

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

Academic Grievance procedure

TVCC encourages students to discuss their concerns and complaints, including academic grade appeals, through informal conferences with the appropriate instructor. Regardless of the instructional mode of delivery or location, concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level. If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the student, the student may initiate the formal process delineated in TVCC Board Policy FLD (LOCAL) (<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/623/?filter=FLD>), and outlined below, by timely filing a written complaint form with the appropriate College personnel. Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns.

A student whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time. The following grievance process **does not** apply to:

- complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, national origin, disability or religion;
- complaints concerning retaliation related to discrimination and harassment;
- complaints concerning disciplinary decisions;
- complaints concerning a commissioned peace officer who is an employee of the College.

Students may not appeal grades recorded on permanent records after one year from the date in which the grade was recorded.

The following grievance process is designated for students who want to appeal an academic decision that does not involve a grade:

Non-Grade Appeal Academic Grievance – Level One

A student who wishes to file a formal complaint must do so in writing within 15 college business days of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance. The complaint should be presented to the division chairperson/associate vice president and/or the appropriate campus provost who will schedule a conference with the student within ten college business days after the receipt of the written complaint. Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the written complaint.

After the initial conference with the level one administrator, no new documents may be submitted unless the student did not know the documents existed before the initial conference occurred. The administrator with whom the conference was held will have ten days following the conference to provide the student with a written response of the decision.

Non-Grade Appeal Academic Grievance – Level Two

If the outcome of the conference with the level one appeal is not to the student's satisfaction or if the time for a response has expired, the student has ten college business days to file a written Notice of Appeal and to request a conference with the vice president of instruction. The appeal notice must be filed in writing within ten college business days of the date of the written level one response. The requested conference will be scheduled within ten college business days of the receipt of the written Notice of Appeal and the request for a conference. The vice president of instruction may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The administrator with whom the level two conference was held will have ten college business days following the conference to provide the student with a written response of the decision.

Non-Grade Appeal Academic Grievance – Level Three

If the outcome of the conference with the level two administrator is not to the student's satisfaction or if the time for a response has expired, the student has ten college business days to file a written Notice of Appeal and to request a conference with the college president or designee. The appeal notice must be filed in writing within ten college business days of the date of the written level two response. The requested conference will be held within ten college business days of the receipt of the written Notice of Appeal and the request for a conference. The college president or designee may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The college president or designee will have ten college business days following the conference to provide the student with a written response of the decision.

Non-Grade Appeal Academic Grievance – Level Four

If the outcome of the conference with the college president or designee is not to the student's satisfaction or if the time for a response has expired, the student has ten college business days to file a written Notice of Appeal and to request a conference with the college board of trustees. The appeal notice must be filed in writing within ten college business days of the date of the written level three response. The requested conference will be placed on the agenda for the next scheduled board meeting after the receipt of the written Notice of Appeal/request for a conference.

The complaint will be presented in an open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. The board shall hear the complaint and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled board meeting. If for any reason the Board fails to reach a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the board upholds the administrative decision at level three.

The following grievance process is designated for students who want to appeal an academic decision that involves a grade:

Grade Appeal Academic Grievance – Level One

A student who wishes to file a formal complaint must do so in writing within 15 college business days of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance. The complaint should be presented to the division chairperson/associate vice president and/or the appropriate campus provost who will schedule a conference with the student within ten college business days after the receipt of the written complaint. Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the written complaint.

After the initial conference with the level one administrator, no new documents may be submitted unless the student did not know the documents existed before the initial conference occurred. The administrator with whom the conference was held will have ten college business days following the conference to provide the student with a written response of the decision.

Grade Appeal Academic Grievance – Level Two

If the outcome of the conference with the level one appeal is not to the student's satisfaction or if the time for a response has expired, the student has through the last regular class day of the next long semester after receiving the grade to request a hearing with the Academic Appeals Committee in accordance to the process outlined below. This written appeal should be directed to the vice president of instruction.

Academic Appeals Committee

The purpose of the Academic Appeals Committee is to provide an opportunity for a student to have a hearing when he/she believes a credit course grade adversely affected his/her academic standing or was unfairly imposed. This process applies to all students, regardless of instructional location or mode of delivery.

After grade disputes have proceeded through the above outlined appellate channels, a student may appeal their grade dispute to the Academic Appeals Committee. A request for a hearing must be submitted in writing to the chairperson of the Academic Appeals Committee. The hearing will be conducted on the TVCC Athens campus and attended only by those persons authorized by the committee chairperson. Should the appeal process involve a dispute for an online course, the hearing may be arranged to be conducted virtually. Neither the student nor the College will have an attorney present. This is not an adversarial process.

The committee will decide whether the credit course grade imposed in a particular case is justified and either agree with it or recommend an alternate course of action to the vice president of instruction. It is expected that, except in unusual circumstances, the vice president of instruction will implement the recommendation of the committee.

The Academic Appeals Committee is a standing committee of the College. For each hearing, the membership of the committee is composed of a chairperson, who does not vote unless there is a tie, three faculty/staff members appointed by the president,

one member of the administrative staff appointed by the president and three students selected by the chairperson of the Academic Appeals Committee. Decisions are made by majority vote. The Academic Appeals Committee chair notifies the student and college officials, in writing, of the decision reached by the committee. This written decision will usually be made within ten class days of the hearing.

Appeals to the Academic Appeals Committee must be filed with the vice president of instruction no later than the last regular class day of the next long semester after receiving the grade. Failure to comply with this deadline will waive the student's right to appeal.

Grade Appeal Academic Grievance – Level Three

If the outcome of the conference with the Academic Appeals Committee is not to the student's satisfaction, the student has ten college business days to file a written Notice of Appeal and to request a conference with the vice president of instruction. The appeal notice must be filed in writing within ten college business days of the date of the academic appeals response. The requested conference will be scheduled within ten college business days of the receipt of the written Notice of Appeal and the request for a conference. The vice president of instruction may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The administrator with whom the level three conference was held will have ten college business days following the conference to provide the student with a written response of the decision.

Grade Appeal Academic Grievance – Level Four

If the outcome of the conference with the vice president of instruction is not to the student's satisfaction or if the time for a response has expired, the student has ten college business days to file a written Notice of Appeal and to request a conference with the college president or designee. The appeal notice must be filed in writing within ten days of the date of the written level three response. The requested conference will be held within ten college business days of the receipt of the written Notice of Appeal and the request for a conference.

The college president or designee will provide the student with a written response within ten college business days following the conference.

Grade Appeal Academic Grievance – Level Five

If the outcome of the conference with the college president or designee is not to the student's satisfaction or if the time for a response has expired, the student has ten college business days to file a written Notice of Appeal and to request a conference with the college board of trustees. The appeal notice must be filed in writing within ten college business days of the date of the written level four response. The requested conference will be placed on the agenda for the next scheduled board meeting after the receipt of the written Notice of Appeal/request for a conference.

The complaint will be presented in an open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. The board shall hear the complaint and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled board meeting. If for any reason the board fails to reach a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the board upholds the administrative decision at level four.