

# Minnesota State University, Mankato University Policy

<b>Policy Name:</b> Grade Appeals	<b>Effective Date of Last Revision</b> August 20, 2019
<b>Custodian of Policy:</b> Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs	<b>Date of Last Review</b> September 2018
<b>Date of Adoption</b> September 1992	<b>Date of Next Review</b> September 2025

## Policy

Students have the right to ask an instructor for an explanation of any grade received. Grade appeals are reviewed in instances where students perceive that a final course grade is unfair, arbitrary, or capricious. Students must begin the procedures of this policy within two weeks\* of university notification of a final course grade. Students needing assistance at any step in appealing a grade may contact the Academic Affairs Coordinator of Student Government (280 Centennial Student Union; phone 389-2611). Students should retain copies of all materials associated with this process for their records. Students should also have records of their coursework from the class as part of the appeal process.

Note: Students are encouraged to talk to their instructors before beginning this process to attempt to resolve the matter informally. Student complaints and concerns about issues OTHER than final grades are to be resolved under the Student Complaints and Grievances policy. Students appealing last date of attendance (LDA) claims should refer to the Last Date of Attendance policy.

## Procedures

Grade appeals will be reviewed in the following manner.

### Step 1.

- A written petition will be submitted by the student to the instructor of the class within two weeks\* of the final day of grade entry for the term in which the course was taken. This petition should contain the nature of the problem, relevant information which supports the appeal, and the remedy sought. The student should retain a copy for his/her records.
- Within two weeks\* following receipt of a step 1 petition, the instructor will respond to the student in writing. If the student is not satisfied with the response provided by the instructor, he/she may proceed to Step 2.
- In cases where the departmental chairperson is the faculty member whose grade is being appealed, the student shall proceed to Step 3.

### Step 2.

- Within two weeks\* of receiving a step 1 response, a written petition will be submitted by the student to the departmental chairperson with a copy to the instructor. This petition should contain

the nature of the problem, a statement that an attempt was made to resolve this issue directly with the instructor, relevant information which supports the appeal, and the remedy sought. The student should retain a copy for his/her records. The student, instructor, and chairperson may meet to discuss the complaint, if necessary.

- Within two weeks\* following receipt of a step 2 student petition, the departmental chairperson will respond to the student in writing with a copy to the instructor of the class. If the student is not satisfied with the response provided by the chairperson, he/she may proceed to Step 3.

#### Step 3.

- Within two weeks\* of receiving a step 2 response, a written petition will be submitted by the student to the dean of the college with a copy to the departmental chairperson and instructor of the class. This petition should contain the nature of the problem, a statement that an attempt was made to resolve this issue directly with both the instructor and the departmental chairperson, all relevant information which supports the appeal, and the remedy sought. The student should retain a copy for his/her records.
- Copies of all materials presented in steps 1-3 shall be forwarded to the dean, upon request, by the chairperson.
- The dean may review the grade appeal personally, or may designate one or more college faculty members to review the grade appeal.
- Within two weeks\* following receipt of a step 3 student petition, the dean or designees will make a decision, and will respond to the student in writing of the decision reached, with a copy to the instructor and departmental chairperson. If the student is not satisfied with the response provided by the dean/designees, he/she may proceed to Step 4.

Faculty Right to Appeal. The instructor of the class who is not satisfied with action at either Step 2 or 3 may appeal by submitting a written statement to the dean if the complaint involves the departmental level or Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs if the complaint involves the college level.

#### Step 4.

- For undergraduate student complaints, within two weeks\* following receipt of the Step 3 decision a written petition will be submitted by the student to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee with a copy to the instructor of the class, departmental chairperson, and dean.
- For graduate student complaints, within two weeks\* following receipt of the Step 3 decision a written statement petition be submitted by the student to the Dean of Graduate Education or designee with a copy to the instructor of the class, departmental chairperson, and dean.
- For either situation the petition should contain the nature of the problem, a statement that an attempt was made to resolve this issue according to Steps 1 through 3, all relevant information which supports the appeal, and the remedy sought. The student should retain a copy for his/her records.

Use of a University Grade Appeals Panel. During consideration at Step 4, the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/designee may convene a University Grade Appeals Panel which shall serve in an advisory capacity. This panel shall consist of two faculty members and two students from colleges other than the college from which the grade appeal originates. The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the Faculty Association, shall name the faculty members. The Student Government shall name the student members.

For appeals involving graduate students, the Dean of Graduate Education may convene a University Grade Appeals Panel which shall serve in an advisory capacity. This panel shall consist of two faculty members and two students from colleges other than the college from which the grade appeal originates. The Dean of Graduate Education, in collaboration with the Faculty Association, shall name the faculty members. The Student Government shall name the graduate student members. University Grade Appeals Panels shall have the right to all relevant information and all relevant instructor records, and may also interview the student and the instructor. The panel shall then make a written recommendation to the Provost and Senior Vice President or Dean of Graduate Education within two weeks\* of completion of the review.

Both the student and the faculty member shall be permitted to make a rebuttal to the written record compiled by the committee. Intent to present a rebuttal should be made in writing within one week of notification\* to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/Dean of Graduate Education. The rebuttal should be presented within two weeks\* and should provide specific information which addresses the items in objection.

The decision of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/Dean of Graduate Education shall be communicated in writing to the student with copies to the instructor, departmental chairperson, and college dean. This decision is final.

Note: \*The time period consists of normal university operating days when classes are held. Under unusual circumstances, deadlines may be extended. If the University representative, at any step, fails to review and/or respond within the time limits provided, the student may proceed to the next step. If the student fails to respond within the time limits provided, the appeal shall be deemed to have been withdrawn.