

# MINNESOTA WEST COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURES

**PLEASE READ COMPLETELY PRIOR TO BEGINNING THE APPEAL PROCESS**

Students:

Minnesota West Community and Technical College recognizes the long-standing and widely accepted practice that the individual classroom instructor is the final authority in evaluating student performance in his/her courses. Also recognized is the fact that this right brings with it a responsibility to provide students with a clear statement of course grading policies, and of fairly and consistently applying these policies. A corollary to this is the student's right to receive from an instructor an explanation of any grade received.

While recognizing the rights and responsibilities of the instructor, in extraordinary circumstances students have the right to appeal for a grade review in instances where they believe that a final course grade was assigned unfairly or in a manner inconsistent with the stated course grading policy. **To be precise, the following three categories are the only legitimate basis for a grade appeal at Minnesota West Community and Technical College**

**ARBITRARINESS:** The course grade awarded represents such a substantial departure from accepted academic norms as to demonstrate that the instructor did not actually exercise professional judgement.

**PREJUDICE:** The grade awarded was motivated by ill will, and is not indicative of the student's academic performance in the course.

**ERROR:** The instructor made a mistake in fact (e.g., a calculation error or omission), or failed to give students enrolled in the course adequate notice of grading policies.

In cases where a student believes that a grade has been assigned incorrectly based on one or more of the grounds stated above, it is expected that the student will seek to resolve any concerns informally by speaking directly with the course instructor before beginning a formal appeal process. The formal appeals process should not be undertaken lightly, nor should it be undertaken merely because a student is unhappy with the grade received in a course.

Please use the following form to initiate a grade appeal.

It is the student's responsibility to see that each step is carried out (if necessary) and that the time constraints are carefully adhered to. Both the student and the instructor may represent themselves at each step.

**Fall Semester Grade Appeal**

- You must file the appeal **prior to the end of the third week of the following spring semester**

**Spring or Summer Grade Appeal**

- You must file the appeal **prior to the end of the third week of the following fall semester**

Each step must be completed before going to the next level **unless** the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of the student. **The Campus Dean/Center Director and Grade Appeal Committee recommendations are advisory in nature. The responsibility for the grade awarded is the instructor's. Should the need arise; the Campus Dean/Center Director will contact the appropriate Academic Administrator to facilitate Steps II and III. However, should it be necessary, the Provost will be the final arbitrator whose decision will be final.**

**The Campus Dean/Center Director shall retain copies of all related paperwork to any subsequent steps.**

Each college official (instructor or Campus Dean/Center Director) or Committee must initiate the appropriate discussion or hearing within three teaching days after receipt of a grievance. Failure of the student to appeal (if necessary) to the next level within the prescribed time limits shall terminate the appeal.

College officials and committees must render a recommendation within three days of receipt of the grade appeal.

After each recommendation/decision, a copy of the appeal form and accompanying documents must be submitted to the:

**Student  
Instructor  
Campus Dean/Center Director**

**Should the appeal reach Step IV, a copy of the appeal and decision shall go to the:**

**Student  
Instructor  
Campus Dean/Center Director  
Grade Appeal Committee**

\* The Grade Appeal Committee shall consist of three full-time faculty members. The college Academic Affairs and Standards Council shall appoint faculty.

\*\* Should a grade change result; the instructor shall submit a grade change to the Registrar's Office.

**COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING FORM**

