



# FINAL GRADE CHALLENGE PROCEDURE

Policy Number: AA035EN

Issue Date: FALL 2023

## 1. PURPOSE

The continuous evaluation of student learning is an integral part of the educational process at The American University of Paris as it is in all American universities. Students must demonstrate their knowledge and comprehension through a wide range of academic exercises and assessments, which may include written assignments, research, in-class essays, examinations or oral presentations. Faculty members perform assessments with professionalism, fairness, consistency, and objectivity. The University recognizes the right of its students to be fully informed about the grading policies used in each class and provides them with an opportunity to appeal when they believe that they have been erroneously or unfairly graded. As members of the AUP community, students are responsible for being aware of academic policies and procedures.

## 2. WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

Students and Faculty

## 3. POLICY STATEMENT

The University recognizes the right of its students to be fully informed about the grading policies used in each class and provides them with an opportunity to appeal when they believe that they have been erroneously or unfairly graded. Students should understand the following:

- The American University of Paris presumes that its faculty members are professional and will grade students fairly, consistently and objectively;
- A challenge of grade procedure is a serious intrusion upon teaching prerogatives, and needs to be carefully considered and reviewed before being initiated.

If a student suspects that an error has been made in recording a final grade, he/she should immediately contact the professor. If an error is detected, professors may request a grade change (see [AA006EN – Change of Grade](#)).

Should a student dispute a final grade, the first required step is communication with the instructor and the department chair or graduate program director; the second step is filing a formal appeal with the Associate Dean of Academic Administration. A student may not formally challenge a grade without having followed through these levels of communication:

**The instructor:** When a student wishes to challenge a final grade, the first step is informal. A student contacts his/her instructor with any queries about a grade. This is the moment for the instructor to review grades and grading methodology with the student. At the end of this discussion, if the dispute persists the student should contact the Chair of the relevant department (or the relevant graduate program director).

**The department chair:** A student should contact the Chair of the relevant department (or the relevant graduate program director) only after a thorough discussion with the instructor of the course. The Chair or graduate program director will meet with the student and the faculty member, providing an independent review, helping to mediate the dispute.

If, after having completed both levels of communication, the dispute persists, a student wishing to formally challenge a final grade must meet all of the following requirements:

### Requirements for a formal grade appeal:

- A student must be able to demonstrate having followed the above required channels of communication with both the instructor and department chair or graduate program director;
- A student must demonstrate that communication with the instructor regarding the grade was initiated within 30 days of when the final grade was awarded; and
- A student must be able to provide copies of graded assignments along with any other relevant documents to support the appeal.

### **Step 1**

- The student submits a written statement to the Associate Dean of Academic Administration. The appeal must be submitted by the end of the semester following the assignment of the grade.
- The appeal statement must include all of the following items:
  - The title of the course and the name of the instructor;
  - A thorough written statement including details of the grade that was given and the reasons for the appeal;
  - A copy of all relevant related documents (i.e., papers, exams, etc.).

### **Step 2**

- The Associate Dean of Academic Administration will respond in writing within 15 days, acknowledging receipt of the appeal.
- The Associate Dean of Academic Administration will discuss the issue with the student, the instructor and the chair (program director in the case of a graduate student), seeking informal ways of resolving the disagreement.
- If the student is not satisfied with the results of this attempt, and if a minimum burden of proof is met, Step 3 will be implemented.

### **Step 3**

- The Associate Dean of Academic Administration will convene the Challenge of Grade Appeal Committee. The Committee consists of the Associate Dean of Academic Administration (or his/her representative) who chairs the committee, the department chair (or program director in the case of a graduate student), two faculty members elected from the respective department, and the student's advisor (or a faculty member chosen by the student).
- The Committee investigates, consults with all the parties involved, and by a majority vote, decides on an appropriate action. Decision of the Committee is final.
- The Committee sends the involved parties a written response to the appeal.

#### **4. APPROVALS & HISTORY**

This long-standing policy was reviewed in Fall 2023. The next review will take place in Fall 2025.

#### **5. ISSUING OFFICE AND CONTACT**

The Office of Academic Affairs  
Tel. +33 1 40 62 06 04  
5, boulevard de la Tour-Maubourg  
75007 Paris