

## **Grade Appeals Policy**

Scope and Effective date. This policy specifies the procedures for grade appeals for courses that were taught at Indiana University East. This includes any courses for which Indiana University East had the primary oversight. This policy takes effect for any grade appeal that is initiated 30 calendar days after this policy is passed.

Limitations of Time. Grade appeal must be initiated in writing to the instructor of record within 30 calendar days after the student's grade was posted. After 30 calendar days a student may only appeal a grade if severe circumstances have prohibited the student from filing on time. Examples of such circumstances include military deployment or catastrophic illness.

Initial Appeals Process. Students who are dissatisfied with the grade received in a course should contact the instructor and attempt to resolve the matter amicably and informally. Should the instructor not be available to the student, the School Dean will act as a liaison between the instructor and the student. If an amicable solution is reached, the instructor should file a "Change of Grade" form. The instructor should declare that to the best of his/her knowledge no other student has been treated inequitably as a result of the decision. The instructor's decision is subject to approval by the School Dean, and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The instructor may appeal a denial by either the School Dean or the Executive Vice Chancellor, as outlined in the "Grade Change Policy".

### Extended Appeals Process

Overview. If an amicable solution as described in "Initial Appeals Process" cannot be reached, the student may formally appeal the grade. A student may appeal each given grade only once. The appeal must first be directed to the instructor. (If the instructor is not available, the student may directly appeal to the School Dean.) If the student is not satisfied with the instructor's decision the student may appeal the instructor's decision to the Dean of the School in which the course was offered.

Both the instructor and the student may appeal the decision of the School Dean to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The Executive Vice Chancellor will forward the appeal to the Admissions and Academic Affairs Committee, whose decision will be final.

Procedure for Extended Grade Appeals. Students may obtain all relevant information regarding their grade, including definite information about what factors contributed to this grade, the respective weight of each of the factors, copies of the student's work, and the instructor's evaluations of this student's work. The student is not entitled to copies of others' work or the grade book for the entire course. Instructors are therefore encouraged to preserve all course material until the 30-day deadline after the end of the semester has passed. Once the student has filed an appeal the instructor of the course is obligated to preserve all evidence that may be of importance for the grade appeal.

**Format of Appeal.** Any grade appeal must be in writing. The letter of appeal must contain the following information:

1. The student's name, Student ID number, and correct mailing address; the course in question, the semester in which the course was taught, the name(s) of the instructor(s); the assigned grade; the date of the appeal.
2. Concise arguments about why the instructor would have been obligated to assign a better grade. It is the student's responsibility to list all such arguments in this letter of appeal. If

more than one argument is given, the student must structure the appeal so that this distinction is apparent. Once the appeal has been made, the student may not add or change arguments. The student is therefore encouraged to draft and review the appeal very carefully.

3. The argument(s) above must be supported by verifiable evidence. The student should list specific sources that can be used to verify each claim made in the arguments. This list may include references to literature, a copy of the course syllabus, or a list of witnesses that are willing to verify the account of an event. The student may also list evidence that the instructor of the course may have, for example, the student's final exam, or electronic documents over which the instructor has custody (e.g., postings to course discussion forums). It is the student's responsibility to explain the significance of each item listed. Students are discouraged from providing copies of lengthy documents. Instead, the appeal should summarize the lengthy documents. The student must furnish the documents if this is requested later.

Standard for Granting a Grade Appeal. The standard for granting a grade appeal is the following:

1. At least one of the arguments in the student's appeal must be valid in the sense that it is demonstrated (assuming the veracity of the circumstances cited) that the instructor would be obligated to assign a better grade.
2. The circumstances cited in the argument above can be independently verified.

#### Process for Grade Appeals.

(1) Should the instructor of the course agree that the student's appeal should be granted he/she may use a "Change of Grade" form to change the grade. The instructor should briefly explain why the student's appeal meets the standard above. The instructor's decision is subject to approval by the School Dean, and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The instructor may appeal a denial by either a School Dean or the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs to the Admissions and Academic Affairs Committee, whose decision will be final.

Should the instructor disagree with the student's argument, he/she should explain in writing why each of the student's arguments fails the standard needed for a grade change.

(2) Appeals to the School Dean must be made within 15 calendar days after the student has been notified of the instructor's decision. In appealing to the School Dean, the student may rebut the instructor's analysis. The student may list new documentation only in support of this rebuttal, but not in support of the original arguments. The School Dean will analyze the appeal, the instructor's response, and the student's rebuttal, and make a written decision based on the standards cited above. Should the School Dean approve the student's appeal, the instructor must be informed of this decision. If the instructor does not appeal (or declare an intent to appeal) within 15 calendar days after being notified, the School Dean will file a "Change of Grade" form along with a copy of the written decision to the Registrar's Office.

(3) Appeals to the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs must be made within 15 calendar days after the appealing party has received the School Dean's decision. If an appeal to the Executive Vice Chancellor is made, the appealing party must submit a rebuttal to the School Dean's decision. The Admissions and Academic Affairs Committee will consider appeals in closed session. In evaluating the veracity of the circumstances cited, the Committee may (at its discretion) call the student, the instructor and/or School Dean, or other parties. Persons called by the Committee may be accompanied by a person of their choice for emotional support or for

advice. Such persons, however, are not permitted to answer questions or otherwise participate in the discussion. The committee may also ask for some of the supporting evidence.

The Committee will make the final decision in an executive session. The decision must be based on the above standards. To change the decision of the School Dean, at least half of the number of Committee members (excluding members who recused themselves) must vote in favor. The Committee will notify the student of its decision. If the Committee upholds the student's grade appeal, a "Change of Grade" form with a copy of the Committee's decision will be submitted to the Registrar's office.

Degree seeking students can enroll in a subsequent required course while appealing a grade of a pre-requisite course.

If the pre-requisite course grade appeal is denied, the student will immediately withdraw from the course for which the appealed course was pre-requisite.

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