

School of Journalism & Graphic Communication
Florida A&M University
Grievance Committee
Academic Grievance Procedures

1. **Appeal to SJGC Grievance Committee.** All appeals of divisional decisions within the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication regarding student appeals and complaints specified in Paragraph 2 will be heard by the Grievance Committee. The student must demonstrate proof that s/he has first met with the faculty member and next with the division director, and that the dispute was not successfully resolved between those parties. All Capstone appeals must follow the same process, except that the student must first meet with the Capstone director and/or committee.

2. **What decisions or actions may be appealed?** A student may appeal a divisional decision to the Grievance Committee in the following cases:
 - A. **Grades.** Where a final course grade is alleged to have been given by a faculty member to the student in a capricious, arbitrary, or discriminatory manner.*

 - B. **Unacceptable academic learning condition.** Where a faculty member, staff member, or administrator has created or perpetuated an unauthorized academic learning condition or environment that has caused a significant and ascertainable negative impact upon the student.

3. **Manner of filing appeal.** All appeals made to the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication Grievance Committee after December 15, 2014, will commence with the filing of a properly completed appeal form, as approved by the Dean of the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication. Appeal forms may be obtained on the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication's website, or in the dean's office, 510 Orr Drive, Suite 4003, Tallahassee, FL 32307.

4. **Where appeal filed.** An appeal must be filed in the Office of the Dean of the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication, via the website or in paper form (typed), 510 Orr Drive, Suite 4003, Tallahassee, FL 32307.

5. **Timing of appeal.** An appeal must be filed within **thirty (30) calendar days** of the rendering of the divisional decision being appealed, unless the Grievance Committee grants additional time for appeal based upon just cause and in the interest of a just resolution of the appeal.

6. **Initial processing of appeal.** After receipt of a properly executed appeal form, the Associate Dean (new appointment effective January 2015) of the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication will refer the appeal in a timely manner to the Grievance Committee by transmittal to the committee director. The Associate Dean also will direct the appropriate division director to furnish to the Associate Dean all documentation within his or her custody

pertaining to the appeal, such documentation to be referred upon its receipt to the committee by transmittal to the committee director. The committee chair, in turn, will furnish each member of the committee with the appeal form, supporting documentation, and other materials relevant to the appeal.

7. **Scheduling of hearing.** The chairperson of the Grievance Committee, upon receipt of an appeal and necessary documentation, expeditiously will schedule a hearing in the matter before the committee. Unless otherwise directed by the committee or its chair, all hearings will be held on an as-needed basis, but not less than once per month on the first Tuesday. The committee director will notify all parties to the appeal—including the student making the appeal, the faculty member, staff member or administrator whose action gave rise to the appeal, and the appropriate division director—of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The notice will be made in writing not less than seven (7) calendar days in advance of the hearing, unless each of the concerned parties to an appeal waives the notice requirement.

8. **Hearings.** Unless otherwise allowed by the committee in the interest of a just resolution of an appeal, each party to an appeal will be allowed not more than ten (10) minutes to present his or her respective position. Only the student making the appeal, the faculty member, staff member or administrator whose action gave rise to the appeal, and the appropriate division director will be allowed to speak during a hearing. Pertinent information from witnesses having direct knowledge of the circumstances giving rise to the appeal may be submitted to the committee in written form, although the committee upon its own motion may call witnesses for oral testimony at a hearing.

9. **Hearing record.** As directed by the committee director, an appropriate written record of each appeal hearing will be taken and maintained.

10. **SJGC Grievance Committee findings and recommendations.** After completion of the hearing of an appeal, the Grievance Committee will expeditiously review the record of the appeal in the interest of a just resolution. Notice of the committee's findings and recommendations will be forwarded in writing by the committee director to the Dean of the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication as soon as is reasonably practicable after the committee's decisions are taken.

11. **Final determination.** The Dean of the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication will review the Grievance Committee findings and recommendations in each appeal in a timely manner. As soon as is reasonably practicable thereafter, the Dean will notify the parties to the appeal in writing of her decision and also will provide each of the parties with a copy of the Grievance Committee's findings and recommendations.

12. **Other grievances.** For information concerning student grievances other than those subject to appeal to the Grievance Committee, see the Florida A&M University General Catalog, including sections relating to academic discipline; cheating and plagiarism; readmission from suspension; modification of degree requirements; university non-discrimination policies; policy on disruptive behavior; university code of conduct; and general catalog policy on student petitions.

*“Capricious” means not resulting from a reasonable and announced grading policy and procedure.

“Arbitrary” means without a sound academic basis or else based primarily upon personal preference or whim.

“Discriminatory” means differential treatment based upon race, religion, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin.