

**Academic Policy Subcommittee of UCC  
Proposal to Revise an Academic Policy  
(Action Item)**

Contact Person: Name: email:, Phone:

1. **Catalog statement of existing academic complaint policy:**
- 2.

**Course Requirements (p 34): Student Complaint Procedure**— The student complaint procedure for resolving a complaint concerning a faculty member is outlined below in four steps.

**Step 1 (Faculty Member)**

The first step is for the student to discuss the complaint with the faculty member involved. If the faculty member is no longer employed by the University, the student should go directly to the department head who will contact and represent the former faculty member. If the complaint involves a grade, the student must take the complaint to the faculty member within the first two weeks of the first regular semester (fall; spring) following the assignment of the grade. It is hoped that the complaint may be satisfactorily dealt with at this level.

**Step 2 (Department Level)**

If the student and the faculty member are unable to resolve the complaint, the student may take the complaint to the faculty member's department head. Written notification of the complaint must be given to the department head within two weeks after the meeting with the faculty member. It is the responsibility of the department head to arrange for a conference where the student, faculty member and the department head will be present for discussion. Neither the faculty member nor the student will be allowed representation at the conference. The department head shall hear both sides of the complaint and shall attempt to mediate a settlement. The department head shall keep a written record of the proceedings, including the recommended solution. The department head's recommended solution is to be considered by both the faculty member and the student as a recommendation and not as a decision that is binding.

**Step 3 (College Level)**

Should the student be unable to receive the satisfaction desired at the departmental level, the complaint may be taken to the college level. Written notification of the complaint must be submitted to the college dean or his designated representative within two weeks after the conference with the department head (Step 2). Upon receipt of the notification, the college dean or his/her representative shall provide the student a copy of the procedural guidelines to be followed by the College Complaint Committee. The procedural guidelines shall provide for a conference with both the student and the faculty member present for joint discussion of the complaint with the committee.

The College Complaint Committee will be responsible for scheduling the conference within two weeks following the submission of a written complaint to the chair of the College Complaint Committee, including as much detail as the student cares to include. The written complaint should clearly state what is considered to be unreasonable and/or unfair practices or procedures. Neither the faculty member nor the student will be allowed representation at the conference. The College Complaint Committee shall hear both sides of the complaint and render a decision. The decision shall be sent in writing to the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, with a copy being sent as a matter of record to the student, faculty

member, faculty member's department head and the faculty member's college dean. The Office of the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs shall be responsible for enforcing the decision of the college committee. The Office of the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs shall not enforce the decision until two weeks after the decision is made by the college committee. The purpose of the two week delay is to provide either the student or the faculty member an opportunity to submit a formal written notice of appeal to the University Complaint Committee.

#### **Step 4 (University Level)**

Should the student or the faculty member desire to appeal the decision of the College Complaint Committee, a formal written notice of appeal may be submitted to the University Complaint Committee chair, with a copy to the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, within two weeks of the decision of the College Complaint Committee. The chair of the University Complaint Committee will provide the student and the faculty member involved with a copy of the University Complaint Committee's Procedural Guidelines. The University Complaint Committee will secure copies of the written proceedings from the department head and the College Complaint Committee. The University Complaint Committee will schedule a conference where the faculty member and the student jointly discuss the issue. Neither the faculty member nor the student will be allowed representation at the conference. The committee's decision will be sent to the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, with a copy being sent as a matter of record to the student, faculty member, faculty member's department head and the faculty member's college dean. The Office of the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs will see that decisions of the University Complaint Committee are carried out. The University Complaint Committee's decision is final.

#### **Catalog statement of proposed policy:**

##### **Grade and Academic Appeal Process**

**Grade Appeal:** A student may appeal a grade granted by any instructor of any course. Grade Appeals will be considered only in the most exceptional circumstances, and are approved only in cases where the evidence strongly supports the student's claim. The burden of proof for a grade change is on the student. The student may appeal the grade based on one or more of the following:

1. An error in the calculation of the grade.
2. The assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than performance in the course as described in the course syllabi.
3. The assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the instructor's previously announced standards for that section of that course.

**Grade and Academic Appeal Procedure—** The student procedure for resolving an academic or grade appeal is outlined below in three steps.

#### **Step 1 (Faculty Member)**

The first step is for the student is to discuss the appeal with the faculty member involved. If the faculty member is no longer employed by the University, the student should go directly to the department head who will contact and represent the former faculty member. If the appeal

involves a grade, the student must take the to the faculty member within the first two weeks of the first regular semester (fall; spring) following the assignment of the grade. It is hoped that the appeal may be satisfactorily dealt with at this level.

### **Step 2 (Department Level)**

If the student and the faculty member are unable to resolve the appeal, the student may take the appeal to the faculty member's department head. Written notification of the appeal must be given to the department head within two weeks after the meeting with the faculty member. It is the responsibility of the department head to arrange for a conference where the student, faculty member and the department head will be present for discussion. Neither the faculty member nor the student will be allowed representation at the conference. The department head shall hear both sides of the appeal and shall attempt to mediate a settlement. The department head shall keep a written record of the proceedings, including the recommended solution. The department head's recommended solution is to be considered by both the faculty member and the student as a recommendation and not as a decision that is binding.

### **Step 3 (College Level)**

Should the student be unable to receive the satisfaction desired at the departmental level, the appeal may be taken to the college level. Written notification of the appeal must be submitted to the college dean or his designated representative within two weeks after the conference with the department head (Step 2). Upon receipt of the notification, the college dean or his/her representative shall provide the student a copy of the procedural guidelines to be followed by the College Academic Appeal Committee. The procedural guidelines shall provide for a conference with both the student and the faculty member present for joint discussion of the appeal with the committee.

The College Academic Appeal Committee will be responsible for scheduling the conference within four weeks following the submission of a written appeal to the chair of the College Academic Appeal Committee, including as much detail as the student cares to include. The written appeal should clearly state what is considered to be unreasonable and/or unfair practices or procedures. Neither the faculty member nor the student will be allowed representation at the conference. The College Academic Appeal Committee shall hear both sides of the appeal and render a decision. The decision shall be sent in writing to the Dean of the college, with a copy being sent as a matter of record to the student, faculty member, and department head. The Dean shall be responsible for enforcing the decision of the college committee.

### **Step 4 (University Level) – Excludes Grade Appeals**

**Academic Appeal:** The University Academic Appeal Committee occasionally receives appeals from student concerning various school/college requirements, and these utilize the same procedures as the grade appeal. The Office of the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs shall not enforce the decision until two weeks after the decision is made by the college committee. The purpose of the two week delay is to provide either the student or the faculty member an opportunity to submit a formal written notice of appeal to the University Academic Complaint Committee. Cases involving student disability appeals regarding denial of accommodations are not covered under this policy, and should be directed to the Student ADA Compliance Officer as stated in WKU Policy #6.1010. This policy also does not cover discrimination and harassment concern, which are directed to the Equal Opportunity/504/ADA Compliance Director as stated in WKU Policy #0.2040

**Proposed term for implementation:** Fall 2015

**Dates of prior committee approvals:**

Academic Policy Subcommittee of UCC:	
Policy Subcommittee of Graduate Council:	
Graduate Council:	
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee:	
University Senate:	