

(System Policy 3.8)

Rochester Community and Technical College faculty have the responsibility and authority to establish the requirements and standards for class expectations and the evaluation of student performance. Faculty have the right to determine their own grading policy, which shall communicate the grading criteria and procedures used to determine final grades. The faculty's grading policy shall be included in the class syllabus. Grade submitted by faculty to the Registrar's Office are presumed to be accurate.

If a student believes, for the reasons of arbitrariness and/or error, the criteria and procedures were not followed as described in the class syllabus, the student shall have the right to appeal the final grade and seek remedy. Students who choose to appeal a final grade assume the burden of proof concerning any believed error in the grade assigned.

Part 1. Definitions:

Arbitrariness: The final class grade awarded represents a departure from accepted academic norms as to demonstrate that the instructor did not exercise proper professional judgment, or the instructor deviated from the evaluation criteria established by the grading policy described in the class syllabus.

Error: The final class grade awarded reflected an error of fact (calculation error, omission, etc.), or the instructor failed to give the student in the class adequate notice of grading policies and procedures in the syllabus or other form of communication.

If the student believes that the grade received is based upon discrimination or prejudice, the student should follow the [RCTC Student Grievance policy/procedures](#).

Part 2. Procedure:

Step 1: Prior to filing a grade appeal, the student, within twenty (20) business days following grades being posted, must contact the instructor about the grade awarded to discuss the specifics of the perceived incorrect grade and to seek resolution. Every effort should be made by both parties to resolve the matter as expeditiously as time and circumstances permit. The instructor, at his/her discretion, may consult with the appropriate Program Leader/Division Chair. If the instructor is no longer with the College or is unavailable to the student, the student shall proceed to step two.

Step 2: If resolution is not achieved in meeting with the instructor, the student may file a formal grade appeal within ten (10) business days of meeting with the instructor. To do so the student must:

- a. Submit a written Grade Appeal Form to the appropriate Dean.
 - i. Grade Appeal Forms can be obtained from the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and are located in RCTC e-forms.
- b. Provide clear documentation that demonstrates grounds for an appeal. (Documentation may be in the form of email communications, graded assignments, proof of timely submissions, the class syllabi, etc.)
- c. Provide written evidence of first meeting with the instructor, or evidence that the instructor was unavailable to complete Step 1.

If the documented evidence is not compelling, the Dean will provide a written response to the student within ten (10) business days and will also notify the instructor that the student's appeal was received and denied.

If the documented evidence appears compelling, within ten (10) business days, the Dean will forward the student's written statement and documentation to the instructor for a formal response. A good faith effort will be made to contact faculty when appeals occur outside of the basic faculty work year. Within ten (10) business days, the instructor will provide a written response to the Dean supporting or denying the appeal request, or request to meet with the Dean and/or student.

The Dean may request an appeal meeting that includes the student and the instructor, however the instructor is not obligated to participate in such a meeting. The instructor is entitled to union representation or a witness during such a meeting. In the event that a meeting is requested by either the instructor or Dean and is scheduled, the student may invite an advocate to sit in, but this individual may not participate except to witness the meeting. The Dean will render a decision to the student in writing within ten (10) business days of the appeal meeting with the student and instructor.

The Dean's decision will be documented on the RCTC Grade Appeal Form and provided to the student, instructor, and the Vice President, Academic Affairs. The dean, in writing, will inform the Academic Standards Committee chairperson whether the student's appeal was approved or denied.

Step 3: If the decision of the Dean does not satisfactorily resolve the issue the student or instructor may, in writing, request an Appeal Review by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. This request must be made within ten (10) business days of the date of notification of the appeal decision by the Dean in Step 2.

The written request for the review of appeal must not simply restate the original appeal, but must provide additional evidence that the grade appeal process was not completed properly or that not all the evidence submitted was fully considered in the appeal process.

New evidence cannot be added in the request for an appeal review.

- The Vice President of Academic Affairs will review the request for Appeal Review to determine its merit. The Vice President may schedule a meeting between any combination of the student, the instructor, and the Dean, but the instructor is not obligated to participate in such a meeting. The instructor is entitled to union representation or a witness during such a meeting. A student's advisor or advocate may attend this meeting but may not participate except to witness the meeting.
- Within ten (10) business days of the Appeal Review meeting, the Vice President will render a decision in writing to the student, instructor, and Dean. The Vice President, in writing, will inform the Academic Standards Committee chairperson whether the student's appeal was approved or denied. The decision of the Vice President is final.

Part 3. Limitations:

Students may only use the Grade Appeal policy and procedures for final class grades. Concerns and complaints about individual tests, quizzes, papers, and project grades cannot be appealed; however, efforts to resolve these concerns and complaints may become part of the evidence used in a Formal Grade Appeal.

Part 4. Maintenance of Records:

All formal grade appeal documents, and relevant evidence, will be scanned and electronically stored with the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs for the period of ten (10) years.

File name sequence for storage of formal appeal documents: GradeAppeal_StudentName_ID_Course_Semester

<i>Date of Implementation:</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
<i>Date of Adoption:</i>	<i>2/13/2008</i>
<i>Revisions:</i>	<i>2/13/17; 2/28/23</i>