

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED REGULATION AMENDMENT

**Date:** May 17, 2021

**REGULATION TITLE:**  
Student Academic Appeals

**REGULATION NO.:**  
UCF-5.016

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED REGULATION AMENDMENT:** This regulation has been substantially revised. The purpose of this regulation is to set forth the conditions and procedures for student academic appeals. Significant portions have been rearranged to better reflect the appeals process and some aspects of the process have been changed, however the primary concepts of the process remain intact. Key improvements in the process include identifying dismissal of appeals that are determined to have no basis under the procedure, expanding on the process at the final stage of available review, and specifying the record keeping requirements for these appeals.

**AUTHORITY:** BOG Regulation 1.001

**NAME OF PERSON WHO INITIATED PROPOSED REGULATION AMENDMENT:**  
Theodorea Berry, Vice Provost and Dean

**COMMENTS CONCERNING THE PROPOSED REGULATION AMENDMENT SHOULD BE SUBMITTED WITHIN 14 DAYS OF THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE TO THE CONTACT PERSON IDENTIFIED BELOW.** The comments must identify the regulation you are commenting on.

**THE PERSON TO BE CONTACTED REGARDING THE PROPOSED REGULATION AMENDMENT IS:**

Regulations Administrator  
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Millican Hall, Suite 360  
Orlando, FL 32816-0015  
Phone: (407) 823-2482  
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**FULL TEXT OF THE PROPOSED REGULATION AMENDMENT:**

**UCF-5.016 Student Academic Appeals**

(1) General Policy.

(a) This regulation applies to:

1. Undergraduate or graduate students seeking to appeal a final course grade (individual grades on assignments, exams, etc. are not appealed by this process).

2. Undergraduate students seeking to appeal a program decision. (Graduate student appeals of program decisions, including termination from an academic program or grades on thesis or dissertation, are handled in UCF-5.017).
- (b) All grade concerns must first be discussed directly with the instructor of the course. The professional judgement exercised by an instructor in assigning a grade or in conducting a class is excluded from the provisions of this regulation. A formal grade appeal is limited to or more of the following reasons:
1. Alleged deviation from established and announced grading policy;
  2. Alleged errors in the application of grading procedures;
  3. Alleged deviation from University syllabus policy that could have impacted the resulting grade; and
  4. Alleged lowering of grades for non-academic reasons, including discrimination.
- (c) Program decisions include actions related to program or college specific requirements. An undergraduate program appeal is limited to one or more of the following reasons:
1. Alleged deviation from program policies or university policies applied to the program as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog or Undergraduate Program Handbook(s);
  2. Alleged errors in the application of program policies or procedures;
  3. Alleged program probation or program dismissal due to non-academic reasons; and
  4. Alleged undergraduate program action for non-academic reasons, including discrimination and/or sexual harassment in the undergraduate program, department or college.
- (d) If an appeal alleges discrimination, the appeal will first be referred to the Office of Institutional Equity (<https://oie.ucf.edu/>). The OIE process must be concluded before a formal grade appeal can be initiated.
- (e) If the student is charged with a conduct violation based on alleged academic misconduct (per UCF-5.008) that relates to the grade or program action being

appealed, the student conduct process must be completed before the student initiates a formal grade appeal.

(f) If the student is pursuing a program appeal that relates to a grade appeal, the grade appeal must be completed before the student initiates the program appeal.

(g) If needed, the University may extend deadlines applicable to the grade or program appeal process for the purposes of reviewing the appeal. If extensions are made, the new deadline will be shared in writing.

(2) For any appeal, the following assumptions are adopted:

(a) The burden of proof for a student academic appeal is on the student.

(b) Students and faculty members are entitled to a fair and timely resolution of academic appeals.

(c) Students have access to published materials, professional advisors, and student government to help them become familiar with and understand the procedures for handling academic appeals. Students may consult the Golden Rule, seek advice from an academic advisor, or consult with a student government advisor ([sga\\_cjus@ucf.edu](mailto:sga_cjus@ucf.edu)) regarding the student's rights and responsibilities with respect to this appeal process.

(d) Faculty members and administrators have access to the materials published in the Golden Rule and access to University staff in the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (<https://osrr.sdes.ucf.edu/>) to help them be aware of and understand the procedures to address academic appeals.

(e) The University as an institution and its faculty members and students are entitled to procedures that ensure due process and the maintenance of academic standards.

(f) All appeal communications between the student and any University personnel must be made via a university-provided system.

1. Information regarding informal appeals should be communicated using the UCF email account (e.g., [knights.ucf.edu](mailto:knights.ucf.edu) or [ucf.edu](mailto:ucf.edu)).

2. Information regarding formal appeals are submitted using the appeal forms and processes available at <https://academicsuccess.ucf.edu/gradeappeal/>.

(3) Step 1: Resolution of Student Appeals with the Instructor or Program

- (a) The appeal of final grades or an undergraduate program action must be initiated within ninety (90) calendar days of the final grade being posted or of the undergraduate program action being taken.
- (b) All student appeals of grades or undergraduate program actions must first be addressed by the person or program whose action is being appealed. In cases of grade appeals this will be the instructor of the course and in cases of undergraduate program actions this will be the faculty administrator (e.g., program director or program coordinator) of the program that enacted the action. Henceforth, the instructor or faculty administrator are referred to as the “Responding Party”. This attempted resolution is required before the student can continue to the formal appeal process described in Step 2.
- (c) If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the Responding Party, or if the Responding Party is not available, the student has the right to pursue a Step 2 formal resolution at the unit level with the unit head or their designee. The “unit head” is usually the faculty member who serves as chair of the department or director of the school that houses the course or program.

(4) Step 2: Formal Resolution of the Student Appeal at the Unit Level

- (a) To initiate the formal academic appeal, the student must submit the appropriate appeal form and supporting documentation. The appeal form is available at <https://academicsuccess.ucf.edu/gradeappeal/>. If supporting documentation cannot be submitted online, the student must provide it to the unit head or designee. This documentation must clearly state the reason for the appeal and must include the resolution sought by the student.
- (b) Once the appeal is received by the unit head, they or their designee will review the appeal and supporting documentation to determine if there are grounds for the appeal.
  - 1. If there is not a basis for the appeal, the appeal will be dismissed, and the unit head or designee will inform the student in writing why the appeal is dismissed.
  - 2. If there is a basis for the appeal, within ten (10) business days of receipt of the appeal the unit head or designee will consult with the Responding Party and may also ask to meet with the student.

- a. If the Responding Party or student is not available to discuss or respond to the appeal, the resolution should wait until the Responding Party or student can respond, but not more than thirty (30) business days.
- b. In the event an immediate resolution is needed (e.g., due to pending graduation certification) the unit head will make a decision based on available information.
- (c) Within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the appeal, or longer based on either the Responding Party or student not being available (see above), the unit head or designee will provide the student and the Responding Party with a written decision.

(5) Step 3: Resolution of Student Academic Appeals at the College Level

- (a) If the student has new information to present or can show that a procedural error occurred in the previous steps, within ten (10) business days of the unit head or designee's written decision the student may submit the appeal to the dean of the college that offers the course or program. The student will provide the information using the processes outlined in (2)(f).
- (b) The dean will delegate the appeal to an associate dean or designee who will, within ten (10) business days of receipt, review the appeal. One of the following actions will take place:
  - 1. If an appeal is presented that was previously dismissed for having no basis, and none of the new or additional information establishes a basis, then the appeal will again be dismissed, and the associate dean or designee will inform the student in writing why the appeal is dismissed.
  - 2. If the student presents new or additional information that must first be reviewed by the unit head, then the associate dean or designee will inform the student in writing that this information must be reviewed first by the unit head and that the student is required to revisit Step 2.
  - 3. If the appeal warrants a review, the associate dean or designee will submit a recommendation to the dean.
- (c) If a recommendation is submitted to the dean, within five (5) business days of receiving the associate dean or designee's recommendation the college dean will provide the student with a written decision on the appeal. The dean's decision will

be sent to the student and copied to the Responding Party, the unit head, and the appropriate dean of the undergraduate or graduate college.

(6) Step 4: Resolution of Student Academic Appeals at the University Level

- (a) If the student has new information to present or can show that a procedural error occurred in the previous steps, within ten (10) business days of the dean's written decision the student may submit the appeal to the dean of the college of undergraduate studies or the dean of the graduate college. The student will provide the information using the processes outlined in (2)(f).
- (b) The university dean will review the appeal within ten (10) business days of receipt. One of the following actions will take place:
  - 1. If an appeal is presented that was previously dismissed for having no basis and none of the new or additional information establishes a basis, then the appeal will again be dismissed, and the university dean or designee will inform the student in writing why the appeal is dismissed.
  - 2. If the student presents new or additional information that must first be reviewed by the college dean, then the university dean or designee will inform the student in writing that this information must be reviewed first by the college dean and that the student is required to revisit Step 3.
  - 3. If the information presented warrants additional review, the university dean will inform the student in writing that the appeal will be reviewed by the Ad Hoc Student Academic Appeal Committee who will make a recommendation to the university dean. The appeal will continue to Step 5.

(7) Step 5: Ad Hoc Student Academic Appeal Committee

- (a) The committee will function as an objective, fact-finding body when examining all available and relevant information concerning the student's appeal of a grade or program action by the Responding Party. Such information may include the student's documented appeal, written and/or oral information provided by the student or Responding Party, statements made by both parties before the committee, and any other information the committee may deem relevant.
- (b) The committee will review the student's appeal of the awarded grade or the undergraduate program action and will make a recommendation to the university dean about how the appeal will be resolved.

- (c) The committee shall be made up of no more than two (2) full-time instructional faculty members and an equal number of students. The university shall make a reasonable effort to select students of comparable academic classification as the student initiating the appeal. The university will select student members from a panel of students appointed and trained by the Vice President of Student Development and Enrollment Services and/or the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The list of students appointed to the student panel shall be maintained by the office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (for undergraduate) or the College of Graduate Studies (for graduate).
- (d) Once the committee is convened, the committee should make reasonable efforts to meet for review of the case within twenty (20) business days. If the committee cannot meet within the 20 days, the university will inform the parties of the need for additional time.
- (e) The meeting is not covered by Sunshine laws, is closed to outside parties, and will not be recorded.
1. The student and Responding Party shall be separately invited to meet with the committee. Participating individuals in the appeal may appear through virtual (electronic) means at the committee meeting. While either party may invite a guest to attend the meeting, no guest may address the committee or respond to questions.
  2. The student and Responding Party shall be allowed adequate time to respond to the appeal and material as submitted, to answer any questions from committee members, and to present additional information needed to clarify the issues involved.
  3. Should either party fail to attend the scheduled appeal meeting, the meeting will be held in the party's absence with the understanding that the proposed outcomes and resolutions will be made using the information available at the time of the appeal meeting and in the party's absence.
- (f) After meeting with both parties, the committee will deliberate and issue a recommendation by majority vote to the university dean. If applicable, the committee will suggest a resolution to the appeal. This decision may let the grade/action stand as is or may alter the recommended grade/action. If the decision

of the committee is to alter a previous decision, only the faculty members on the committee will recommend what the alteration will be; however, the student members on the committee may participate in the discussion. The committee chair will ensure that the committee's majority opinion, rationale, and recommended findings and resolutions are documented and forwarded to the university dean within five (5) days of the conclusion of the committee hearing.

(g) Within five (5) business days of receiving the committee's recommendation, the university dean will provide the student with a written decision on the appeal. This decision represents final agency action. The dean's decision will be copied to the unit head and the dean of the college from which the appeal originated.

(8) Responsibility for Record Keeping of Formal Student Academic Appeals

(a) To support institutional compliance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Principles of Accreditation, the following parties shall be responsible for maintaining complete records of all formal student academic appeals.

1. The College of Undergraduate Studies for undergraduate-level academic appeals; and
2. The College of Graduate Studies for graduate-level academic appeals.

(b) The complete record shall include the following components:

1. First and last name of the student filing the formal appeal or the student's unique UCF personal identification number,
2. Date the formal appeal was filed,
3. Final decision resulting from review of the formal appeal,
4. Date the formal appeal was determined closed, and
5. Documentation reviewed at each phase of the formal appeal process.

(c) The dean of the College of Undergraduate Studies and the dean of the College of Graduate Studies or their respective designees shall be responsible for monitoring formal academic appeals for patterns that may warrant broader review in an effort to ensure the integrity of the academic enterprise and continuous compliance with accreditation standards. At minimum, the respective dean or designee shall conduct an annual review of the elements addressed in the SACS-COC Principles of Accreditation (10)(b)1, 2, 3, and 4 and shall consult the documentation on file for



SACS-COC Principles of Accreditation (1)(b)5 as needed to render a determination of need for broader review.

~~(1) General Policy~~

- ~~(a) This regulation shall apply to undergraduate and graduate students seeking to appeal a final course grade or an undergraduate program decision. The professional judgement exercised by an instructor in assigning a specific grade or in conducting a class is excluded from the provisions of this regulation except as noted.~~
- ~~(b) This regulation does not apply to appeals of graduate programs actions or decisions by a faculty member, program, or college, including termination from an academic program, or to the assignment of grades for Thesis or Dissertation credit hours. Appeals from such actions are discussed in and may only be brought under Regulation UCF-5.017.~~
- ~~(c) Grounds for a grade appeal must fall under at least one of the following:~~
- ~~1. Alleged deviation from established and announced grading policy;~~
  - ~~2. Alleged errors in the application of grading procedures;~~
  - ~~3. Alleged deviation from University syllabus policy that could have impacted the resulting grade; and~~
  - ~~4. Alleged lowering of grades for non-academic reasons, including discrimination. (A grade appeal alleging discrimination in violation of University policy will be referred to the Office of Institutional Equity. The University is entitled to a reasonable period of time to review allegations of discriminations contained in an appeal, and the University may accordingly extend deadlines applicable to the University for the purposes of reviewing such allegations).~~
- ~~(d) Grounds for an undergraduate program appeal must fall under at least one of the following:~~
- ~~1. Alleged deviation from program or university policies as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog or Undergraduate Program Handbook(s);~~
  - ~~2. Alleged errors in the application of policies or procedures;~~
  - ~~3. Alleged probation or dismissal due to non-academic reasons; and~~
  - ~~4. Alleged undergraduate program action discrimination and/or sexual harassment in the undergraduate program, department or college. (An~~

~~appeal alleging discrimination in violation of University policy will be referred to the Office of Institutional Equity. The University is entitled to a reasonable period of time to review allegations of discriminations contained in an appeal, and the University may accordingly extend deadlines applicable to the University for the purposes of reviewing such allegations).~~

~~(2) The following assumptions are adopted:~~

- ~~(a) — Resolution of student academic appeals should be made as informally as possible.~~
- ~~(b) — Students and faculty are entitled to a fair and timely resolution of academic appeals.~~
- ~~(c) — The burden of proof in a student academic appeal is on the student.~~
- ~~(d) — Students have access to published materials and student government to help them become familiar with and understand procedures for handling academic appeals. Students may consult with a student government advisor for advice regarding the student's rights and responsibilities with respect to this appeal process.~~
- ~~(e) — Faculty members and administrators have access to published materials and University staff to help them be aware of and understand procedures to address academic appeals.~~
- ~~(f) — The University as an institution and its faculty are entitled to procedures that ensure the maintenance of academic standards.~~
- ~~(g) — The University is entitled to a reasonable period of time to review allegations of discrimination contained in an appeal, and the University may accordingly extend deadlines applicable to the University for purposes of reviewing such allegations.~~
- ~~(h) — All communication between the student and any University personnel must be made via a university provided email account (e.g. knights.ucf.edu or ucf.edu).~~

~~(3) Resolution of Student Appeals at the Unit Level~~

- ~~(a) — The initial appeal, for final grades or an undergraduate program action, must be initiated within ninety (90) business days of the undergraduate program action or final grade posting.~~
- ~~(b) — Step 1: All student academic appeals of allegedly wrongful academic action(s) by an instructor or administrator shall first be brought to the attention of the person whose action is being appealed. (The instructor of the course or administrator whose action is being appealed will be referred to in this regulation as the Responding Party.) If the issue cannot be resolved with the decision of the~~

~~Responding Party, or if the Responding Party is not available, the student must pursue a Step 2 solution with the unit head, usually the chair or director of the unit.~~

~~(c) — Step 2: The student must submit the appropriate appeal form, available at the following URL: [www.dtl.ucf.edu/gradeappeal](http://www.dtl.ucf.edu/gradeappeal). The unit head or designee, in consultation with the Responding Party, should make reasonable efforts to communicate with the student and resolve the problem. This communication shall normally take place within ten (10) business days of the complaint being forwarded to the unit head or designee. The unit head or designee will provide the student with a written final unit level decision. The written decision must include the contact information of the appropriate associate dean or designee to contact regarding the appeal process if dissatisfied with the final unit level decision.~~

~~1. — If the Responding Party is not available to discuss the problem, the resolution should wait, if at all possible, until such time as the Responding Party can return to the campus, but not more than (90) business days.~~

~~2. — If the unit head or designee and/or associate dean or designee determines that an emergency exists requiring that the problem be solved prior to the availability of the Responding Party (e.g. in a case of probable delayed graduation), the unit head or dean or designee shall make reasonable efforts to inform the Responding Party of the situation. The Responding Party may elect to submit a written statement and/or to designate a replacement to aid in solving the problem.~~

#### ~~(4) Resolution of Student Academic Appeals at the College Level~~

~~(a) — Step 3: If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, then the student may proceed to Step 3 of the process. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of the unit head's or designee's decision, the student must schedule an appointment with the appropriate associate dean or designee of the college in which the action occurred. That individual will review the student's concerns, inform the student of their ability to seek the assistance of a student government advisor and explain the Student Academic Appeals process. The associate dean or designee shall issue a written recommended resolution, including a concise and explicit written statement that explains the basis for the recommended resolution, within ten (10) business days of the meeting outlined above. Each party has ten (10) business days from the~~

~~issuance of the written recommended resolution to review the written recommended resolution.~~

~~(b) Step 4: If the student does not accept the written recommended resolution of the associate dean or designee, then the student must submit a written appeal to the associate dean or designee. The college will have ten (10) business days from that notice to form an Ad Hoc Student Academic Appeals Committee. This committee will review the student's appeal regarding the awarded grade and/or the academic program action and, if appropriate, suggest a resolution.~~

~~(c) The Committee shall, at a minimum, be presented with the following information:~~

- ~~1. Electronic appeal form submitted by the student.~~
- ~~2. A written final decision of the unit head or designee.~~
- ~~3. Recommended resolution of the associate dean or designee.~~
- ~~4. Information submitted by the student.~~
- ~~5. Information submitted by the Responding Party.~~

#### ~~(5) Composition of the Ad Hoc Student Academic Appeals Committee~~

~~(a) Each college shall establish an Ad Hoc Student Academic Appeals Committee whenever required and the Committee shall be considered dissolved upon submission of the Committee's recommendation to the college dean.~~

~~(b) The committee shall be made up of at least two and no more than five full time instructional faculty members and an equal number of students. The college shall make a reasonable effort to select students of comparable academic classification as the student initiating the appeal.~~

~~(c) Quorum for the Committee shall be two (2) faculty members and two (2) students.~~

~~(d) Student members shall be selected by the associate dean or designee from a panel of students. This panel shall be appointed by the Vice President of Student Development and Enrollment Services and/or the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The list of students appointed to the student panel shall be maintained by the Office of Student Conduct and furnished upon a request from a college.~~

~~(e) The parties will be informed of the names of the Ad Hoc Student Academic Appeal Committee members seated to hear the appeal. Any member may be challenged for cause by either party within three (3) days of notification of the names of the members assigned to the Ad Hoc Student Academic Appeals Committee. The~~

~~validity of such challenges shall be decided by the Assistant Dean and Executive Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities or designee. If a challenge is upheld, the college dean or designee shall appoint a replacement from the college's full-time instructional faculty members or the student panel.~~

~~(6) Ad Hoc Student Academic Appeals Committee Guidelines.~~

~~(a) The following guidelines should be adhered to when a committee is conducting a review of an appeal:~~

- ~~1. The Committee will function as an objective, fact-finding body when examining all available and relevant information concerning the student's appeal of a grade or program action by the Responding Party. Such information may include the student's written appeal, written and/or oral information provided by the Responding Party, statements made by both parties before the Committee, and any other information the committee may deem relevant.~~
- ~~2. The time limits specified in the following review procedure may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties.~~
- ~~3. The committee should make reasonable efforts to meet for review of the case within twenty (20) business days. If the committee cannot meet within the 20 days, the university will inform the parties of the need for additional time. Should either party fail to attend the scheduled appeal hearing, the hearing will be held in the party's absence with the understanding that the proposed outcomes and resolutions will be made using the information available at the time of the appeal hearing in the party's absence.~~
- ~~4. The associate dean or designee will convene the committee, establish procedural rules for conducting the meeting, serve as its chair, and will vote in the case of a tie. The meeting is not covered by Sunshine laws and is thus closed to outside parties and will not be recorded.~~
- ~~5. The student and Responding Party shall be invited to meet with the committee. Participating individuals in the appeal may appear through virtual (electronic) means at the committee meeting. Each shall be allowed adequate time to respond to the appeal and material as submitted, to answer~~

~~any questions from committee members, and to present additional information needed to clarify the issues involved.~~

~~6. After meeting with both parties, the committee will deliberate and issue a recommendation by majority vote to the college dean. The committee will (1) decide if the student has demonstrated that there were grounds for the appeal and, if there were grounds, (2) suggest what resolution should be implemented. This decision may let the grade/action as recommended by the associate dean or designee in Step 3 stand as is, or alter the recommended grade/action. If the decision of the committee is to alter the recommended Step 3 decision of the associate dean or designee, only the faculty members on the Board will be involved in deciding what the alteration will be. The committee chair will ensure that the committee's majority opinion, rationale, and recommended findings and resolutions are recorded and forwarded to the college dean within five (5) days of the conclusion of the Committee hearing.~~

~~(b) The college dean will prepare a written decision on the appeal within five (5) business days of the receipt of the Committee's recommendation. The college dean may do one of the following with the Committee's recommendation: accept it, reject it, or modify it. If the college dean rejects or modifies the Committee's recommendation, then the college dean's written decision must include a statement of reason for the action. The college dean will send a copy of the Committee's recommendation along with the college dean's written decision to the student, the Responding Party, the Provost, the unit head, and the appropriate dean of undergraduate or graduate studies. The college dean's decision shall be the final decision on the college level.~~

#### ~~(7) Final Appeal~~

~~(a) Step 5: If dissatisfied with the college dean's decision, the student may, within ten (10) business days, file a written request for review with the dean of undergraduate studies or the dean of graduate studies, or designee (depending upon the classification of the student), clearly stating the basis for review and the resolution sought by the student.~~

- ~~(b) — The dean of the college of undergraduate studies, or designee, or dean of the college of graduate studies, or designee, shall serve as the final appellate officer. The final appellate officer should issue a written decision to the student's appeal within twenty (20) business days of receipt of the appeal. Should the final appellate officer require additional time for review beyond the 20 business days, the final appellate officer will notify the student in writing of the need for additional time.~~
- ~~(c) — Acting as the University President's representative, the decision of the dean of undergraduate studies, or designee, or the dean of graduate studies, or designee, shall represent final agency action. Copies of the dean's, or designee's written decision shall be sent to the student, the college dean, the unit head, the Director of OSC, the Responding Party, the Provost, and the appropriate dean of undergraduate or graduate studies.~~

*Authority: BOG Regulation 1.001. History— New 4-23-03, Formerly 6C7-5.00431, Amended 8-10-09, 9-4-12, 10-29-15, 7-20-17, 7-19-18, 1-24-19, 9-19-19, \_\_\_\_\_-21.*