

Title: The Faculty and the Student
Subtitle: Grades and Grading Policy
Source: ADM

Section: X-8
Date: 12/04
Responsibility of: Admin & Faculty

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 within 90 calendar days after the student's grade was posted. To extend this time by one year, the student must notify the instructor within the 90 days time frame of an intent to appeal a grade. After 90 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 chair of the division 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 chair of the division, and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The instructor may appeal a denial by either the Division Chair or the 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 division chair.) If the student is not satisfied with the instructor's decision the student may appeal the instructor's decision to the chair of the division (dean of the school) in which the course was offered. Both the instructor and the student may appeal the decision of the division chair to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The 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 90-day deadline after the end of the semester has passed. Once the student has filed an appeal (or an intent to 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 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 provide a summary of lengthy documents. The student must ~~be~~ 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 chair of the division, and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The instructor may appeal a denial by either the Division Chair or the Vice Chancellor 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 division chair must be made within 30 calendar days after the student has been notified of the instructor's decision. In appealing to the division chair, 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 division chair 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 division chair 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 10 working days after being notified, the division chair will file a "Change of Grade" form along with a copy of the written decision to the Registrar's Office.

(3) Appeals to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs must be made within 30 calendar days after the appealing party has received the division chair's decision. If an appeal to the Vice Chancellor is made, the appealing party must submit a rebuttal to the division chair'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 division chair, 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 division chair, 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.

Passed by Faculty Senate: 12/7/04