



**Policy & Procedure No. 1.030
Nunez Community College**

Title: Academic Appeals

Effective Date: April 6, 2023

Last Revision Date:

Cancellation:

Department/Office: Academic Affairs

Academic Appeals

PURPOSE

This policy governs the conditions under which a student may initiate an Academic Appeal and provides a procedure for conducting the appeal process.

SCOPE

This policy applies to academic grievances not addressed in Nunez’s Student Complaint Policy, Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, and other College policies that govern student grievances. Through the procedure outlined in this policy, students may petition for a final grade change, initiate a retroactive withdrawal request, or request removal from a first-time academic suspension.

Academic appeals are not used for financial aid appeals or refund requests.

POLICY

An Academic Appeal may be initiated by a student who believes that their academic performance is not accurately reflected in the final grade they have received for a course or by a student who believes that their academic record or academic status should be corrected, updated, or changed due to extenuating circumstances not previously considered by the College.

The policy provides students with due process for submitting academic appeals. Failure to follow the policy procedures by faculty and staff of Nunez Community College would deny students their due process rights. Students who do not follow the procedures, including, but not limited to, adhering to the



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timeline for filing an appeal and providing supporting documentation, may have their appeal denied on those grounds.

Final Grade Appeal

Students may only appeal a final course grade after the grade has been issued at the end of the semester. Unresolved grading issues that arose earlier in the semester may become the basis for a formal course grade appeal once the semester has ended and a final course grade has been assigned. Although the grade appeal process may only be used to contest grading issues that impact the final course grade, faculty members and students should attempt to find a resolution to any grade dispute before it escalates to a formal grade appeal once final grades have been issued.

A student who is dissatisfied with an instructor’s grading decision during a semester should discuss the issue with the instructor and attempt to resolve the matter informally. A student who believes that a grading issue has not been satisfactorily resolved may choose to submit a grade appeal if they feel that the unresolved grading issue has adversely affected the final grade of the course. The burden of proof is on the student to demonstrate why the grade should be changed.

All academic appeals must be initiated within thirty (30) business days of the awarding of the final grade, except in the case of extenuating circumstances that could not have been known within the designated petition period as deemed appropriate by the academic dean of the course in question. If the faculty member who assigned the grade is no longer at the college, the student should begin the appeal process with the academic dean of the appropriate department, discipline, or subject area.

Students may appeal final course grades if they believe the following:

- The final grade in question is based on an error in calculation, and the student has tangible evidence to support the claim that an error had been made.
- The assessment resulting in the assigned grade did not follow the grading criteria, standards, and requirements as stated in the course syllabus.
- The instructor did not apply grading criteria uniformly to evaluate the student’s academic work compared with the work of other students.
- Without notifying students, the instructor departed substantially from his or her previously articulated written standards in determining the grade.
- The instructor demanded, as a condition of passing a course, a requirement not germane to the subject matter of the course.



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An appeal shall not be used to question the professional judgment of a faculty member, the content of an examination, or any previously articulated and unaltered course or assignment requirement.

If a student feels as if they have cause to submit a grade appeal on the abovementioned grounds, the grade appeal procedure is as follows:

Level 1

The student informally meets with the instructor to discuss the final grade. In this meeting, the instructor will explain the rationale for awarding the grade in question. The student is responsible for demonstrating why the grade should be changed. If, in this informal meeting, it is determined that the grade should be changed, the instructor completes and submits a grade change form. If the instructor is not available to meet face-to-face, email correspondence between the student and the instructor will be regarded as an informal meeting.

If a grade appeal involves an instructor no longer employed by the college or an instructor who is unavailable for an extended period of time, the student may appeal in writing to the appropriate academic dean, who will attempt to serve as mediator between the student and the instructor. If this mediation does not end in a resolution, the dean will convene a two-person committee of faculty members of the former instructor's program who also teach in the same subject area of the course in question or who have expertise in a closely related field of study. This committee will review the contents of the student's appeal within seven (7) working days of receiving the appeal and offer a recommendation to the dean to deny or approve the appeal. The dean will review the reading committee's recommendation and render a written decision (including a brief rationale) to deny or approve the appeal within five (5) working days.

Level 2

If the final grade dispute is not resolved through Level 1 of the grade-appeal process, the student may proceed with the next level.

1. The student must submit the following documents to the appropriate academic dean:
 - Academic Appeal Form
 - A letter explaining the student's reason(s) for the grade appeal
 - Any supporting documentation the student deems relevant evidence for why the grade should be changed

The Academic Appeal Form may be found in the Forms Clearinghouse on the Nunez website.



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The student will select the appropriate type of academic appeal on the form (e.g., Grade Appeal) and attach digital copies of the letter and supporting documentation to this electronic form, which will then be routed to the appropriate academic dean.

2. The dean receiving the Academic Appeal Form will forward all appeal documents to the instructor's Program Chair. The Program Chair will provide the faculty member with a copy of the appeal. The faculty member shall provide the Program Chair with a statement concerning the basis for the grade with any supporting documentation. The Program Chair will discuss the appeal with the student and faculty member as needed and, after review, render a decision on the appeal and, in writing, notify each party of this decision.
3. The student may appeal the Program Chair's decision, in writing, to the appropriate academic dean. The dean will convene the Grade Appeal Committee. The committee will consist of three faculty members (one who teaches in the subject area in which the grade was given), two officers of the Nunez Student Government Association, a representative of Student Affairs, and the dean (as a non-voting chairperson). The chairperson will be responsible for assuring adherence to the established procedures and for maintaining records. The chairperson has authority to grant a warranted time extension in the appeal process.

The chairperson will share all appeal documents to the committee members, who will review the documents within seven (7) calendar days from the date they are received. At the end of this seven-day period, the committee will meet to discuss the evidence and render a decision.

- a. If the committee (by a majority vote of the committee membership) recommends changing the original grade, the chairperson will inform both the student and the faculty member of the decision. If both the student and the faculty member agree to this outcome, the chairperson will submit a Grade Change form to the Registrar.
- b. If the committee (by a majority vote of the committee membership) recommends upholding the original grade, the chairperson will inform both the student and the faculty member of the decision.

A written report of the committee's decision will be sent to the chairperson no later than three (3) working days after the conclusion of the hearing. The chairperson will forward the committee's written decision to all parties no later than five (5) working days after receiving the decision.



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Level 3

If the appeal is denied, the student may submit an explanation to the dean (the Grade Appeal Committee Chairperson) an explanation detailing why the appeal should be reviewed again. The dean will forward this explanation and all documents originally reviewed by the Grade Appeal Committee to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success, who will consider the evidence and render a decision. The decision of the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success is final.

If the faculty member wishes to appeal the decision of the Grade Appeal Committee, they may submit to the dean (the Grade Appeal Committee Chairperson) an explanation detailing why the originally assigned grade should be upheld. The dean will forward this explanation and all documents originally reviewed by the Grade Appeal Committee to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success, who will consider the evidence and render a decision. The decision of the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success is final.

Retroactive Withdrawal

The Academic Calendar, posted on the College’s website, lists the deadlines by which students may withdraw from their courses. Each semester and mini-session are given their own withdrawal deadline, which students are responsible for knowing and adhering to. Students may not withdraw from a course (with a grade of W) after these posted deadlines. However, they may petition for a retroactive withdrawal, granted after the withdrawal deadline of the semester in question, if they meet the criteria outlined below. A course from which the student has withdrawn, including retroactively, will remain on the student’s academic record with a grade of W.

The College discourages retroactive changes to students’ academic records and considers exceptions to this rule only when a student makes a compelling case that a retroactive withdrawal is appropriate and provides documentation supporting this case.

Appeals for retroactive withdrawals must be submitted no more than sixty (60) days from the end of the course for which the student is requesting a retroactive withdrawal and must be grounded in what the College considers an appropriate condition for an appeal. Appropriate conditions for appeals are typically acts beyond the reasonable control of the student that prevented them from withdrawing from the course by the withdrawal deadline posted to the Academic Calendar.

Examples of appropriate conditions for appeals:

- Death of an immediate family member (spouse/domestic partner, child, sibling, parent,



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- grandparent)
- Physician-documented onset of a mental health or medical condition, including pregnancy, that prohibited continued attendance
- Accident or injury that prohibited continued attendance
- Administrative error made by the college
- Call to active military duty or training or voluntary armed services enlistment
- Relocation or the necessity to leave the country to take care of the health of an immediate family member (spouse/domestic partner, child, sibling, parent, grandparent)

The abovementioned examples do not constitute an exhaustive list of potentially legitimate conditions for which to request a retroactive withdrawal. The burden of proof is on the student to explain why any of these (or other) conditions prevented them from dropping the course by the withdrawal deadline posted to the Academic Calendar.

Examples of unacceptable conditions for appeals:

- Forgetting to withdraw from a course(s) by the deadline published on the Academic Calendar
- Bad personal habits or poor judgment
- Lack of knowledge of deadlines or other college policies
- Insufficient resources to pay tuition
- Known medical condition, injury, or illness that has not changed materially since the time of enrollment in the course
- Unsubstantiated claims of LoLA (student management system) error when attempting to withdraw

Students who believe they have cause to request a retroactive withdrawal must adhere to the following procedure:

1. The student completes the online Academic Appeal Form, selecting the appropriate type of appeal process (e.g., Retroactive Withdrawal) and attaches digital copies of documentation that supports the student's appeal. This documentation must include the following:
 - Written verification from the instructor who taught the course in which the student is requesting a grade of W that the student never completed the course, including the student's last day of attendance in the course
 - A statement from the student's academic advisor verifying that withdrawal from this course will not affect other classes on the student's transcript (e.g., prerequisites)



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- All other relevant documentation that supports the student’s appeal, including an explanation as to why the student did not withdraw from the course by the deadline posted to the Academic Calendar
- 2. The form will be routed to either the Dean of Instruction or the Dean of Nursing and Allied Health, as appropriate, who will review the documentation submitted with the appeal and will choose to approve or deny the request.
- 3. The form will then be routed to the Dean of Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Success, who will review the documentation submitted with the appeal and will choose to approve or deny the request.
- 4. The form will then be routed to the Director of Financial Aid, who will review the documentation submitted with the appeal and will choose to approve or deny the request.
- 5. The form will then be routed to the Bursar, who will review the documentation submitted with the appeal and will choose to approve or deny the request.
- 6. If all parties deny the appeal, the matter will be closed, and the course grade currently on the student’s transcript will remain. This decision is final. If all parties approve the appeal, the appeal form will be routed to the Registrar, and the course grade will be changed to a W. If all parties do not render identical decisions on the student’s appeal, the appeal will be routed to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success, who will review the appeal documents and render a decision. This decision is final.

Academic Suspension Removal

Students who are on academic probation and who fail to achieve a semester GPA of at least 2.00 will be suspended for one semester. If a student is put on academic suspension at the conclusion of a spring semester, the student is suspended for the following fall semester. If a student is put on academic suspension at the conclusion of a fall semester, the student is suspended for the following spring semester.

Students who are under a first-time suspension may appeal to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success if they feel that extenuating circumstances contributed to their unsatisfactory academic performance. Appeals must be submitted prior to the end of regular registration in the semester for which the student wants to enroll.

As a condition of enrollment during a suspension period, the courses in which the student is allowed to enroll may be limited. If a suspended student is granted permission to enroll, and earns a semester grade point average of less than 2.00, another one-semester suspension will occur.



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Credits earned by students while on suspension may or may not be accepted toward a degree or certificate at other institutions. Individual colleges and universities determine whether students will be awarded credit for courses taken while on suspension. Therefore, all students on suspension who intend to transfer should consult with the transfer institution prior to enrolling.

Students who believe they have cause to be removed from Academic Suspension must adhere to the following procedure:

1. The student completes the online Academic Appeal Form, selecting the appropriate type of appeal process (e.g., Removal from Academic Suspension) and attaches digital copies of documentation that supports the student’s appeal.
2. The form will be routed to either the Dean of Instruction or the Dean of Nursing and Allied Health, as appropriate, who will retain a copy of the appeal form for their records and forward it to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success.
3. The Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success will review the appeal and render a decision, which is final.
4. If the appeal is approved, the form will be routed to the Dean of Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Success, who will direct the Registrar to remove the student from Academic Suspension.

The Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success may impose certain conditions that the student must abide by, should the appeal be granted. These conditions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Consultation with an academic advisor before the student is allowed to enroll in courses
- A limitation to the number of courses the student may enroll in for that semester
- Mandatory regular meetings with an Academic Advisor or Student Success Coach
- Mandatory tutoring in the subject area(s) in which the student has shown poor academic performance

X	Reviewing Council/Entity	Review Date	Effective Date	Notes
	Executive Cabinet	03/21/2023		
	Chancellor	04/06/2023	04/06/2023	



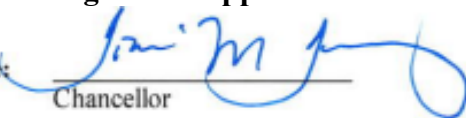
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Policy Reference: NUNEZ Student Complaint Policy
NUNEZ Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy
NUNEZ Sexual Harassment Policy

Forms Referenced: NUNEZ Academic Appeal Form

Distribution: Distributed Electronically via College's Internet

Chancellor's Signature/Approval

Signature: 
Chancellor

Date: 4/6/23