

Graduate Grade Appeals

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Policy Link:	
Responsible Official:	Samantha Langley
Responsible Office:	Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Research & Outreach
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Approved by:	Choose an item.

I. Policy Statement

Any graduate student who believes his/her final course grade is inaccurate, or based on factors that were not included in the grading policy, may appeal the grade. To be considered, the grade appeal must meet one or more of the following conditions:

1. The method for determining the final course grade conflicts with the grading policy per the course syllabus or other announced grading policies.
2. There is an alleged mathematical error in calculating the final course grade.
3. There is evidence that the final course grade is based on something other than performance in the course.

Grades on individual assignments cannot be appealed.

If a student wishes to appeal a course grade, the procedure below should be followed:

1. The student must initiate the appeal of the grade no later than fifteen (15) working days after the last date for faculty to submit grades. To facilitate the discussion, the student shall provide the faculty member with a written statement (email or letter) that outlines the grade appeal. If the student is unable to reach the faculty member, he/she should seek assistance in making contact through the chair of the department for which the course was taught. After considering the student's appeal, the instructor must respond in writing to the student within five (5) working days from the receipt, stating whether or not the appeal is granted and stating the instructor's rationale for the decision.

2. If the student and the faculty member are unable to resolve the matter at Step 1, and the student wishes to continue to pursue the appeal, the student must submit a letter of appeal within five (5) working days of the instructor's decision to the chair of the department for which the course was taught. The department chair will review the issue in consultation with the student and faculty member. The department chair may uphold the decision of the faculty member or recommend a different solution. The chair shall submit a written response to the student and the instructor within 5 working days following the receipt of the student's letter of appeal. The instructor shall respond in writing within five (5) working days to all parties whether

he/she agrees with the chair's recommendation. If a grade change is agreed, the record change shall be initiated by the instructor within 2 working days.

3. If no mutually satisfactory decision was reached at Step 2, the student may appeal to the dean of the college (or designee) that houses the course. The written appeal must be submitted within five (5) working days of receipt of the instructor's response. The dean (or designee) shall review the recommendation and respective documentation, and provide, in writing, to all parties a recommendation for the solution of the problem within five (5) working days following receipt of the written appeal. The instructor shall respond in writing within five (5) working days to all parties whether he/she agrees with the dean or designee's recommendation. If a grade change is agreed, the record change shall be initiated by the instructor within 2 working days.

4. If the student is dissatisfied with the results of the appeal in Step 3, the student may submit a written appeal requesting a hearing with the Grade Appeals Panel to the Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Research, and Outreach, within five (5) working days of the instructor's response to the dean's recommendation. The Vice Provost will convene a Grade Appeals Panel as soon as practical.

Grade Appeals Panel

1. **Membership:** The Grade Appeals Panel shall be comprised of a dean or designee not involved in the appeals process, two faculty members from graduate programs other than the one involved in the appeal (selected by the Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Research, and Outreach), and two graduate students (selected by the Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Research, and Outreach). The Vice Provost (or designee) convenes the panel and serves as a non-voting member.

2. **Determination of Merit:** The Grade Appeals Panel shall receive copies of the written appeal and all prior documentation. Thereafter, neither new evidence nor changes shall be introduced before the Grade Appeals Panel. The Grade Appeals Panel shall review the file to determine if the student's case meets any of the grounds for appeal. If the panel determines that the appeal does not meet any of the grounds, the appeal will not be considered. The ruling of the Grade Appeals Panel is final and must be communicated to all parties within 2 working days of the decision.

3. **Hearing Meeting:** If the Grade Appeals Panel determines that the case meets any of the grounds for appeal, the Panel will proceed to a full hearing of the appeal. All previously involved parties (instructor, student, chair and dean (or designee) have the right to attend the meeting and offer evidence or rebuttal. Both student and instructor may request to be accompanied by advisors during the hearing. Advisors may only consult and interact privately with the student and instructor during the hearing and will not be allowed to address the Grade Appeals Panel. The Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Research, and Outreach or her/his designee will notify the parties of the exact date, time and location of the hearing at least five (5) working days before the hearing. During the hearing, both student and instructor shall be granted time to present their case.

4. Deliberation and Decision: The Grade Appeals Panel shall deliberate confidentially and arrive at a decision by majority vote. If the Grade Appeals Panel finds that an academic evaluation based upon anything other than a good-faith judgment of a student's work has been proved, it will approve a grade change to the academic record. The Grade Appeals Panel shall provide a written report of its ruling to the student, the instructor, the department chair, and the dean of the college within five (5) working days of the hearing. The decision of the Grade Appeals Panel is final and binding. If a grade change is approved, the Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Research, and Outreach will forward the information to the Registrar's Office.

This policy is a NEW policy specific to graduate student grade appeals. Previously graduate grade appeals were addressed through the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities V.G. Academic Policies and Procedures – Student Academic Grievance Process.

II. Entities Affected

Graduate Students and faculty, department chairs, college deans, and VP GERO. All parties concerned must be cognizant of the impact that grade appeals may have on the student's academic progression or graduation. This policy does not apply to Chase Law students.

III. Authority

N/A

IV. Definitions

A "working day" is any day when Northern Kentucky University is officially open.

V. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of campus departments/graduate program directors/Office of Graduate Education to communicate this policy when it takes effect.

VI. Committee

NA

VII. Procedures

NA

VIII. Reporting Requirements

NA

IX. Exceptions

If the instructor is not on contract or in residence on the campus or no longer employed by the University, the student may appeal in writing directly to the department chair of the department for which the course is taught.

If the procedure would normally occur during the summer and the student is not enrolled in any summer session, or the faculty member is not on campus, the procedure may be deferred until the fall semester at the student's or faculty member's written request, with copy to the department chair.

X. Training

NA

XI. Communications

NA

References and Related Materials

References:
Related Policies:
Related Forms:
Revision History: