

## Mathematics

(April, 2006)

The Department upholds the principle that the instructor in a course is always in the best position to determine the quality of students' work. The Department of Mathematics also has confidence in the qualifications and good judgment of its faculty. Nonetheless, where it can be proven that a clerical error, a procedural fault, or a capricious or biased appraisal has resulted in the awarding of an unfair grade, the Department will do everything in its power to correct the error. It must be understood, however, that only the instructor of a course can determine the substantive value of a student's performance in that course and only the instructor can change the grade.

Furthermore, while the Department wishes to see demonstrably unfair grades rectified, it will not automatically invoke the full procedure described below for every grievance. For example, a grievance based on the argument that one instructor's grading standards are stricter than those of others will normally not be pursued. Nor will minor imprecision in grading, such as between a B- and B, normally be considered an appropriate grievance.

The appeal of a final grade in a course offered by the Mathematics Department should be filed (a) by the end of the first eight weeks of classes of the first regular full term (Fall or Winter) following the completion of the course, or (b) within eight weeks of the issuance of a grade received by making up a grade of "Incomplete". Requests to file complaints at later times will be considered in unusual circumstances. The appeal should be filed with the Associate Chairman for Education, who will decide if the grievance is appropriate to pursue, and if so will supervise the following procedure and the completion of a change of grade form when appropriate. Please contact the Undergraduate Mathematics Office at 2084 East Hall, 763-4223 to schedule an appointment to meet with the Associate Chairman for Education.

### Step 1

A discussion is held between the student and the teacher alone, or in the presence of the Associate Chairman. If the discussion results in a resolution of the problem, the teacher may enter a memorandum to that effect in the student's academic file, sending a copy to the student. If the problem is not resolved, Step 2 is taken:

### Step 2

1. A review committee is appointed by the Associate Chairman. The Committee will consist of the Associate Chairman and two other recent teachers of the course in question. If the course was taught by a Teaching Assistant (T.A.), then one teacher should be a T.A. and the other should be a faculty member, preferably a mentor in the case of a mentored course. Two students from the complainant's peer group; the students ordinarily will have completed the course in question.
2. The review committee meets together with the complainant and the teacher (if in residence). The Associate Chairman chairs the review session. All available evidence of the student's course work should be presented.
3. The review committee meets alone to arrive at a recommendation. The Associate Chairman has a vote only in the case of a tie. The recommendation may be for no change in grade or for a specified increase or decrease in grade.
4. The review committee transmits its recommendation in writing to the complainant and the teacher.
5. If the teacher refuses to follow the recommendation, then a letter to that effect is prepared by the review committee. A copy of the letter is submitted for inclusion in the student's academic file.
6. A letter describing the committee recommendation and the final disposition of the case is submitted to the Chairman of the Department.