

<b>The University of North Texas at Dallas Policy Manual</b>	Chapter 7.000
<b>7.007 Grade Appeal</b>	<b>Student Affairs, Education &amp; Funding</b>

**Policy Statement.** The University of North Texas at Dallas establishes this grade appeal process based on the principles that UNTD faculty are ultimately responsible for the assignment of grades and students should be free from prejudicial or arbitrary grading. The UNTD grade appeal policy is designed to resolve a disagreement between a student and faculty member in a collegial manner through informal discussion and through a more formal process only when necessary.

**Application of Policy.** This policy applies to all students.

**Definitions.**

1. **Arbitrary.** “Arbitrary” means a decision based on inappropriate criteria or not in conformity with established procedures or standards.
2. **Prejudice.** “Prejudice” means a decision motivated by ill will that is not indicative of the student's academic performance in regard to grades.
3. **Error.** “Error” means a decision that is based on a mistake in fact.

**Procedures and Responsibilities.**

1. **Faculty Responsible for Assignment of Grades.** The responsibility for the evaluation of students rests with the UNTD faculty. The university presumes that the judgment of the faculty member in a course is authoritative, and that all assigned grades are correct.
2. **Student Informal Consultation with Faculty Member.** A student who wishes to complain about a final course grade must first discuss the matter with the faculty member of record. The discussion with the faculty member must occur as soon as possible after assignment of the grade and under no circumstances will a faculty member entertain a student's complaint any later than one week after the start of the academic term following the assignment of the grade. The faculty member is expected to actively listen to the student complaint, provide an explanation for the awarded grade and be receptive to changing the grade if the student provides a convincing argument for changing the grade. The faculty member must inform a student of a decision within three (3) days of meeting with the student.
3. **Formal Petition for Grade Appeal.** If a student's concern remains unresolved after the informal consultation with the faculty member, the student may submit a written petition for appeal to the chair of the faculty member's department within three (3) days of learning the result of the informal conversation with the faculty member.

- a. A formal petition for a grade appeal may only be considered based on a concern that the final grade in a course was assigned arbitrarily or based on prejudice, or was assigned in error. Students bear the burden of proof to support their petition.
- b. A student's formal petition for grade appeal to the department chair must include:
  - i. The stated grounds for the final course grade appeal and specifically the basis for the claim that a final course grade was assigned arbitrarily, prejudicially or was in error.
  - ii. Any additional supporting information.
- c. Within five (5) business days of receiving a student petition, the department chair will meet with the student to review the petition.
- d. If the chair believes that the student's petition may have merit, within three (3) business days after meeting with the student, the chair will consult with the faculty member to consider an amicable solution.
- e. After consulting with the department chair the faculty member may choose to let the grade remain or change the course grade.
- f. The chair will communicate the decision of the faculty member to the student, or, if the chair determines that the student's petition is without merit, that decision will be communicated to the student. Notice must be provided to the student no later than two (2) business days after the most recent meeting between the chair and the faculty member resulting in a decision on the grade appeal.

4. **Appeal to Faculty Committee.**

- a. If a student's concern remains unresolved after review by the department chair, the student may submit a written request for appeal to the dean of the division that offers the course taught by the faculty member. The written request must be delivered no more than three (3) days after the decision from the department chair is communicated to the student and must include:
  - i. The stated grounds for the final course grade appeal and specifically the basis for the claim that a final course grade was assigned arbitrarily, prejudicially or was in error.
  - ii. Any additional supporting information.

- b. The dean may either:
  - i. review the appeal on their own; or,
  - ii. appoint a committee of three (3) faculty members from the faculty member's department or in a closely allied field to review the grade appeal ("faculty committee") and report their findings back to the dean. Faculty members appointed to the committee must not have any apparent conflict of interest with the faculty of record. If any apparent conflicts of interest exist, the faculty member will be replaced on the committee by another faculty member appointed by the dean.
- c. The dean and/or the faculty committee (as applicable) will examine the available written information (including that from the department chair) and may meet with the student and the instructor, if necessary. The dean or faculty committee may request meetings with any other individuals as deemed necessary for their thorough examination of the appeal.
- d. The dean and/or the faculty committee (as applicable) will be charged to determine whether the grade was assigned in a fair and appropriate manner, or whether there is evidence of unfair treatment such as arbitrariness, prejudice and/or error that might justify a change in a grade.
- e. If the dean alone or with feedback from the faculty committee concludes that the grade was assigned in a fair and appropriate manner, the dean will report the conclusions to the student and faculty member in writing and the matter will be closed.
- f. If the dean alone or with feedback from the faculty committee determines that compelling reasons exist for changing the grade, the dean will request that the instructor change the grade and provide the faculty member with a written explanation for the request. If the faculty member declines to change a grade as requested, the faculty member will provide a written explanation of the refusal to the dean.
- g. The dean, after considering the faculty member's explanation, and upon concluding that it would be unjust to allow the original grade to stand, may change the grade and notify the student and the faculty member of the action.
- h. Only a dean may change a grade over the objection of a faculty member.

5. **Miscellaneous.**

- a. Time frames established for the grade appeal process may be extended by the department chair involved in the process for good cause.
- b. Grades issued by a faculty member will remain in effect during the appeal procedure.

**References and Cross-references.** None.

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Revised: