

## **Appeal Policy for Summary Evaluation or Course Grade**

### **Purpose**

Pritzker School of Medicine students have the right of grade clarification and if deemed necessary, procedures in place to appeal final grades of a course, elective or clerkship.

### **Overview**

Pritzker School of Medicine students who believe their final grade does not properly align with their performance in a course, elective or clerkship should request a grade clarification from the course director. If the results of the clarification are unsatisfactory, the student may appeal the grade.

### **Related LCME Standards:**

- 11.6 Student Access to Educational Records

### **Principles**

1. Pritzker School of Medicine students may review their academic record and have the right to ask for a grade clarification in any course or clerkship. Students are also afforded the right to a timely response from the course director in regards to a grade clarification.
2. Pritzker School of Medicine students may appeal a grade after a grade clarification by the course director. A final grade appeal is considered an academic grievance.
3. Academic grievances trigger a chain of review process that may ultimately end with a decision by the Dean of the Division of Biological Sciences.

### **Policy**

1. Grievances of an academic nature should first be brought to the attention of the appropriate course director. The course director and student may work to resolve the grievance at this point.
2. Responsibility for reviewing all course requirements falls upon the student, and should be thoroughly reviewed prior to initiating a grade clarification.
3. Once a grade clarification is initiated by a student, course directors must respond directly to the student by email or meeting in-person, and explain the rationale for the grade given.

### **Appeal Procedure**

1. If the grievance involves the course director personally, or if the student remains dissatisfied, the complaint should be brought, in writing, to the department chairman. If the course director and the department chairman are the same person, or if the student remains dissatisfied, the grievance should be brought, in writing, to the Dean for Medical Education. The student must present the written grievance to the department or

Dean for Medical Education within four weeks (20 working days) of the incident or receipt of the course grade or evaluation.

2. In the departmental grievance, the department chairman conducts the review, consulting as appropriate with other faculty and staff, and informs the student and the Dean's Office, in writing, of the department's decision regarding the grievance. The department should strive to reach a decision within three weeks (15 working days) of receipt of the written grievance.
3. If the issue cannot be resolved at the departmental level, the Dean for Medical Education will review the department's decision, and if considered to be appropriate, may institute a review mechanism through the appointment of an Ad Hoc Committee. This committee will function in the same manner as an Academic Appeal Committee, below.
4. Committee on Academic Promotions Grievance, Appeal of Decision of Committee on Academic Promotions: For those grievances that relate to decisions of an academic nature to relate to decisions of the Committee on Academic Promotions, the following procedural guidelines pertain:
5. A student appealing any academic decision beyond the departmental level, including decisions of the Committee on Academic Promotions must make the request, in writing, to the Dean for Medical Education within three weeks of the receipt of the written notification of the decision. The request should include the basis for the appeal, as well as any relevant new information. Upon receipt of the written request, the Dean will be required to constitute an Academic Appeal Committee which consists of the following:
  - a. A minimum of five senior faculty members including department chairs, committee chairs or section chiefs, and/or other senior faculty, preferably none of whom have been directly involved in the student's educational program
  - b. The medical student initiating the appeal may request that another medical student be added to the committee, however, that student member must be an upperclassman. This individual will be chosen to serve by the Dean for Medical Education
  - c. The Dean for Medical Education (non-voting) and/or their designee
6. The Academic Appeal Committee shall consider all pertinent materials, including any new information, and determine whether the Committee on Academic Promotions has rendered the appropriate decision. The appeal committee is not a legal proceeding and does not follow the procedures of a court of law.
7. The Academic Appeal Committee may request that the student appear before the committee to answer questions or to present any new relevant information. The student may also request to appear before the committee to present new information, although it is the prerogative of the committee to grant or deny such a request by the student. When and if the student appears before the Academic Appeal Committee, the student shall be allowed to select an advisor for assistance. If an advisor is to be present, the student must notify the Dean for Medical Education at the time a request for appeal is made. The advisor may not participate in the presentation or discussion.

8. The Dean for Medical Education shall convene the Academic Appeal Committee and commence the procedure. The Committee will provide a report with its recommendations to the Dean of the Division.
9. The Academic Appeal Committee will review all pertinent material in the academic file of the student, including the letter of review and any additional supporting documentation that has been procured for the purpose of the hearing. The student shall have the right to inspect these documents. The procedure to be followed for the hearing will be:
  - a. The Dean for Medical Education or their designee will review the guidelines around which the Committee is to function and to clarify any aspects that are unclear to members of the Committee, including the directive that the Committee on Academic Promotions' decision is entitled to deference.
  - b. The Dean for Medical Education or their designee will present information from the Committee on Academic Promotions that led to the decision being contested by the student.
  - c. New information from the student may be considered, at the discretion of the Academic Appeal Committee, but not if it could have been presented to the Committee on Academic Promotions at the time of its decision.
  - d. If so decided by the Academic Appeal Committee, the student may be requested or permitted to appear before the committee. The student will leave the meeting at the conclusion of their presentation and after the committee's questions, if any, have been answered.
  - e. The Academic Appeal Committee will be free to discuss the case in closed session.
  - f. The Committee shall communicate a summary report of the proceedings, including the recommendation(s) of the Academic Appeal Committee to the Dean for Medical Education, who in turn will forward a final recommendation to the Dean of the Biological Sciences Division for approval.
  - g. The Dean of the Division of Biological Sciences will review the recommendations, make a final decision, and communicate with the student in question following the hearing. In the case of a dismissal, the Dean decides whether to uphold the recommendation or to select another alternative; either a notation of the dismissal is entered on the student's official University transcript, or a letter detailing the conditions of retention is sent to the student. The decision of the Dean is final.

Accountable Dean or Director: Associate Dean for Evaluation and CQI, Associate Dean for Medical School Academics

Related Policies:

Approval Date and Governing Body: December 13, 2019; Education Executive Committee