**RESOLUTION TO REVISE GRADE APPEALS POLICY**

Educational Policy & Student Affairs (EPSA) Committee

Faculty Senate

Ohio University

DRAFT FOR FIRST READ (updated on 03.24.2024)

Whereas a grade appeals policy provides guidance to students and instructors;

Whereas there exists ambiguity in the timeline in the current grade appeals policy;

Whereas students need guidance about the expectations for evidence provided in submitting a grade appeal;

Whereas a grade appeal policy must balance tension between instructor responsibilities at times when they may not be on contract with students’ needs for timely resolutions to grade appeals;

Be it resolved the grades appeals policy be updated and the faculty handbook be modified as shown below and corresponding sections of the Graduate and Undergraduate Catalog be similarly modified:

a The instructor assigned to a class has full responsibility for grading, subject to the appeal process described in this section. In unusual circumstances (e.g., death, incapacity, or indefinite inaccessibility of the instructor) the departmental chair is responsible for the final grade, subject to appeal by the student to the dean as described in this section. A student who wishes to appeal a course grade should follow the steps outlined here.

b Step one occurs immediately upon the notice of a grade when the student should contact their department chair or school director to determine whether the program/department/college has a grievance procedure of its own—before using the process outlined here.

c Step two is to attempt to resolve the matter with the course instructor~~, as soon as possible, on your own~~. Students should make a concerted effort to resolve the matter with the instructor at the conclusion of the term. If no response is received within 5 business days the student may contact the department chair/school director to facilitate resolution with the course instructor. If the department chair/school director is the instructor, the student should contact the dean to facilitate resolution with the course instructor.

d ~~A student appealing a grade must make a concerted effort to resolve the matter with the instructor of the course.~~ Failing such a resolution with the course instructor, step three is that the student may formally appeal the grade to the department chair/school director, using the designated college appeal form. If the department chair/school director is the instructor, the student should appeal to the college dean using the designated college appeal form. ~~Students are encouraged to initiate grade appeals immediately after receiving notice of the letter grade.~~ Final grade appeals must be initiated on or before ~~no later than 21 business days~~ the 10th day that classes are in session for the ~~beginning of the~~ term immediately following assignment of the final grade in dispute. The department chair/school director must attempt a resolution acceptable to both the student and the instructor but does not have the authority to change the grade. At this step the department chair/school director should also collect written documentation from the course instructor, including any supporting material (e.g. copies of the student’s work, copies of other materials used but not referenced in the student’s work, etc.) relevant to the case. The department chair/school director may enlist departmental grievance procedures to assist in resolving the grade appeal at the departmental level. The student shall be notified of the departmental decision within 10 days that classes are in session from ~~21 business days~~ the submission of the college appeal form .

e If the student wishes to appeal the departmental decision, the student may avail themselves of step four by appealing to the College Dean as follows: **Upon notice of the department decision on the appeal**, the student should request that ~~Inform your~~ the department chair/school director forward the appeal documents to the College Dean. This request should be made within 10 days that classes are in session of receiving the departmental decision. The department chair/school director shall forward the appeal to the dean of the college within 5 days that classes are in session from the receipt of the student request. ~~If the chair is the instructor, the student appeals directly to the dean.~~

f ~~In cases not involving academic misconduct, the burden of proof for a grade change is on the student.~~ The dean has 10 days that classes are in session ~~21 business days~~ from the time of receiving the appeal to decide whether the appeal has sufficient grounds and to notify the student of that decision. If the dean concludes that the student has insufficient grounds for an appeal, there can be no further appeal by the student. If the dean has concluded that sufficient grounds do exist for an appeal, within 10 days that classes are in session from making that determination, the dean shall appoint a faculty committee of five members to consider the case and forward the appeal to the committee. The committee shall have 15 days that classes are in session ~~21 business days~~ from the time of receiving the appeal to reach a decision concerning the appeal and communicate that decision to the student. If a majority on the committee decides that the grade should be changed and the instructor does not accept the recommendation, the committee can authorize the Registrar to change the grade. The decision of the committee is not subject to further appeal. In appeal cases in which the dean is the instructor, the role of the dean will be assumed by the Provost. In those appeal cases involving courses taught by faculty from more than one college, the Dean of University College will review the appeal and, if necessary, appoint the appeals committee.

g In cases not involving academic misconduct, the burden of proof for a grade change is on the student and evidence or supporting documentation should be included with college appeal form. In cases of academic misconduct, both the student and course instructor document their allegations and refutations in writing, including any supporting material (e.g. copies of the student’s work, copies of other materials used but not referenced in the student’s work, etc.) relevant to the case. Such written evidence or supporting documentation from the student should be included with the initial submission of the college appeal form. Evidence or supporting documentation from the instructor should be collected by the department chair/school director in step three. All evidence and supporting documentation will be reviewed in accordance with the grade appeal process followed by the college or unit.

h In all cases, the appeals process should be fully completed within 90 calendar days (excluding summers) of the initial submission of the college appeal form. Failure to notify appropriate parties of decisions or actions within the specified period should result in automatically advancing appeals to the next step of the process. Exceptions for failing to initiate an appeal, to reach a decision, or to take action within the specified period may be made for unusual circumstances such as documented medical emergencies, family emergencies, or acts of nature.