



## **AP 4231 Grade Changes**

### **Criteria**

The instructor of the course shall determine the grade to be awarded to each student.

An instructor can change grades during the grading cycle up until the time final grades are verified at the end of the semester. In the absence of a mistake, fraud, bad faith or incompetence, grades are final.

A “mistake” may include, but is not limited to, errors made by an instructor in calculating a student’s grade and clerical errors. “Fraud” may include, but is not limited to, inaccurate recording or change of a grade by any person who gains access to grade records without authorization.

Once the grading cycle is completed, an instructor is not permitted to change grades, except by the procedure outlined below (unless changing an “I” grade upon the completion of work specified in an Incomplete Contract).

If a grade has been incorrectly entered on a student’s permanent record during computer services procedures, the error will be corrected.

The removal or change of an incorrect grade from a student's record shall only be done pursuant to Education Code Section 76232 or by an alternative method that ensures that each student shall be afforded an objective and reasonable review of the requested grade change.

If the procedure for changing a grade requires that a student first request a grade change from the instructor, provisions shall be made to allow another faculty member to substitute for the instructor if the student has filed a discrimination complaint, if the instructor is not available, or where the District determines that it is possible that there may have been gross misconduct by the original instructor.

In the case of fraud, bad faith, or incompetence, the final determination concerning removal or change of grade will be made by the Chief Instructional Officer or appropriate Dean.

In all cases, the instructor who first awarded the grade will be given written notice of the change.



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### **Process for Instructor Changing a Grade after the Semester Has Ended**

If the instructor discovers that an error was made in calculating the student's grade, the instructor will complete and sign a Grade Change Form. The instructor will write a short explanation on the form explaining why a change of grade is necessary. The instructor's signature is required on the Form for auditing purposes.

The instructor must perform this task with all due haste, and within two years of the end of the term in which the grade was given. If the instructor makes the request in writing, the Coordinator or Dean can make the grade change.

Students may verify their final grade online within three (3) days from the date the Grade Change Form was submitted.

### **Process for Student Requesting a Grade Change**

If a student judges a grade to be the result of a mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence on the part of an instructor, the student should follow the Student Grievance Procedures (Academic Grievance) outlined in the Student Handbook.

Students have six months following the end of the semester or session in which a grade is recorded to file a grievance. Student Grievance Procedures are not used for removing an "F" grade due to non-attendance, or changing an "F" grade to a "W" grade. A Student Petition Form, available from Admissions and Records, is appropriate for those changes.

The student may begin by presenting his/her claim to the faculty member informally. If the instructor acknowledges that an error was made, then the instructor will initiate the procedure for changing a grade.

If after consulting with the instructor who issued the grade, a student judges the grade to be the result of a mistake which the instructor does not acknowledge, or fraud, bad faith, or incompetence on the part of the instructor, the student should continue to follow the Student Grievance Procedures outlined in the Student Handbook. If the instructor is no longer employed or working at the college and cannot be reached, or if the instructor refuses or is unable to meet informally with the student, the student will then meet with the Coordinator or a discipline expert designated by either the Coordinator or Dean to attempt to resolve the grade dispute.



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Unless the instructor is no longer employed or working at the college and cannot be reached, only the instructor of record can change a grade as a result of the Informal Academic Grievance. If the instructor is no longer employed or working at the college and cannot be reached, and a grade change is necessary as judged by a discipline expert on the faculty, the discipline expert will advise the Coordinator or Dean in writing, and the Coordinator or Dean will file the Grade Change Form.

If informal procedures fail to resolve the grading dispute, the student should then follow the Formal Grievance Procedures. The burden of proof lies with the student to produce facts that demonstrate a grading mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence.

### **Security of Grade Records**

The District shall implement security measures for student records that assure no person may obtain access to student grade records without proper authorization. These measures shall be installed as part of any computerized grade data storage system.

The measures implemented by the District shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, password protection for all student grade databases, locking mechanisms for computer stations from which student grade databases can be viewed, and strict limits on the number of persons who are authorized to change student grades.

Persons authorized to change grades shall be designated by the Director of Admissions and Records. No more than five District employees may be authorized to change student grades. Only regular full-time employees of the District may be authorized to change grades. Student workers shall not have access to grade records, and student workers may not change grades at any time.

Any person who discovers that grades have been changed by someone other than the persons authorized to do so shall notify the Director of Admissions and Records immediately. The Director of Admissions and Records shall immediately take steps to lock the grade storage system entirely while an investigation is conducted.

If any student's grade record is found to have been changed without proper authorization, the District will notify 1) the student; 2) the instructor who originally awarded the grade; 3) any educational institution to which the student has transferred; 4) the accreditation agency; and 5) appropriate local law enforcement authorities.

Whenever a grade is changed for any reason, corrected transcripts will be sent to any educational institution to which a student has transferred.



## **AP 4231 Grade Changes**

Any student or employee who is found to have gained access to grade recording systems without proper authorization, or who is found to have changed any grade without proper authority to do so, shall be subject to discipline in accordance with District policies and procedures.

Any person who is found to have gained access to grade recording systems without proper authorization, or who is found to have changed any grade without proper authority to do so, shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the college where the incident occurred.

Also see BP 3310 titled Records Retention and Destruction, BP/AP 5040 titled Student Records, and AP 5530 titled Student Grievance Procedures.

References: Education Code Sections 76224 and 76232;  
Title 5 Section 55025

Approved: 4/17/12  
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