year course taken: ____________ Instructor: ______________________________________

Explain, in detail, why you think a palpable injustice has occurred. A palpable injustice occurs when a faculty member has been demonstrably inconsistent and unfair to the student. Please also attach any relevant documentation.

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Use additional sheets if necessary.
GRADE APPEAL FORM PART 2: DOCUMENTATION

I. LEVEL 1 – Discussion with the Instructor

To be completed by the student

1. Were you able to contact the Instructor regarding grade appeal? (circle) Y N

Date of contact/s or meeting/s: (dd) ____ \ (mm) ____ \ (yr) ____

(dd) ____ \ (mm) ____ \ (yr) ____

Was a resolution reached? (Check one) YES ☐ NO ☐

2. Provide a summary of grade appeal decision. If resolution not reached, the student may proceed to Level 2. (Use additional sheets if necessary)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

NAME OF SUMMARY AUTHOR: _____________________________________________

If resolved, a signature from both parties signifies an agreement has been reached regarding the grade appeal and concludes the grade appeal process.*

Grade Prior to Appeal _______ Grade Following Appeal (if changed) _______

STUDENT SIGNATURE __________________________________ Date: ____________

INSTRUCTOR SIGNATURE __________________________________ Date: ____________

* The student shall retain a copy of this signed agreement. If an agreement is reached to change the grade, the Instructor shall submit the grade change to the Registrar’s office.
II. LEVEL 2 – Mediation with the Chairperson

To be completed by the student

1. Were you able to contact the Department Chairperson? (circle)  
   Y  N  
   Date/s of contact/s or meeting/s: (dd) ____ \ (mm) ____ \ (yr) ____  
   (dd) ____ \ (mm) ____ \ (yr) ____  
   Was a resolution reached? (Check one) YES □  NO □

2. Provide a summary of grade appeal decision. If resolution not reached, the student may proceed to Level 3. (Use additional sheets if necessary)

   ____________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________  

NAME OF SUMMARY AUTHOR: ________________________________________  

If resolved, a signature from all parties signifies an agreement has been reached regarding the grade appeal and concludes the grade appeal process.*

Grade Prior to Appeal _______  Grade Following Appeal (if changed) _______

STUDENT SIGNATURE ___________________________________________  Date: _____________

INSTRUCTOR SIGNATURE __________________________________________  Date: _____________

CHAIRPERSON SIGNATURE _________________________________________  Date: _____________

* Both the Student and Department Chairperson shall retain a copy of this signed agreement. If an agreement is reached to change the grade, the Instructor shall submit the grade change to the Registrar’s office.
III. LEVEL 3 – University Academic Standing Committee (UASC)

To be completed by the student

1. Date of grade appeal submission to Faculty Senate President
   (dd) ___ \ (mm) ___ \ (yr) ___

To be completed by Faculty Senate President

2. Date grade appeal forwarded to UASC
   (dd) ___ \ (mm) ___ \ (yr) ___

The following is to be completed by UASC

3. Date grade appeal forwarded to relevant Dean
   (dd) ___ \ (mm) ___ \ (yr) ___

4. Provide a written rationale of UASC grade appeal decision. (Use additional sheets if necessary)

   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

SIGNATURE OF UASC CHAIRPERSON __________________________________________

DATE OF GRADE APPEAL FINAL DECISION: (dd) ___ \ (mm) ___ \ (yr) ___

Grade Prior to Appeal ________ Grade Following Appeal (if changed) ________

DATE GRADE CHANGE SUBMITTED TO REGISTRAR: (dd) ___ \ (mm) ___ \ (yr) ___

DATE DECISION AND WRITTEN RATIONALE SENT TO STUDENT, INSTRUCTOR, DEPARTMENT
CHAIR/DIRECTOR, AND RELEVANT DEAN:
   (dd) ___ \ (mm) ___ \ (yr) ___
Grade Appeal Form Instructions

A student may submit a grade appeal only in instances in which a palpable injustice can be claimed. A palpable injustice occurs when a faculty member has been demonstrably inconsistent and unfair to the student. Grade appeals can be submitted only in the fall or spring semester after the grade is received (Appeal Semester). This includes 8-week courses and courses taken during summer, winter, or spring break sessions. See Grade Appeal Procedure document for additional details and important deadlines.

The Grade Appeal Procedure consists of three levels:
1) Level 1 – Discussion with Instructor
2) Level 2 – Mediation with Chairperson
3) Level 3 – University Academic Standing Committee (UASC)

Grade Appeal Procedures and Deadlines

LEVEL 1 – DISCUSSION WITH INSTRUCTOR

If a student decides to appeal grade based upon palpable injustice, the student completes and submits the Grade Appeal Form to the Instructor before the end of Week 1 of the Appeal Semester (same for 8-week courses). The student and Instructor will attempt to reach a resolution regarding grade appeal.

**Level 1 Resolution Deadline:** End of Week 2 of the Appeal Semester (same for 8-week courses)

LEVEL 2 – MEDIATION WITH CHAIRPERSON
(Note: If Instructor is also Department Chairperson, student may skip to Level 3)

If a resolution regarding the grade appeal is not reached between the student and the instructor after Week 2, the student may submit the Grade Appeal Form to the Department Chairperson before the end of Week 3 of the Appeal Semester (same for 8-week courses). The Chairperson will act as mediator during the continued grade appeal discussion between the student and Instructor.

**Level 2 Resolution Deadline:** End of Week 5 of the Appeal Semester (end of Week 4 for 8-week courses)

LEVEL 3 – UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC STANDING COMMITTEE (UASC)

If a resolution regarding the grade appeal is not reached after Week 5 (Week 4 for 8-week courses) and following mediation with the Chairperson, the student may submit the Grade Appeal Form to UASC via the Faculty Senate President by the end of Week 6 of the Appeal Semester (end of Week 5 for 8-week courses). UASC will review the grade appeal and render a final decision.

**Level 3 Final Decision Deadline:** End of Week 9 of the Appeal Semester (end of Week 7 for 8-week courses)