

# ACADEMIC POLICIES

## GRADE CHALLENGE POLICY

Classroom instructors at Navarro College have the responsibility and authority to award final grades in the class they are teaching; however, grades must be based on college policy, procedures, and written instructions in the form of a course syllabus. In cases where a student has a valid reason for challenging the grade awarded in a course, the student must first consult with the instructor and informally present his or her case. If the student and the instructor are not able to reach a mutual agreement, the student may request in writing, through the appropriate dean, a Grade Challenge Hearing. The appropriate dean must receive this written request within ten (10) days from the last day final grades may be posted. If, in the judgment of the dean, there are valid reasons for a grade challenge, the dean will appoint a Grade Review Committee, which will consist of one student, one instructor, and one dean who will chair the committee.

The Grade Review Committee will call a meeting, at which time the case will be reviewed. The committee chair will open the meeting by reading the grade challenge procedure. The student will then have 30 minutes in which to present to the committee the reasons for challenging the grade, including any evidence the student would like for the committee to consider. The instructor will then have 30 minutes in which to present to the committee the justification for the grade the student was awarded. The committee will then question both parties. The student and instructor may address questions to each other only through the chair of the committee. Both parties have the right to counsel, but the hearing will be conducted in private with only the student, faculty, and Grade Review Committee present. The student and the instructor will each be allowed three minutes in which to make a closing statement. After hearing both sides of the case, the committee will discuss the case in a closed session. Any decision must be based upon clear and convincing evidence. A written report of the committee's decision will be prepared and mailed or delivered to the student and the instructor within two business days.

If either party wishes to appeal the decision of the Grade Review Committee, he or she may do this in writing to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The Vice President of Academic Affairs must receive this written request within ten (10) days from the date of the Grade Review Committee decision or the appeal denial by the dean. The Vice President of Academic Affairs has the option to call a meeting with the student. This meeting will be conducted in private with only the student and Vice President of Academic Affairs present.

If there are valid reasons to continue the investigation, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will then appoint the Administrative Staff Committee, consisting of three administrators (excluding the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the District President) who will review all evidence of the Grade Review Committee meeting and any additional evidence provided by the student and the instructor. Both parties have the right to counsel, but the hearing will be conducted in private with only the student, faculty, and Administrative Staff Committee present. Both parties will be allowed to make a summary statement. Either or both parties may, in addition to the written statement, present any additional evidence orally.

The committee will research the decision and prepare a written report that will be sent to each of the people concerned. The decision of the Administrative Staff Committee will be final and binding, and a written report of the committee's decision will be prepared and mailed or delivered to the student, the instructor, and the appropriate dean within two business days of the decision.

As referenced in the Student Grievances Procedures, the role of the District President in these procedures is not to decide the case or appeal thereof, but merely to determine whether the administrative chain of command has adhered to Navarro College.

No outside recording devices will be allowed. The institution will record and maintain an official recording of the initial hearing and the subsequent meeting and hearing as applicable. Committee deliberations will not be recorded. Recordings will be kept on file in the appropriate dean or Vice President's office. Recordings will be available for one year after the date of the final hearing or meeting by request, in writing, to involved parties only from the applicable dean or Vice President's office.