

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR ACADEMIC MEDIATION

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

I. Purpose of Mediation Policy

A. The purpose of the Academic Mediation Policy within the College of Liberal Arts is to establish and clarify a procedure for contested grades and grading. The policy seeks to protect and articulate both student rights and faculty responsibilities. In an effort to provide a fair proceeding for both instructor and student, this policy is adopted to serve the following needs:

(1) To recognize and affirm the instructor's professional responsibilities: To:

- (a) set standards for academic performance
- (b) establish and articulate procedures for evaluating performance (methods and grading scales)
- (c) evaluate performance
- (d) assign grades based on this evaluation of all students enrolled, consistent with departmental, college, and university policy--regardless of such non-academic criteria as race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, or disability, or because of other arbitrary or personal reasons

(2) To recognize and affirm the student's right to have clearly defined criteria for academic performance to:

- (a) be provided with demonstrable standards
- (b) be given procedures for evaluation
- (c) be evaluated fairly according to these standards regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, disability, or because of other arbitrary or personal reasons

B. The departments and academic units within the College of Liberal Arts assume a collective responsibility for the following:

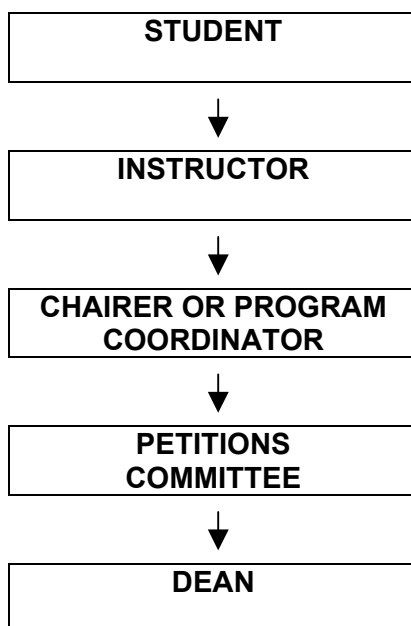
- (1) clearly informing faculty and students of course evaluation procedures, program specifications, and degree requirements and, at the same time, (2) asserting the right to make professional and academic judgments which are relevant or unique to specific disciplines.

C. Faculty and academic units retain the right to make course adjustments (e.g., revisions in assignments or content coverage). A student may not use such an adjustment (when it has been clearly articulated by the faculty) as a basis for mediation.

II. Utilization of Mediation Policy

A course grade assigned to an individual student within the College of Liberal Arts may be challenged by that student on grounds that the grade was based on an evaluation of the student's work by criteria not directly reflective of course performance such as race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, disability, or because of other arbitrary or personal reasons. A student may not use the Procedure because he/she perceived the course to be "too hard" or "too demanding."

III. Academic Mediation Chart



IV. Procedure for Academic Mediation

- A. **Phase One:** A student should first submit his/her complaint directly to the course instructor. In this initial phase, the instructor and student should review course requirements, the instructor's evaluation procedures, and the student's performance. The student's examinations, papers, and other course projects should be analyzed during this informal discussion in an effort to resolve the problem.
- B. **Phase Two:** If the complaint is not resolved in the initial phase, the student must submit a formal complaint form to the chairer of the department offering the course in the College of Liberal Arts (a copy must also be submitted to the course instructor). This form must be submitted within fifteen (15) class days after the receipt of the grade.

- C. **Phase Three:** The chairer will then consider the validity of the complaint and review the complaint with the instructor. The student should then be informed by the chairer of the instructor's decision. Normally, this should be accomplished within fifteen (15) class days after the complaint has been filed with the chair.
- D. **Phase Four:** If the grade is unchanged, the student may then appeal in writing the decision to the College of Liberal Arts Petitions Committee within seven days after the student has received notification from the department chairer. The Committee or its designated representative will then meet with the instructor and the department chairer for a thorough review of the complaint and provide a recommendation to the instructor. Normally, this should be accomplished within 30 class days after the receipt of the complaint.
- E. **Phase Five:** The student may then appeal in writing the decision to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts within seven days after the Dean has been notified by the College Petitions Committee. The Dean will then meet with the instructor and the department chairer for a thorough review of the complaint and for a final recommendation to the instructor.
- F. **Phase Six:** The decision to change the grade or to leave the grade unchanged will then be made by the instructor. The instructor must initiate any change of grade since his/her decision prevails. The department chairer will communicate the instructor's decision to the student.

College of Liberal Arts
Formal Complaint Form for Academic Mediation
(Prepare three copies)

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

CIRCLE: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

UNIVERSITY ID NUMBER: _____ MAJOR: _____

STUDENT'S EMAIL: _____

STUDENT'S TELEPHONE: _____

COURSE NUMBER: _____
 Department Number Section Quarter Year

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: _____

WRITTEN EXPLANATION OF THE BASIS FOR COMPLAINT

(Items for comment and/or attachment may include: (1) examination grades and copies of available exams; (2) information regarding assignments and completion of these assignments; (3) information regarding regularity of attendance in class; (4) copies of any special projects or papers; and (5) any other pertinent information.

CHAIRER'S COMMENTS: (To be forwarded to the student making the complaint)

Current Document Original:
Policy and Procedures Academic Mediation 2002
(January 28, 2002 for web use)