Grade Appeal Policy

Applicability: All PharmD Didactic and Experiential Courses
Who is affected: Students, Course Managers, Vice Chairs of Academic Affairs, Department Chairs, Associate Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs, Assistant Dean for Experiential Learning
Effective Date: Spring 2026
Last Approval: 01/07/2026
Initiated By: Curriculum Committee
Responsibility: Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs
Assistant Dean for Experiential Learning
Policy Link:
http://go.pharmacy.umaryland.edu/policygradeappeal

Background

While grades assigned to student work are typically final, course managers may change a grade under certain limited circumstances. The situations in which a grade may be changed include:

a) A computational or recording error updated by the grade deadline each semester
b) Changing a NM or I to a letter grade within the allowed 1-year timeframe
c) Pursuant to a grade appeal on the basis that the grade was assigned in an arbitrary or capricious manner. Arbitrary or capricious grading is defined as the assignment of the grade on some basis other than performance in the course, the assignment of the grade based on unreasonable application of standards different from the standards applied to other students in the course, or the assignment of a grade by a substantial and unreasonable departure from the instructor's initially articulated standards.

In addition to all students and course managers, the following individuals have specific administrative responsibilities in the implementation of this policy: the Vice Chair of Academic Affairs and Chair of the department in which the course is offered, the Assistant Dean of Experiential Learning, and the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs. Questions about the Grade Appeal Policy should be directed to the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs, who has the final say on designating responsibilities should situations occur outside those specified in the policy.

Goal

The goal of this policy is to establish a uniform process and a well-defined timeframe in which a student may appeal a grade that they believe was assigned in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

Policy

If a student believes that a grade that they received is arbitrary or capricious, the student may initiate the following procedure.

1. Within **5 business days** of notification to a student that a final grade is available in Blackboard, or in the case of experiential grades, in CORE ELMS, the student should email the course manager(s) a written explanation of why they believe the grade received is arbitrary or capricious if they choose to appeal the grade. Should a course have more than one course manager, the student should deliver the explanation to all course managers. If a student does not appeal the grade within 5 business days of notification of the failing

grade, the grade will be considered final and not subject to further review and reconsideration.

a) This written documentation should explicitly state the action, with respect to the grade, that is requested by the student.
b) The course manager(s) will return a written response to the student within **5 business days** of receipt of the student's written documentation. If course managers are unable to reach consensus on a response, the grade will stand.

2. If a response is received within **5 business** days of the grade notification and the student does not agree with the course manager's response, the student may appeal to the course manager's vice chair within **5 business days**. If a course has more than one course manager, the appeal should be emailed to both vice chairs of the departments.

a) The student must provide the vice chair of academic affairs with the following written documentation:
    i. The original written explanation of why they believe the grade was assigned in an arbitrary or capricious manner.
    ii. Any new or additional evidence or clarification that was not presented in the initial appeal to the course manager(s).
    iii. The course manager's original written response
    iv. Their written explanation as to why he or she disagrees with the course manager's response.
b) The vice chair of academic affairs will convene an ad hoc Grade Appeal Committee to review the documentation. This committee will include the vice chairs of academic affairs from the two academic PharmD departments, as well as the associate dean for faculty and academic affairs for didactic courses or the assistant dean of experiential learning for experiential learning courses. If a vice chair is unavailable or is the course manager of the course in question, the respective chair will serve on the committee. If an associate or assistant dean is unable to participate, the other will serve on the committee.
c) The ad hoc Grade Appeal Committee will determine the response.
d) The vice chair(s) of academic affairs will provide the student and the course manager with a written response from the ad hoc Grade Appeal Committee within 10 **business days** of receipt of the student's documentation. The decision of the ad hoc Appeals Committee is final and cannot be appealed further.

3. If the course manager(s) does not respond within **5 business days**, the student may deliver the original explanation, noting non-response from the course manager(s), to the course manager's vice chair(s) of academic affairs.

a) The vice chair(s) of academic affairs, in consultation with the department chair(s), will work with the course manager(s) to resolve the situation.
b) The vice chair(s) of academic affairs and the course manager(s) will review and approve the response.
c) The vice chair(s) of academic affairs will provide the student and the course manager with a written response within **5 business days** of receipt

of the student's documentation. If vice chairs are unable to reach a consensus on a response, the grade will stand.

4. When a grade change is found to be appropriate, the course manager is expected to begin implementation of the action within 5 business days.

5. In situations where the same person holds more than one administrative role, the following responsibilities apply. Should situations occur not specified below, the associate dean for academic affairs will designate the appropriate responsibilities.
    a) Should the course manager also be the vice-chair of academic affairs, the chair will replace the vice-chair for academic affairs in this process.
    b) Should the course manager also be the assistant dean for experiential learning, then the associate dean for faculty and academic affairs will replace the assistant dean for experiential learning in this process.
    c) Should the course manager also be the associate dean for faculty and academic affairs, then the assistant dean for experiential learning will replace the associate dean for academic affairs in this process.

Adoption Date: 05/20/2013
Amendment Dates: 02/19/2015, 12/21/2017, 09/25/2024, 09/16/2025, 01/07/2026