

Grade Appeals Policy for Courses, Clerkships and Electives

The components of assessments and evaluation in a course or clerkship are transparent to the student and discussed at the start of the student's experience. The course/clerkship director generates grades. Should there be a disagreement about a grade in a course or clerkship, the student is to follow the guidelines below for grade appeals. When appealing a grade, the burden of proof for the basis of the appeal lies on the student. Students may not use questions that fall under the exam challenge policy (Exam Review and Assessment Item Appeal Process) as the basis for an appeal. Other measurements of student performance (e.g. quiz questions and written assignments) may form the basis of an appeal. Students may not appeal the standards set for assessments and evaluations but may appeal their performance on these standards. The SOM Registrar will send out a notification of grade posting for each course and clerkship. It is at this time that a grade-appeal may be initiated.

1. **Level 0 Appeal:** The first stage of a grade appeals process is the resolution phase. This will be a meeting between the student and the course/clerkship director. The student must appeal to the course/clerkship director in writing and provide a rationale for the appeal. This meeting must be scheduled (not held) within 10 business days of the notification of grade posting by the SOM Registrar. The student or the course/clerkship director may also request any course instructors/faculty preceptors involved in evaluating the student be present for this meeting. If the grade appeal is based on challenge of a graded-assessment or assignment given by a course/clerkship faculty, the course/clerkship director(s) can rely on guidance from the faculty member for a complete assessment of the appeal. This should occur before the resolution meeting. At the resolution meeting, the student will have an opportunity to voice his/her concern(s) about the grade that he/she received. The course/clerkship director will have the chance to review the criteria by which the final grade is determined and will be expected to answer any questions the student has. The course/clerkship director may elect to obtain additional information based upon what the student has said and would ultimately decide to maintain the original grade or submit an amended grade to the Registrar. The course/clerkship director can consult

with their department chair in reaching their final decision. This level must be completed within 15 business days of the notification of grade posting by the SOM registrar.

2. **Level 1 Appeal:** If dissatisfied with the resolution phase, the student may appeal their grade to the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs in writing. This meeting must be scheduled and held within 10 business days of the decision of the original resolution meeting. At this meeting, the course/clerkship director and the student will meet with the Assistant Dean who will serve as the neutral arbitrator. The burden of proof for the basis of the grade appeal lies on the student. The Assistant Dean may ask for additional materials, not presented at the original meeting between the student and the course/clerkship director. The decision of the Assistant Dean will be delivered to the student, the course/clerkship director, the SOM registrar and the Office of Medical Education (OME) and Student Affairs. In the event of unavailability of the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, the Associate Dean of Medical Education can address an appeal. This level must be completed within 25 business days of the notification of grade posting by the SOM registrar.
3. **Level 2 Appeal:** If dissatisfied with the decision at the Level 1 appeal, either the student or the course/clerkship director may appeal to the ASPC (Academic Standards and Professionalism Committee) by contacting the Office of the Vice Dean of Medical Education, in writing, within 7 business days of the decision of the Level 1 appeal. The Associate Dean of Medical Education, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, and the Registrar, will be non-voting ex-officio advisors/members at the ASPC meeting. In the case of a student appeal, the student will be asked to provide information regarding the grounds for the grade appeal and will be given an opportunity to address the ASPC if they so desire. The course/clerkship director involved will not be allowed a vote in the matter and will be excused for the period of debate and voting after being given a chance to address the Committee. After consideration, the ASPC will render a decision to the Vice Dean of Medical Education with correspondence to the student, the course director and the SOM registrar. In the case of a course director appeal, the director will be asked to provide information regarding the grounds for reversing the decision of the Level 1

appeal and will be given an opportunity to address the ASPC if they so desire. The student may provide verbal comment at the ASPC meeting, is not allowed a vote in the matter, and will be excused for the period of debate and voting. After consideration, the ASPC will render a decision to the Vice Dean of Medical Education with correspondence to the student, the course/clerkship director and the SOM registrar. This level must be completed within 50 business days of the notification of grade posting by the SOM registrar.

4. The student may appeal the ASPC's decision to the Dean of the Medical School by notifying him/her in writing within seven business days of the ASPC decision. The Dean's review will be limited to review of procedural integrity (i.e. where the processes in levels 0, 1 and 2 as stated in the policy). If the Dean finds that the appeals process, at any level, did not adhere to procedure, s/he may overturn the decision and decide in favor of the student. Regardless of outcome, the Dean's decision will be final.

This policy supersedes and replaces all previous policies or correspondence, written or oral, with respect to the subject matter of this policy.