



# Grade Appeal Timeline

Updated; January 13, 2020

## Informal Grade Review

These steps should be followed if a student believes that a grade has been assigned in an unfair manner. Students appealing a final course grade must initiate the grade appeal process within four (4) months of the date that the grade in question is officially due to the Registrar's office.

### **1. Conference between student and faculty of record.**

Every effort should be made to handle the review at this level.

### **2. Conference Between Student and Department Chair**

If the review issues cannot be resolved with the faculty member, the student should consult the Department Chair for the faculty of record.

### **3. Conference between student and Assistant/Associate Dean**

If the review issues cannot be resolved with the faculty member or the Department Chair, the student should consult the College Assistant/Associate Dean. The Assistant/Associate Dean will communicate via email to the student the outcome of the informal grade review. If the outcome does not uphold the student's appeal, the Assistant/Associate Dean will provide the necessary paperwork to the student for a formal grade appeal and explain the process as outlined below.

## Formal Grade Appeal

If the grade review issues cannot be resolved through the initial informal process, then these steps should be followed.

### **1. Petition for Formal Grade Appeal**

Within ten (10) class days of the decision of the Assistant/Associate Dean, the student should file a Petition for Formal Grade Appeal (<https://academicaffairs.nsuok.edu/StudentResources.aspx>) with the Dean of the College.

### **2. Notification of Faculty of Record**

Within five (5) class days of receiving the Petition for Formal Grade Appeal, the Dean shall notify the faculty of record of the formal grade review.



### **3. Response from Faculty of Record**

Within five (5) class days of receiving notification from the Dean of the formal grade review, the faculty of record shall submit to the Dean a written response to the formal grade review.

### **4. Notification of College Grade Appeal Committee**

Within five (5) class days of receiving the response from the faculty of record, the Dean shall notify the College Grade Review Committee of the formal grade review and shall provide committee members with a grade appeal packet.

### **5. College Grade Appeal Committee Initial Meeting**

Within five (5) class days of notifying the College Grade Appeal Committee, the Dean shall convene the Committee for its initial meeting. The Dean shall serve as Committee Chair and additional meetings are at the Dean's discretion.

### **6. Decision of the Committee**

Within forty-five (45) class days of receipt of the Petition for Formal Grade Appeal, the College Grade Appeal Committee shall render its decision.

## **Appeal of the Grade Appeal Committee Decision**

If the student believes that the grade appeal processes have failed to provide a reasonable and fair result, then these steps should be followed.

### **1. Appeal to the Provost**

Within five (5) class days of receiving the decision of the College Grade Appeal Committee, the student shall submit a written appeal to the Provost.

### **2. Decision of the Provost OR Formation of a University Grade Appeal Committee**

Within ten (10) days of receiving the written appeal, the Provost shall render a decision on the appeal. If, in the opinion of the Provost, further appeal is justified based on procedural errors, a Review Committee of academic administrators not connected with case will be formed. Upon receiving the Review committee's recommendation, the Provost will make a final decision and communicate those findings to the faculty, member, the student, and college dean. The Provost's



## Undergraduate and Graduate Grade Appeal Policy

The responsibility for academic assessment of student performance rests with the faculty. The grade appeal process reviews whether a faculty member's grading practices and procedures were followed consistently and accurately when determining the student's final grade. The following circumstances are the only grounds considered for a grade appeal.

- 1) Allegations that a faculty member's policy in assigning final grades is not applied consistently to all students within a class and section;
- 2) Allegations that the method of assigning grades differs from the method described in the faculty member's course syllabus or in other material made available by the faculty member to the students;
- 3) Allegations that the faculty member's policy on assignment of grades was not made known to students.

*The grade appeal process, does not establish whether a grading system is academically sound.*

Undergraduate student grade reviews/appeals shall be administered by the college in which the course was offered. Graduate student grade reviews/appeals shall be administered by the Graduate College. Students appealing a final course grade must initiate the grade appeal process within four (4) months of the date that the grade in question is officially due to the Registrar's office. The following procedures must be followed, except for those cases that arise where specialized policies and procedures shall apply at the department/program level.

### A. INFORMAL GRADE REVIEW

- 1) The student must first discuss the grade with the faculty member. This process is grounded on the premise that resolution should occur at the level of the faculty member and student relationship.
- 2) If the issue is still unresolved, the student must consult with the department chair. (If the faculty member is the department



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chair, the consultation must be made with the associate dean of the college in which the course is offered).

- 3) If the student is still dissatisfied, the student must consult with the associate dean of the college in which the course is offered. (If the faculty member is the associate dean, the consultation must be made with the dean of the College in which the course is offered).
- 4) If after consulting with the faculty member, department chair, and associate dean, the student is still dissatisfied, the procedure for a formal appeal provided in section B below must be followed.

### B. FORMAL GRADE APPEAL

- 1) If no satisfactory resolution results from the informal grade review, the student may pursue a formal grade appeal if one or more of the following three (3) criteria are present. The student shall carry the burden of proof by a preponderance of the evidence that the grade was inaccurately awarded based on:
  - Allegations that a faculty member's policy in assigning final grades is not applied consistently to all students within a class and section;
  - Allegations that the method of assigning grades differs from the method described in the faculty member's course syllabus or in other material made available by the faculty member to the students;
  - Allegations that the faculty member's policy on assignment of grades was not made known to students.
- 2) Within ten (10) class days (excludes weekend classes) of receiving the decision from the associate dean regarding the informal grade review, the student must complete the grade appeal form located on the Academic Affairs website and provide any documentation related to the appeal (<https://academicaffairs.nsuok.edu/StudentResources.aspx>). If the student is an undergraduate student, this form must be submitted to the dean of the college in which the course was



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offered. If the student is a graduate student, this form must be submitted to the dean of the Graduate College. If the faculty member is the dean, the student must the form to the Provost.

- 3) Within five (5) class days (excludes weekend classes) of receiving the appeal, the dean shall notify the faculty member of record. The faculty member shall submit a written response and provide any documentation related to the dispute to the dean within five (5) class days (excludes weekend classes) of receiving the review notification. If the faculty member is no longer associated with Northeastern State University, the department chair is authorized to act in his/her absence.
- 4) Within five (5) class days (excludes weekend classes) of receiving the faculty member's response, the dean shall assemble and forward the grade appeal packet to the grade appeals committee. The grade appeal packet should consist of the student's completed appeal form, any supporting documentation, and the faculty response. Within five (5) class days (excludes weekend classes) of notifying the grade appeals committee, the dean serves as the chair of the grade appeals committee and shall convene the committee. At this initial meeting, the Committee will determine whether the written appeal statement and the supporting documents include sufficient justification for further consideration. If the Committee concludes that the written evidence fails to warrant further review, the Dean will provide written notification to inform the parties. This decision is final. If the Committee determines that further review is warranted, a formal hearing will be scheduled per section C below, and a decision rendered no later than forty-five (45) class days (excludes weekend classes) following receipt of the written appeal.

## C. FORMAL HEARING PROCEDURES BY THE GRADE APPEALS COMMITTEE

- 1) If formal hearings are conducted, copies of the written student appeal, including any documentation from the student, and the written faculty response will be provided to both parties within one week prior to the hearing.



- 2) The Grade Appeals Committee schedules hearing appearances for both the student and instructor. Both appearances are generally held on the same day, but never simultaneously to avoid confrontation between student and instructor. Each party is permitted to have one silent observer of their choosing present during their part of the hearing and the right to call a short recess to consult with that observer outside the hearing.
- 3) Hearing proceedings will be recorded and retained for use in the review process.
- 4) Following the hearing proceedings, the grade appeals committee will consider the evidence and recommend one of the following actions, based on a simple majority of the voting members:
  - The grade is appropriate and should not be changed.
  - The grade is inappropriate and should be changed. If the committee recommends a grade change, the grade approved by a four-fifths (4/5) majority of the voting members shall be awarded. The grade appeals committee chair is responsible for forwarding the written recommendation of the committee to the Provost, the faculty member, the department chair, and the student. In addition, the grade appeals committee chair will initiate the appropriate procedure for a grade change after the period for Provost appeal has passed.

The committee's written recommendation must include grounds for its decision. All voting members must sign the recommendation, but a minority may attach a statement of reservations or a dissenting opinion. The grade appeals committee recommendation becomes final unless an appeal of the recommendation is approved by the Provost.



## D. APPEALING THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- 1) The student may appeal the committee recommendation by submitting a written statement to the Provost within five (5) class days (excludes weekend classes) after receiving the grade appeals committee's recommendation. The written statement must state why the student believes the grade appeals committee's recommendation should be reconsidered. If in the opinion of the Provost, further review is justified, a review committee composed of three (3) members will be appointed by the Provost to review the findings of the Grade appeals committee.
- 2) The Review Committee will review the written appeal request and the record of the grade appeals committee proceedings and any other evidence it deems appropriate. The Review Committee will render a decision within 10 class days (excludes weekend classes) of the appeal request. The Review Committee shall determine whether the decision of the grade appeals committee is supported by any competent evidence and should be upheld or whether the recommendation is not supported by any competent evidence and recommend other appropriate action to the Provost.
- 3) Upon receiving the Review Committee's decision, the Provost conducts a final review for procedural errors. The Provost's findings will be sent to the faculty member, the student, and the college dean. The decision of the Provost is final.

## E. RECORD MAINTENANCE

The proceedings of the formal hearing conducted by the college grade appeals committee, to include all original documents, digital recordings, recommendations, and final determinations are retained in the respective college office. According to the Oklahoma Archiving Law, the recording must be retained for 5 years if no court action is taken and an additional 2 years longer if court action is taken.

Approved by Academic Council - 4/28/92

Revised and Approved by Academic Council - 8/22/95; 8/3/99



Revised by adhoc committee members: Drs. Collier, Keller, and Hathorn;  
01/14/20

Approved by Dean's Council; 01/15/20

## Northeastern State University Grade Appeals Committee

The grade appeals committee in each College is charged with conducting a review when a grade appeal is filed for one of the following reasons:

- 1) Allegations that a faculty member's policy in assigning final grades is not applied consistently to all students within a class and section;
- 2) Allegations that the method of assigning grades differs from the method described in the faculty member's course syllabus or in other material made available by the faculty member to the students;
- 3) Allegations that the faculty member's policy on assignment of grades was not made known to students.

### A. COMPOSITION OF COLLEGE GRADE APPEALS COMMITTEE

- 1) The selection of the Grade appeals committee shall be made within 30 days of the beginning of the academic year.
  - a) Each college will select faculty and students to form a pool from which appeals committees will be drawn until the following Fall semester. To obtain this pool each college will select one or more faculty from within each department, and one student of junior/senior standing from within each department and/or college student academic organization. Grade appeals for graduate students are administered by the Graduate College. The graduate college will select one or more faculty with regular graduate faculty status from each graduate program. In addition, the Graduate College will select three (3) graduate students who have completed a minimum of 18 credit hours





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toward their degree.

- b) The Grade appeals committee will be selected in an unbiased manner by the college from the above pool. Each committee will consist of four (4) faculty members and one alternate; and one student and one alternate student of junior/senior, or graduate standing.
  - c) If the number of individuals in the appeals committee pool falls below the minimum of four faculty plus two students the dean of the college is authorized to select additional members in an unbiased manner.
- 2) A faculty member or student who is involved in a complaint or in a conflict of interest that makes it impossible to render an objective opinion shall not sit as a member of an appeals committee.

## **B. CONDUCT OF THE GRADE APPEALS COMMITTEE**

- 1) The college dean will call the meetings to order and conduct the meetings. In the event that the faculty member is the dean, the Provost will appoint a committee chair.
- 2) All regular and alternate members of the Committee will attend and participate in all meetings, discussions, and hearings. Only regular members will cast a vote except, in the absence of a regular member, the alternate will vote.
- 3) All decisions will be made by a simple majority (51%) of the voting members, unless otherwise specified in the policy. The college dean, or moderator, will only vote in the case of a tie.
- 4) The student shall carry the burden of proof by a preponderance of the evidence that the grade is incorrect or unjustified.
- 5) The proceedings of the formal hearing conducted by the grade appeals committee shall be recorded and retained in the respective college office. (According to the Oklahoma Archiving Law, the recording must be retained for 5 years if no court action is taken and an additional 2 years longer if court action is taken.)



- 6) Appeals shall be handled in a confidential manner in order to protect the privacy of all parties.

Approved by Academic Council - 4/28/92

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