

GRADE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

1. Course instructors have the main responsibility for awarding to students the grades that are most fit, both for the course itself and for all work in the course. The Department expects its instructors to exercise their best judgment in grading, and in general presumes that they have done so. For this reason, the Department will not examine a grade unless a student files with it a grade grievance that raises a reasonable doubt about the grade's fundamental fairness. In all cases of reasonable doubt, the Department tries to consider and deal with such grievances in a fair and open-minded manner, so that the rights of aggrieved students and instructors are both protected.
2. A student who questions a grade should first discuss the problem with the instructor, so that it can be settled on that level if possible. If a GSI has had the responsibility for grading, the student should first discuss the problem with the GSI. If the issue cannot be settled between the student and the GSI, the student should discuss it with the faculty member in charge of the course before beginning grievance procedures.
3. If the student and instructor do not resolve the problem themselves, the Department provides a grievance procedure only in the case of course grades. The basis for disputing a course grade within the Department is that it represents substantial unfairness by the instructor to the student; such conduct may also include any alleged discrimination under Title IX of the Federal Education Amendments of 1972 if it affects the grade. Instructors are presumed to have graded equitably unless clear evidence points to the contrary; allowance is also made for individual grading practices if these are reasonable.
4. An aggrieved student can appeal a course grade by submitting a written complaint to the Department's Chair. The complaint must be registered within four weeks of the posting of the grade, unless special circumstances have intervened. This complaint should state all the reasons why the student believes the grade to be improper. If the Chair determines that the student could be raising a valid grievance, then the Chair will appoint an *ad hoc* panel to hear the complaint. A grievance panel consists of two faculty members of at least equal rank with the instructor against whom the grievance has been lodged and either an undergraduate or a graduate student (depending on the complainant's status). The panel will solicit a written reply to the complaint from the instructor involved, and will also collect available evidence concerning the grade; this material is made available to the complainant prior to any hearings, and the complainant may amend the grievance on the basis of this material. If either party wishes, the student or the instructor may appear before the panel to give testimony. Each party may question the other in the presence of the panel, unless the instructor is away from the university or no longer on the faculty. A GSI against whom a grievance has been made may ask that the faculty supervisor attend the hearing. If the GSI is no longer at the university, the faculty supervisor may, with the GSI's consent, represent him or her. No other representatives may be present. Any hearing will be scheduled at the convenience of the parties but before the end of the semester following the semester for which the grade was given.

5. A grievance panel's proceedings, including any testimony by witnesses, are in strict confidence, and are completed as quickly as possible consistent with fairness. The Department will notify the student when the initial complaint is received; it will also notify instructor and student of all arrangements for hearings and of the disposition of the case.
6. After fully considering the complaint, the panel by majority vote will accept or reject the complaint. The panel will then briefly report its proceedings, findings, and recommendations to the Chair, who will inform the instructor and the student of the outcome. If the panel accepts the complaint, the Chair will ask the instructor to respond to the report. The Chair then has the following options: either to persuade the instructor to change the grade or come to some other arrangement acceptable to both parties, or, failing this, to recommend to the College Administrative Board that it allow the student to drop the course, expunge the course from the transcript, or receive partial credit. In cases of extreme impropriety, the Chair may place a record of the panel's findings in the instructor's file. A separate file is kept in the Department of all records concerning grade grievances.
7. The Department itself has no further grade grievance or appeal process. In some cases, however, the student may have additional recourse within the College or the University. Students may also wish to consult with the Office of the Ombudsman.

January 2008