

UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance
Procedure for Appeal of Grades
Rev. Spring 2004

In general, students are encouraged to discuss any academic matter informally with their instructors, with division chairpersons or with the academic dean.

The grade appeal procedure in the Conservatory is designed to assure students an orderly process for appeal and review of allegedly capricious assignment of grades and to assure instructors of their responsibility and authority for evaluation of student performance. Students, of course, are responsible for meeting the standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.

Capricious grading, as that term is used here, comprises any of the following:

1. the assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than the performance in the course;
2. the assignment of a grade to a particular student according to more exacting or demanding standards than were applied to other students in the course; (Note: this does not preclude instructors from setting more demanding standards for those taking undergraduate level courses for graduate credit);
3. the assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the instructor's previously announced standards.

The following procedure should be initiated only when the student believes the course grade was capriciously assigned, and after the results of informal consultation are considered unsatisfactory. This appeal procedure must be initiated within six weeks after the start of the regular semester term.

Step 1. Students should discuss a course grade that they consider capricious first with the instructor of the course. If anyone other than that instructor is first approached, the student should be referred to that instructor unless there are compelling reasons to the contrary. In the latter instance, the student should be referred to the chairperson of that division. If a grade appeal is made against a division chair, then the member of the division would assume the role of division chair for the purpose of the appeal.

Step 2. If the matter cannot be resolved by consultation with the instructor within ten (10) calendar days, the student should confer with the appropriate division chair and present in writing all applicable facts and allegations. Within five (5) calendar days of receipt of the appeal, the division chair must notify the faculty member in writing of the complaint and provide the faculty member with a copy of the student's written statement. The instructor must prepare a written explanation of the disputed grade for the division chair within ten (10) calendar days upon receiving notification of the appeal. The division chair will review the case and render a written decision to both the student and instructor within five (5) calendar days.

Step 3. If either the student or instructor is dissatisfied with the division chair's decision, one or both can make a written appeal to the Dean within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the chairperson's written statement.

The Dean may refer the appeal to the Assessment Committee for review and for a recommendation. Action by the Assessment Committee must be taken within ten (10) calendar days of notification from the Dean. The Dean will render a decision within five (5) calendar days upon receiving the recommendation of the Assessment Committee, and the decision will be communicated to the student, the instructor and the division chairperson.

Step 4. If the matter is not resolved within the Conservatory, the campus procedure (UMKC Procedure for Appeal of grades) will apply and the student may appeal to the Chancellor or his/her designated representative. The appeal must be made within ten (10) calendar days after notification of the decision of the Dean.

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