GRADE APPEAL
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY
This policy pertains to employees and students.

Students attending Fox Valley Technical College may appeal final course grades.

Scope of Grade Appeal Policy
The Grade Appeal policy provides students with a process to challenge what they perceive to be an unfair grade while also respecting the instructor's academic expertise and judgment. Grade appeals alleging discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should be referred to the applicable FVTC Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, and Antiharassment Policy and procedures. Appeals alleging disability, discrimination, or failure to provide approved reasonable accommodation should be referred to the FVTC Students with Disabilities Policy and grievance procedure. Allegations involving sex-based discrimination or harassment should be referred to the FVTC Sexual Harassment – Title IX Policy or, when applicable, the Sexual Misconduct Policy and procedures.

Basis for a Final Grade Appeal
An appeal of a final grade may be pursued when there is a valid basis and substantial evidence of an error or injustice in grading alleged to be caused by unfair treatment such as arbitrariness, actions of a capricious nature, and/or error. Circumstances for final grade appeals include, but are not limited to:

- Allegations of unfair or unequal application of grading standards or applying grading criteria to a student or students in a manner that treats them inequitably.
- Allegations of unfair or unannounced alteration of assignments, grading criteria, or computational processes from the instructor's previously articulated standards.
- Dispute over the calculation or recording of a final grade.
- Allegations of arbitrary or flawed assessment methods, measures, or standards. This includes appeals of grades reflecting instructor of record determination(s) of academic dishonesty.
- Documented instructional technology issues involving college-provided or college-required systems, software, or equipment that significantly affected a student's ability to access required course materials or complete course requirements within established timelines.

Underlying Principles

- This procedure outlines appeals for final grades in credit-bearing courses. Non-credit courses are excluded from this policy.
- Students should make every effort to resolve questions about grades directly with the instructor and be able to demonstrate those efforts prior to submitting an appeal.
- Fox Valley Technical College presumes that the instructor of record judgment is definitive and that the final grades given are accurate.
- A grade appeal should only be pursued if there is a valid basis and substantial evidence of an error or injustice in grading.

- The student making the appeal is responsible for developing and presenting the appeal.
- If the instructor no longer works at the College or is unavailable (e.g., on leave), the Division Dean or Associate Dean shall appoint an instructor designee to represent the instructor throughout the process.
- No person or entity other than the original instructor or instructor designee appointed by the Division Dean or Associate Dean may change to an evaluative final grade.

Appeal Process

If the academic issue(s) cannot be resolved with the instructor, the following procedure will be followed.

1. Within twenty-one (21) calendar days of the posting of the student's final course grade and after a formal meeting with the instructor to discuss concerns, a student may appeal a grade by submitting a written petition to the Division Dean or Associate Dean. Petitions filed beyond the twenty-one (21) calendar day timeframe will be heard at the discretion of the Division Dean or Associate Dean
    a. The Division Dean or Associate Dean will review the appeal and consult with the necessary individuals (student, instructor, and other parties) to determine if the appeal has merit.
    b. If the appeal is found to have merit, the Division Dean or Associate Dean will work with the instructor to resolve the appeal in a manner that results in the student's work being fairly evaluated by the instructor. This **does not** mean that a student will receive a higher grade. It only ensures that students are graded in accordance with the standards set out for the course and for other students in the course.
    c. If the appeal is found to have no merit, the student will be notified in writing within fourteen (14) business days of the appeal.
2. If a student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean or Associate Dean, they may appeal that decision to the Chief Academic Officer within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the decision.
    a. Student-initiated appeals require a written petition submitted to the Chief Academic Officer, outlining the basis for the appeal. This petition should cite *new or compelling* evidence not considered by the Dean or Associate Dean in the appeal process. Disagreement with the decision alone is not sufficient grounds for further appeal.
    b. The Chief Academic Officer will review the merits of the appeal to determine if there is a justifiable basis provided by the student. If the Chief Academic Officer does not determine that there is a basis for the appeal, the appeal is denied.
    c. If the Chief Academic Officer determines that a justifiable basis for appeal exists, the appeal may be addressed in one of the following ways:
        i. Remand the appeal back to the Dean or Associate Dean for additional review.
        ii. Make an independent determination of outcome, weighing information provided by the appealing student, the appropriate instructor, and the Dean or Associate Dean who reviewed the original appeal.

iii. Convene an Academic Appeals Committee that consists of one Dean, one instructor, and one student, all of whom have no direct relationship to the student, instructor, course, program or circumstances involved in the appeal. The committee will review the written appeal and related documentation and may conduct a hearing with the student, instructor, and other appropriate individuals as necessary.
    1. If the appeal is found to have merit, the committee will direct the Division Dean or Associate Dean to work with the instructor to resolve the grading issue consistent with the committee's findings. Any change to an evaluative final grade must be made by the instructor of record or, when applicable, the instructor designee appointed by the Division Dean or Associate Dean.
    2. If the appeal is found to have no merit, the appeal will be denied.

d. Within ten (10) business days of receiving the written appeal, the Chief Academic Officer will notify the student in writing of the determination and, when applicable, the next step in the appeal process.

Adopted: 04/22/2002
Reviewed: 10/28/2020, 12/05/2023, 10/20/2026
Revised: 10/28/2020, 08/29/2024, 10/20/2026