TITLE OF POLICY
Policy on Appeal of Block Grades, Course Grades, and Written Evaluations

PURPOSE AND SCOPE
To establish the policy and procedures for appealing a block and/or course grade and written evaluations. This policy applies to all medical students and faculty.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE
The Education Committee will review and approve the policy in odd-numbered years or as needed.

LCME REFERENCE(S)
LCME 9.9: Student Advancement and Appeal Process

HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES
Revised and approved by the Curriculum Committee July 18, 2011
Approved by Education Committee February 20, 2017
Revised and approved by Education Committee October 2018
Revised and approved by Education Committee December 2018

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Grounds for an Appeal
All appeals must be in writing and contain one or more of the following as the basis for appeal:

- Mathematical or clerical error
- Arbitrariness (i.e., decisions that are made by chance, whim, or impulse, and not by reason or principle);
- Discrimination based on age, color, creed, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identify, genetic information, national origin, religion, sex, or veteran status;
- Personal malice; or
- Inappropriate jurisdiction (i.e., the matter was inappropriately decided through a School of Medicine (SOM) forum when there were elements that should have first been decided in a general University forum (e.g., UNC-Chapel Hill Honor Code violations). The SOM may impose additional requirements/sanctions after the University forum review has been completed, consistent with the Student Advancement Policy.

The University’s Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct (http://policies.unc.edu/files/2013/04/PPDHRM.pdf) prohibits discrimination or harassment on the
basis of an individual’s age, color, creed, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, religion, sex, or veteran status.

Students who want additional information regarding the University’s process for investigating allegations of discrimination or harassment should contact the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office for assistance:

Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
137 E. Franklin Street, Suite 404
Campus Box 9160
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599
Telephone: (919) 966-3576
Fax: (919) 445-1580
eoc@unc.edu
https://eoc.unc.edu/

Any administrator or supervisor, including a department chair, associate dean or other administrator, who receives a student’s complaint about prohibited harassment or discrimination must notify the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office within five (5) calendar days of receiving the complaint. If a student raises a claim of prohibited harassment or discrimination during an academic appeal, an investigation of the student’s claim must be performed by the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office. The School of Medicine (SOM) must await the results of the harassment or discrimination investigation before deciding the student’s academic appeal.

Appeal of Block and/or Course Grade and/or Written Evaluation

Level 1: Appeal to the Course Director(s)

The first level of appeal of a block or course grade and/or written evaluation is to the course director(s). A copy of the written appeal must be submitted to the following:

1. Course Director(s);
2. Associate Dean for Student Affairs; and
3. College advisor.

The written appeal must clearly state the grounds for appeal (see list above). Foundation Phase students must initiate an appeal within 10 business days of the notification of the grade or evaluation. Application/Individualization Phase students must initiate an appeal within 20 business days of the notification of the grade or evaluation. Students appealing failing grades may not continue to the next
phase of the curriculum, but they are able to take approved electives as allowed by the Associate Dan for Student Affairs.

Should the course director(s) determine that there is a reason to change the course grade or evaluation in the student’s favor, the course director will send notification of the revision to the Office of Student Affairs. If no basis for changing the course grade and/or written evaluation is found, the course director will inform the student that the grade and/or evaluation will not be revised. The student will receive written notification of the course director’s decision within 10 business days of the student’s appeal. If it is not possible to meet this deadline, then within those 10 days, the course director will inform the student of the date when the notification will be sent.

**Level 2: Appeal to the Executive Vice Dean for Education or Designee**

If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the course director(s), the student may file an appeal within 10 business days of receiving the denial. The written appeal must clearly state the grounds for appeal (see list above), include the course director’s rationale for denying the level 1 appeal, and then be submitted in writing to the following people and must include a rations:

1. Executive Vice Dean for Education or Designee;
2. Associate Dean for Student Affairs; and
3. College advisor.

Within 10 business days of receipt of the appeal, the Executive Vice Dean for Education or designee will either:
   - Decide that the appeal lacks the merit to warrant a hearing and uphold the decision of the course directors; or
   - Schedule a hearing within 10 business days of the Vice Dean’s receipt of the appeal before an ad hoc committee consisting of three faculty members of the SOM who serve on the Education Committee. The individuals serving on the ad hoc committee must not be individuals who have either been involved in assessing the student in the course or who have been the student’s health care provider.

During the hearing, the student will have an opportunity to discuss the rationale for their appeal, and the course director, or their representative, will have an opportunity to discuss their rationale for determining the student’s grade and for denying the appeal. The student may have their advisor, or another SOM faculty advocate of their choice, attend the hearing. Attorneys may not attend or participate in the hearing.

The ad hoc committee will make a determination based on the information reviewed and discussed at the hearing. The decision of the ad hoc committee is advisory to the Executive Vice Dean for Education or designee. The Executive Vice Dean for Education or designee, upon receipt of the recommendation
of the ad hoc committee, will render a final decision regarding the appeal. The decision will be delivered to the student within 10 business days of the appeal hearing. If it is not possible to meet this deadline, then within those 10 days, the Executive Vice Dean for Education or designee will inform the student of the date when the notification will be sent. The decision of the Executive Vice Dean for Education or designee is the final decision for block or course grade or written evaluation appeals, and no further appeals are available to the student.

DEFINITION(S):

NA

ADDENDUM:

Grades for Honor Court Violations
A student who is alleged to have cheated on a medical school exam should be given a grade of NG and the incident should be referred to the UNC-Chapel Hill Honor Court system for investigation. Assigning a failing grade for cheating is not allowed under the current Instrument of Student Judicial Governance until the student has passed through the UNC-Chapel Hill Honor Court system. If the student is given a grade of F because of an allegation of cheating, and the case has not been referred to the UNC-Chapel Hill Honor Court system, the student may appeal the grade. This ground for appeal was previously expressed as appealing based on “student conduct cognizable under the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance.”