

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sheila Converse, Executive Secretary
Faculty Senate

FROM: Becky Bitter, Registrar's Office

FOR: Academic Affairs Committee

DATE: 7 December 2016

SUBJECT: Proposal to Revise Rule 104, Academic Complaint Procedures, Rule 105, Administrative Changes to Final Grades, and Rule 98, Correction of Grade Errors

At its meeting on November 29, 2016, AAC approved the following proposal to revise Rule 104, Academic Complaint Procedures, Rule 105 (c), Administrative Changes to Final Grades, and Rule 98, Correct of Grade Errors.

The revision to Rule 104 was prompted by comments at the Faculty Senate, where it was suggested that the department chair should be copied when the student files a complaint so that the chair knows that the instructor has been notified (and therefore will know whether the instructor has been given the allotted time to respond). The revision also clarifies the procedure and timeline.

The revision to Rule 105 was prompted by a request from the Attorney General's Office so that the rule will state that the procedure for processing academic integrity violations is governed by the Washington State Legislative Code (WAC 504-26-404).

The revision to Rule 98 clarifies that the time limitation to grade changes does not apply in the case of academic integrity violations.

104. ACADEMIC COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

~~Students~~ A student having complaints about instruction or grading should ~~refer them first to the attempt to resolve those issues directly with the instructor. If that fails, the student should send an email to the instructor using his or her official WSU email account no later than 20 business days following the end of the semester. This email should briefly outline the complaint and be copied to the chairperson of the academic department.~~

If the complaint is not resolved with the instructor within 20 business days of sending the email, then the student may work directly with ~~refer the complaint in writing to~~ the chairperson of the academic department in which the course is offered ~~by the end of the last day of the following semester (excluding summer term)~~. The chair's decision shall be rendered within 20 additional business days.

After the chair's decision, the student or the instructor may appeal to the academic college Dean's Office. Complaints must be presented in writing to the college dean within 20 business days of the chair's decision. The written statement should describe the complaint, indicate how it affects the individual or unit, and include the remedy sought from the college dean. The decision of the college dean is the final step and shall be made within 20 business days.

At the ~~urban~~ campuses other than Pullman, the procedure is identical except that the ~~academic area coordinator~~ program leader shall substitute for the department chair, and the campus chancellor or his or her designee shall substitute for the college dean, if the department chair and/or the college dean is not located on ~~that the urban~~ campus.

The University Ombudsman is available at any stage for advice or assistance in resolving academic complaints.

Note: Though chairs and college deans (and ~~academic area coordinators~~ program leaders and campus chancellors) may resolve complaints about instruction and grading, they may not change a final grade without the consent of the instructor, except as provided by Rule 105.

105. ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES TO FINAL GRADES

a.) Chairperson Acting in Lieu of Instructor: In the extraordinary circumstances when an instructor is not available, or has failed to respond to the student or chairperson using his or her official WSU email account within 20 business days according to Rule 104, ~~then~~ the chairperson of the department may change a final grade.

b.) University Grade Appeals Board: If a chair, dean, Graduate School Dean, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or designee, or University Ombudsman determines that a change of a final grade is warranted for any reason other than academic dishonesty, any one of them may refer the case to the chair of the University Grade Appeals Board for review. The case must be referred within one semester of the posting of the grade (excluding summer term).

The University Grade Appeals Board shall have jurisdiction over decisions of any instructor and/or administrator on matters of University course grading appeals. The decision of the board is final and not subject to further appeal.

Note: Students may not take a grade appeal directly to the board but should follow the academic complaint procedures, as presented in Rule 104.

~~c.) University Academic Integrity Hearing Board: If an allegation of academic dishonesty is not resolved between the instructor and the student, then the case is referred to the University Academic Integrity Hearing Board. The case must be referred to the board within one semester (excluding summer term). The University Academic Integrity Hearing Board shall have jurisdiction over decisions of any instructor on matters of grading related to academic dishonesty cases. The decision of the board is final and not subject to further appeal.~~
Procedure for academic integrity violations: Allegations of academic integrity violations are processed through the procedure established in WAC 504-26-404. A final grade may be changed at any time as a result of this procedure.

98. CORRECTION OF GRADE ERRORS

An instructor may not change a grade after it has been filed with the Registrar, except in the case of clerical error, which the instructor may correct by so certifying to the Registrar. Such change must be approved (signature required) by the chairperson of the department in which the course was offered. Grade corrections must be processed within one year of the end of the term for which the original grade was given. In extenuating circumstances or when prompted by an academic integrity violation, exceptions to the one-year limit for correction of grade errors may be considered by petition to the Registrar's Office.

At this time, Faculty Senate review and approval is recommended, to be effective fall 2017.