

**SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE****SUBJECT: Academic Appeals****EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2000; Revised May 19, 2008; Revised October 11, 2021**

Southwest Tennessee Community College (“Southwest” or “the College”) students have the right to know and understand the reasons for decisions affecting their academic standing and their progress through the curriculum; however, the burden of proof rests with the student.

**Matters Appealable**

Students may appeal decisions of faculty or other College personnel affecting the following:

1. Course grades; and
2. Academic Probation or Suspension from the College.

**A. Course Grade Appeals**

This appeal process recognizes the instructor’s right to assign a grade based on any method that is professionally acceptable, submitted in writing as a part of the class syllabus to everyone in the class, and applied equally to all members of the class.

Students have the right to review their examinations and assignments, to know the correct answers to test and examination questions, and to understand how grades were assigned. *In matters of interpretation, however, the judgment of the faculty member as the professional in the discipline shall prevail.* Should instances arise in which a student has evidence that a mistake has been made in calculating or recording a grade or that grade has been assigned based on arbitrary or capricious deviation from the instructor’s stated grading policy, the student has the right to appeal the assigned grade. This includes:

1. The assignment of a course grade to a student on some basis other than performance in the course;
2. The assignment of a course grade to a student by resorting to standards different from those which were applied to other students in the class; or
3. The assignment of a course grade by an unannounced departure from the instructor’s previously articulated standards (factual and computational errors are included in this definition).
4. If course did not meet as published in the official College course scheduling system (this excludes situations in which College-wide classes experienced a shift in modality due to unforeseen events or individual emergency situations approved by the division Dean).

**The procedure for appealing a course grade is as follows:**

Any student may initiate an appeal of any course grade within three (3) months after the conclusion of the semester in which the grade was assigned.

1. The student completes the Grade Appeal form that will route to the instructor to review. The student should include all supportive documentation such as course outline, course communication, copies of papers, lab reports, themes, and examination grades. Upon instructor review and response to the appeal, an email will route to the student's Southwest email account to review the determination and act on the appeal.
2. If the student still believes that further appeal is warranted, the student must respond to the appeal within 30 days, which will then route the appeal to the Department Chair.
3. If the response from the above step is not satisfactory, the student must respond to the appeal within 30 days to appeal to the division Dean.
4. Should further resolution be requested beyond the Dean's involvement and response, the student must respond to the appeal within 30 days to request review of the Grade Appeals Committee of the Faculty Senate.
5. Should further resolution be requested after the Grade Appeal Committee's response, the student must respond to the appeal within 30 days to request review from the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
6. After consideration of the student's request, the faculty member's response, the recommendations of the division Dean and the Grade Appeals Committee, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will make the final determination and notify the student.

**Note:** Any appeal awaiting student action will expire within 30 days of no response from the student.

**B. Academic Probation or Suspension Appeals**

Students placed on academic probation or suspension may appeal to the Readmission Committee concerning readmission to the College. *In the absence of the Readmission Committee, students may appeal to the Vice President and/or the Vice President for Student Affairs/Enrollment Management or designee.*

**Transition Team II:**  
**Source of Policy:** Academic Programs

**VP of Academic Affairs**  
**Administrator:** and VP of Student Affairs

**TBR Policy Reference:** 2:03:01:01

**Related Policy:** n/a

**TBR Guideline Reference:** n/a

**Approved:** Dr. Tracy D. Hall  
**President**

**Date:** October 11, 2021