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Standard Number:	<b>2005</b>	Effective Date:	<b>Jan 1, 2024</b>
Standard Title:	<b>Grade Reviews and Appeals</b>	Last Updated:	<b>Dec 7, 2023</b>
Standard Category:	<b>Academics</b>	Next Review Date:	<b>Jul, 2025</b>

## Purpose

Ridge Meadows College recognizes the right of students to fair and unbiased evaluation. This standard explains the appeal procedure available to students who believe they have received an incorrect or unjust grade.

## Definitions

Course: one course of the program which is required to achieve a regulated certification, or consideration for completion of College defined program.

Final Grade: The annotation received upon completion of a course, after grades have been submitted by the instructor to the registrar's office.

Grade Review: an informal appeal – requested of the instructor prior to instigating a formal appeal to the Program Chair or Manager.

Program: the complete set of all courses required to achieve a regulated certification, or the collection of courses defined as a program by the College.

Work: visual material: whether by hand, computer, mathematical equation, musical or artworks; oral material; individual or group reports and presentations; audio visual material and any other medium submitted to an instructor for the purposes of grading.

## Statement

Any grade review or appeal must be accompanied by material evidence that supports the claim. Grade appeals must fall into one of the following categories:

1. A significant error in the assessment, evaluation, calculation and/or determination by an instructor.
2. A procedural error, such as failure by the instructor to follow outlined expectations as identified in the course syllabus or academic calendar.
3. Credible claims of bias or discrimination.

Grade appeals are not considered when based on a solely subjective argument such as “deserving a better grade”.

In most cases, individual pieces of work such as an exam, assignment, presentation or quiz are not eligible for appeal outside the context of a final grade appeal. This is to prevent instructor and administrative resources being taxed when courses are operating. As a result, students are expected to wait until a course has completed to begin the appeal process.

In cases of an appeal to a claim of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism or cheating, the student must follow the process outlined in Standard 2001: Academic Integrity.

### **Review and Appeal Process**

There are three potential steps to the appeal process that must be completed in order. At any time, the student may decide to cease the grade review / appeal process.

#### Request of Grade Review (to Instructor)

The first step in the appeal process is an informal request to review the decision. This request should be made in writing and made to the instructor. This is the student’s opportunity to present additional information that may change the instructor’s decision. This request must be made within 7 calendar days from the publishing of final grades.

An instructor may choose to change a grade at this time if they feel the presented information/evidence is sufficient.

#### Appeal of Decision (to Program Chair)

The second step in the appeal process may only be undertaken if the first step has been attempted and proven unsuccessful. To conduct an appeal to the Program Chair, students must fill out the *Final Grade Appeal Form* and submit it to the College Administrative Office with any required payment as per the form (payments will be refunded to the student in the case of a successful appeal).

An appeal must be made within 7 calendar days from the instructor’s reply to an initial review request.

Upon receipt of the appeal form, the College Administrative Office will send the form to the appropriate Program Chair for consideration. The Chair will review all provided documentation and may or may not choose to interview the student and/or instructor as part of the investigative process.

When a decision has been reached, the Program Chair will notify the student and College Administrative Office in writing and provide an explanation of the investigative process and rationale for the decision.

*It is the student’s responsibility to provide all relevant information and materials for review. In general, an appeal will only be granted on the grounds of a procedural or calculation error or the presentation of evidence that demonstrates a credible claim of bias. An appeal will not be granted solely on compassionate grounds.*

### Appeal of Decision (to College Manager)

This final step in the appeal process may only be undertaken if the first and second step has been attempted unsuccessfully.

To conduct an appeal to the College Manager, students must forward all documentation, including the *Final Grade Appeal Form* and all prior decision letters to the College Administrative Office for forwarding to the College Manager.

An appeal must be made within 7 calendar days from the Program Chair's reply to an appeal.

The College Manager will review all provided documentation and may or may not choose to interview the student, instructor, and/or program chair as part of the investigative process.

When a decision has been reached, the College Manager will notify the student and College Administrative Office in writing along with an explanation of the investigative process and rationale for the decision.

If an appeal is still unsuccessful after this stage, the initial grade shall stand and is not subject to further appeal.

### **Successful Appeal**

If a grade review or appeal is successful, the corrected notation will be recorded in the course gradebook and student transcript. Any change to a course grade must be made at the assignment level – an instructor, program chair, or college manager, cannot arbitrarily modify the final grade.

### **Related Standards**

- 2001 – Academic Integrity
- 3001 – Payments and Refunds
- 4005 – Academic Standing

### **Related Forms**

- 2005F – Final Grade Appeal Form