

<b>Policy title</b> Grade Appeal	<b>Category</b> Academic Affairs Registrar
<b>Owner</b> Academic Affairs	<b>Approved by</b> Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and Graduate Curriculum and Standards Committee

## Policy statement

- A. At the beginning of each term, the instructor provides students his/her course syllabus that includes the grading policy for the class. A copy is also submitted to the Academic Affairs Office, which will be on file and available for review. Any published updates or modifications of the instructor's published grading policy must also be filed in the Academic Affairs Office, as relevant.
- B. At the end of the term, if a student has a question about the grade he or she received or believes an instructor has violated the grading policy of the class, the student should arrange to discuss the grade with the instructor.

*If the instructor is no longer employed at Nebraska Wesleyan University, and/or the student is unable to communicate with the instructor to discuss the grade, the student should contact the department chair/program director of the faculty member who assigned the grade. The department chair/program director will attempt to contact the instructor, and if unable to communicate with the instructor, the process shall proceed with the department chair/program director serving the place of the instructor.*

- C. The discussion between the instructor and student may lead to an agreement that the grade will remain as reported or that the instructor will submit a change of grade.

*Academic policy prohibits extra work to be done in a course after the term has ended. A change in a student's grade for a course is only possible if an error has been made by the instructor in the determination of the grade or in the reporting of the grade to the Registrar's Office.*

- D. If an agreement is not reached between the student and instructor, the next step is a discussion between the student and the department chair/program director of the faculty member who assigned the grade. The department chair/program director will attempt to mediate between the instructor and the student in order to resolve the dispute. If the department chair/program director is the instructor who assigned the questioned grade, the division chair will conduct the discussion with the student.

*If the department chair/program director is also the division chair, the student should ask the Dean of Undergraduate Programs or Dean of Graduate and Adult Programs to appoint another department chair/program director to conduct the discussion with the student.*

- E. If the discussions with the instructor and the department chair/program director do not resolve the issue, the student may file a **Formal Grade Appeal** with the appropriate Dean (Dean of Undergraduate Programs or Dean of Graduate Programs). The Formal Grade Appeal shall include: student's name, student ID number, term, course, instructor name, concise statement of what the student wants to achieve and all reasons and evidence that justify the request, and a summary of communication the student has had with the instructor and department chair/program director. The Formal Grade Appeal must be filed within two months from the end of the term.

*If the grade in question was originally an Incomplete, the grade appeal must be submitted within two months from the time the grade is turned in to the Registrar's Office or two months from the time the Registrar's Office has made permanent the letter grade assigned in the event the work is not completed.*

- F. Upon receipt of the Formal Grade Appeal, the Dean will notify the student of receipt of the appeal and communicate the upcoming process and timeline.

The Dean will then notify the instructor and department chair/program director of the Final Grade Appeal, providing to each a

copy of the appeal, and ask the instructor and department chair/program director to confirm prior attempts to resolve the grade dispute with the student. The instructor may submit a written response for the Grade Appeal Committee.

The Dean will notify the relevant division chair of the need to constitute a Divisional Grade Appeal Committee, of which the division chair will serve as chair.

*In cases where the division chair is a party to the dispute or is unavailable in the required timeframe, the Dean of the Colleges will assume the division chair duties for the grade appeal, including chairing the Grade Appeal Committee.*

- G. The Grade Appeal Committee chair will appoint four faculty members and three students to the Grade Appeal Committee. These members should have availability within the coming four weeks to attend the grade appeal hearing. Whenever possible, at least one student should be in the same student category as the student who submitted the appeal (undergraduate traditional, undergraduate non-traditional, graduate), and at least one faculty member should regularly teach at the academic level of the course in which the grade is being appealed (undergraduate/graduate).

Any committee member may disqualify herself or himself from a particular case and must notify the chair at least one week prior to the hearing.

- H. The chair of the Grade Appeal Committee shall normally convene the Grade Appeal Committee within four weeks after receipt of the Formal Grade Appeal. If the committee cannot meet within four weeks after receipt of the appeal, the chair will notify the student and instructor. A date to convene the Grade Appeal Committee will be established as soon as possible.

The chair will send written notification of the place, date, and time of the Grade Appeal Hearing to the student, the instructor, the department chair/program director, and committee members and will also provide copies of the Grade Appeal Hearing Rules and Procedures. The time and location of the hearing should take into consideration the student's and instructor's availability. The student and instructor may 'attend' electronically.

The chair shall circulate all written materials submitted by the student and instructor to the committee for their review prior to the hearing.

- I. Grade Appeal Hearing Rules and Procedures:

A quorum of the Grade Appeal Committee will be the majority of its members.

All members of the Grade Appeal Committee are voting members for the grade appeal hearing, except for the chair, who will vote only in the case of a tie. The committee's decision is by majority vote of the members in attendance.

The hearing will be in closed session. All present during the hearing will keep the proceedings confidential.

The student and the instructor are required to appear at the time of the hearing as scheduled and notified. If necessary, the instructor or student may "appear" by electronic means. If either one fails to appear before the committee without sufficient advance notice, the committee reserves the right to conduct the hearing on the basis of the Formal Grade Appeal.

An instructor unable or unwilling to attend the hearing may be represented by the Department chair/program director or a faculty or staff member designated by the Department chair/program director, and may present an instructor's written statement. A designated representative of the instructor assumes the role of the instructor during the hearing.

The instructor and student may bring counsel to the hearing; however, if they intend to do so, they must notify the chair of the committee, and identify the counsel, at least one week prior to the hearing. The counsel is not a participant at the hearing and may not address the committee.

The Grade Appeal Committee may invite individuals to the hearing to present testimony and answer questions.

The chair of the Grade Appeal Committee will insure that minutes are taken during the hearing and placed on file with the Academic Affairs Office.

At the hearing, the committee chair will identify and acknowledge the student and instructor and all other individuals present. After acknowledgement of all present, the chair will read the Formal Grade Appeal and then ask the instructor to respond to the appeal. The chair will facilitate a discussion giving the student, instructor, committee members, and any individuals invited by the committee the opportunity to ask questions and respond. Both the student and instructor may close with a summary statement.

After these summary statements, the chair of the Grade Appeal Committee shall excuse the student, instructor, and all others, so that the committee can discuss the case and vote on whether or not to approve the appeal.

If the committee finds evidence that the grade was unjust in view of the published and distributed grading standards, the committee will grant the appeal or determine a modification of the final grade.

The Grade Appeal Committee Chair will insure that a written statement of the committee's decision is prepared within 10 working days after the conclusion of the grade appeal hearing, and copies are sent to the student, the instructor who assigned the questioned grade, the Registrar, the Dean, the Provost, and Grade Appeal Committee members. If the written decision calls for a change of grade, the Registrar will make the appropriate change on the student's academic record.

The decision of the Grade Appeal Committee is the final step of the Grade Appeal Policy.

- J. If the student who appealed or the instructor who assigned the grade is not satisfied with the decision of the Grade Appeal Committee, he or she may appeal to the Provost. This written appeal must be filed with the Provost within two weeks after the parties have received the Grade Appeal Committee's written decision. The Provost, being presented with new information not presented to the grade appeal committee, or upon finding of a procedural error committed by the committee, may, after consultation with the committee, alter the committee's decision. The Provost will provide written notification of his or her decision to the student, instructor, members of the committee and the relevant parties within 10 business days of receiving the appeal.