

FACULTY MEETING
April 9, 2010

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PLANNING
MOTION ON POLICY TO APPEAL A FINAL FAILING GRADE

MOVED: That the Skidmore College faculty:

- A) adopt the Policy to Appeal a Final Failing Grade stated below;
- B) amend the Faculty Handbook to incorporate the policy as indicated below;
- C) direct that the College Catalog be revised in accord with the policy, as indicated below;
- D) recommend that the *Student Academic Handbook* and other print and electronic publications accord with and refer to the Policy to Appeal a Final Failing Grade language appearing in the Faculty Handbook.

RATIONALE

In May of 2007, the Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR) requested of the Dean of Faculty, the Associate Dean of Faculty for Academic Advising, the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) and the Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP) that they take up the issue of grade appeal. In the fall of 2008 CEPP, CAS, and CAFR formed a joint subcommittee to draft a grade appeal policy. This process of consultation has led to the present motion.

The principle of fairness and the educational purpose of assigning grades require a clear and effective means of settling grade disputes. At present, statements addressing this matter in the Faculty Handbook and the Student Academic Handbook are inconsistent. Appropriate channels for appeal are unclear. While CAFR may hear any appeal based on a violation of rights, CAFR does not have authority to change a grade. Further confusion may result from the adoption in spring 2008 of Part Six of the Faculty Handbook, which refers to “unfair grading or evaluation of performance or assignments” as one form of retaliation prohibited under Part Six, VIII, C.

The present motion provides a clear statement of policy and procedure, promotes consistent communication of the policy, and recognizes the final authority of CAS to determine a change in grade. Students are assured of effective redress in cases where a claim is found to be justified. The limitation of claims to final course grades protects faculty against excessive intervention in an area where their judgment and authority are primary.

TEXTS

A. Policy to Appeal a Final Failing Grade

Preamble

- b. The instructor assigned a grade on some basis other than performance in the course.
- c. The instructor did not adhere to stated procedures or grading standards.

The appropriate department chair or program director must respond to the student in writing within two weeks of receipt of

A student's failure to meet time limits will result in denial of the student's appeal. If the faculty member, department chair, program director or dean fails to meet a deadline, the appeal will move to the next level.

B. Faculty Handbook amendment: Part Two, III

C . Grading

[Current Handbook language:]

1. These policies are printed in the College Bulletin and may change only by vote of the Faculty.
2. Grades should be submitted to the Registrar according to a schedule set by the Registrar. Faculty members are asked to record grades on official forms, either paper or electronic, available from the Registrar.
3. If an instructor has made a computational or clerical error, he/she may request a change in the student's grade. No grade may be changed on the basis of re-examination or supplementary work. Petitions to change grades must originate with the faculty members concerned and be brought before the Committee on Academic Standing for consideration.

[Proposed new Handbook language:]

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3. If an instructor has made a computational error, he/she may request a change in the student's grade. No grade may be changed on the basis of ~~re-examination~~ ~~re-testing~~ or supplementary work. **Except in the circumstances outlined in the Policy to Appeal a Final Failing Grade (Part Two, III, D),** petitions to change grades must originate with the faculty members concerned and be brought before the Committee on Academic Standing for consideration.

D. **Policy to Appeal a Final Failing Grade** (text to be inserted following adoption of A above)

Current D and E to be relettered E and F

C. College Catalog revision

[Current Catalog language:]

Grade Change

All grades are considered final once they are submitted to the Office of the Registrar. An instructor may request a change in the student's grade only if the instructor has made a computational or clerical error (or if an academic integrity infraction requires a change in the course grade). No grade may be changed on the basis of reexamination, reevaluation, or supplementary work. Petitions to change grades must originate with the faculty members concerned and be brought before the Committee on Academic Standing for consideration.

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D. Other College publications

The *Student Academic Handbook* and other print and electronic publications should accord with and refer to the Grade Appeal Policy language appearing in the Faculty Handbook.