Academic Grievance Procedure
Bill and Vieve Gore School of Business

Definition
An academic grievance is a claim that a specific academic decision or action, including the assignment of a grade, is unfair or violates relevant policies and procedures.

Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to provide students who are taking classes in the Bill and Vieve Gore School of Business (BVGSB), as well as faculty teaching those courses, with an opportunity for objective review of facts and events pertinent to academic grievances.

Policy
Students who believe that a specific academic decision or action, including a grade assignment, was unfair or violated relevant policies and procedures, are entitled to file an academic grievance according to the procedure described in this document. Academic grievances will be conducted in a collegial, non-judicial atmosphere rather than an adversarial one, and all of the parties involved will be allowed to participate. All parties are expected to act in a professional, objective, and civil manner.

A grade appeal is likely to hold merit when the assigned grade was the result of:
- A mathematical or other administrative error
- False or undocumented allegations of academic dishonesty
- Discriminatory, threatening, abusive, or other improper conduct toward the individual student
- A capricious or arbitrary grading decision
- Violations of course-specific or college-wide academic policies as set forth in the course syllabus, student handbook, and academic catalog

Procedure
1. A student who believes that he or she has a legitimate academic grievance must seek to resolve the issue with the faculty member involved before initiating the grievance procedure.

2. If it is not possible to resolve the issue directly with the faculty member, the student must next contact the relevant division chair or program director, who will seek to mediate a resolution, working directly with the student and professor.

3. If it is not possible to resolve the matter with the help of the division chair or program director, the student may submit a written appeal with supporting documentation to the BVGSB dean.
Supporting documentation may include the course syllabus, graded paper or exam, timeline of events, etc. The written appeal and all supporting documentation must be submitted within four weeks after the contested grade is posted or the contested decision is made. This timeline also applies to grades for work submitted for incomplete classes carried over from previous terms. The dean will attempt to resolve the grievance in a meeting with the student and the faculty member.

4. If the issue cannot be resolved by the BVGSB dean, the dean will refer the matter to a BVGSB Hearing Committee selected by the dean. No member of the Hearing Committee will have prior knowledge of the grievant or the grievance.

**Undergraduate students.** If the grievant is an undergraduate student, the Hearing Committee will consist of three BVGSB faculty members and two student representatives, all appointed by the dean. Whenever possible, the student representatives will be members of the ASWC Senate.

**Graduate students.** If the grievant is a graduate student, the BVGSB Hearing Committee will consist of three BVGSB faculty members and two BVGSB staff members, all appointed by the dean.

The Hearing Committee will select a chair who will schedule the hearing, moderate the deliberations of the committee, and ensure that full and fair consideration is provided to all parties. All five committee members will vote on the committee’s decisions.

**Hearing Committee Procedure**

a. The committee will conduct a hearing at which the student and faculty member will be asked to testify and present applicable evidence. No representatives, observers or third parties to the complaint will attend the hearing, unless previously approved by the Hearing Committee chair.

b. All committee deliberations will be held in private and will be kept confidential by all members of the committee and the parties to the grievance. The use of recording devices is prohibited. The recommendation of the committee will be based on the factual evidence and documentation presented to it. The burden of proof will rest with the grievant, who must demonstrate that the contested decision or action was unfair or discriminatory or that it violates relevant policies and procedures.

c. Within two weeks of receiving the written grievance, the chair of the Hearing Committee will deliver a written report of the Hearing Committee’s decision and its recommended resolution to the student, faculty member, division chair or program director, and dean.

d. Within one week of receiving the Hearing Committee’s report, the dean will determine the final disposition of the appeal and communicate his or her decision to the student, faculty member and division chair.

5. If the dean’s decision is not acceptable to the student, the student may file a subsequent appeal with the Office of the Provost within five (5) school days of receiving notification of the dean’s decision. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more information on the college’s academic grievance policy.