



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

University Policy 3130

Grade Appeal

Effective Date

July 1987

Last Revision Date

January 03, 2024

Responsible Party

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, (208) 426-1202

Scope and Audience

This policy applies to all final course grades. Grades on individual assignments and exams may not be appealed until a final course grade is assigned, and only if the individual assignments and exams impacted the final course grade. A student may not concurrently be enrolled in the same course in which they are appealing a final grade.

For complaints of discrimination, harassment, or failure to provide reasonable accommodations that involve concerns with final course grades, other policies and processes apply. Students may report and follow the processes for complaints of discrimination or harassment under University Policy 1060 (Non-discrimination and Anti-harassment) and University Policy 1065 (Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking). For complaints involving reasonable accommodations, students may follow the grievance procedure outlined in University Policy 2080 (Equal Access for Students with Disabilities).

1. Policy Purpose

To establish the University's policy and responsibilities for student appeals (graduate and undergraduate) of final grades when a student believes a different grade has been earned.

2. Policy Statement

This policy is established to maintain high academic standards and to protect objectivity and fairness in assigning, administering, and evaluating student academic performance. Faculty members carry the responsibility to observe and judge all aspects of a student's academic performance. Based on their qualifications as experts in a particular area of study, faculty are empowered to assess students' academic performance using their professional judgment aligned with University policies.

3. Definitions

3.1 Grade Appeal

A formal complaint regarding a final course grade falling into one of the categories in Section 4.

4. Procedures for Grade Resolution

- a. All parties are encouraged to work towards a resolution that ensures high academic standards and performance, fairness, and academic freedom. Before beginning the Grade Appeal process, students are encouraged to consult the Grade Appeal Form, which should be used to document the process at each step outlined in Section 4.1 below.
- b. Grade Appeals will be considered only when it is clearly established by the student, in a concise written manner and with supporting evidence, that at least one of the following has occurred:
 - The course grade assigned was based on factors other than the student's academic performance in the course and/or completion of course requirements;
 - The course grade assigned was based on standards different from those that were applied to other students in the same course section;
 - The course grade assigned was based on a substantial, unreasonable, and unannounced departure from the instructor's previously communicated standards (e.g., evidence to include copy of course syllabus).
 - There was a clerical or administrative error in the calculation and/or assignment of the course grade.

4.1 Resolution Process - Step 1

- a. If a student disputes a final course grade, the student must notify the instructor of record within ten (10) University business days from the posting of the final course grade and attempt to resolve the issue. It is important that the student documents the date and manner of the attempt(s) to communicate with the instructor of record.
- b. The communication to the instructor must clearly identify which of the four categories in Section 4 serve as the basis for the Grade Appeal (it is possible that more than one may apply). The communication should also describe what remedy the student is seeking.
- c. The instructor of record will respond to the student within ten (10) University business days of receiving the Grade Appeal from the student.
 - If a student does not receive a response within ten (10) University business days, the student may proceed to Step 2 below. The responding party in Step 2 will confer with the instructor of record, as appropriate, as part of their process.

4.2 Resolution Process - Step 2

- a. If the student is unable to resolve their concern with the instructor of record, the student may forward the complaint to the department chair, head, or designated program director, hereafter noted as “department chair”, of the department or program in which the course is taught within ten (10) University business days after the attempts at resolution with the instructor of record have failed, or the instructor of record did not respond.
- b. The student’s Grade Appeal to the department chair must be in writing and include the efforts taken to resolve the matter with the instructor of record, including the date and manner of attempt to communicate with the instructor, the basis for the Grade Appeal, the remedy sought, and any additional relevant evidence or documentation.
- c. The department chair will respond to the student within ten (10) University business days of receiving the Grade Appeal from the student. If the student chooses to proceed to Step 3, they must have the department chair sign their Grade Appeal Form.
 - If a student does not receive a response within ten (10) University business days after contacting the department chair, the student may proceed to Step 3 below. The responding party in Step 3 will confer with the instructor of record and/or the department chair, as appropriate, as part of their process.

4.3 Resolution Process - Step 3

- a. If the student is unable to resolve their concern with the department chair, head, or designated program director, the student may forward the complaint to the designated associate dean of the college in which the course is taught within ten (10) University business days after the attempts at resolution with the department chair have failed. The associate dean may designate an alternative person to handle the process at the college level.
- b. The student's Grade Appeal to the associate dean must be in writing and include the efforts taken to resolve the matter with the department chair, including the date and manner of attempt to communicate with the department chair, the basis for the Grade Appeal, the remedy sought, and any additional relevant information or documentation.
- c. The associate dean will review the concern and seek a resolution within ten (10) University business days. If the student, instructor of record, and department chair have not had a conversation attempting to find a resolution, the associate dean will facilitate a discussion seeking an acceptable outcome. This discussion must occur in person unless circumstances prohibit a face-to-face interaction.
- d. Regardless of the outcome, the associate dean will provide a written response to the student documenting findings and the associate dean's decision. If the student chooses to proceed to the appeal process outlined in section 5, the associate dean must sign their Grade Appeal Form.

4.4 Exceptions

- a. If the instructor of record involved is also serving as department chair, the student will attempt resolution with that person. If unsuccessful, the student may appeal directly to the associate dean.
- b. If the instructor of record involved is also serving as associate dean, the student will attempt resolution with that person. If unsuccessful, the student may appeal directly to the dean.
- c. If the instructor of record involved is also serving as dean, the student will attempt resolution with that person. If unsuccessful, the student may appeal directly to the Provost or designee.

- d. If the instructor of record involved is also serving as the Provost, the student will attempt resolution with that person. If unsuccessful, the student may appeal directly to the President or designee.
- e. Grade Appeals involving graduate comprehensive exams and graduate oral exams must complete the Failure of the Comprehensive Examination or the Failure of the Final Oral Examination process outlined within the Boise State Graduate College Catalog before engaging in the process of appealing a grade through the process of this Grade Appeal policy.

5. Appeal Process

- a. If the concern is not resolved at the associate dean level, the student may submit their Grade Appeal to the Provost's Office within ten (10) University business days following the last attempt at resolution through the associate dean.
- b. The student's Grade Appeal to the Provost's Office must be in writing and include the same items provided in the Grade Appeal to the associate dean, the efforts undertaken to resolve the matter with the associate dean including the date and manner of attempt to communicate with the associate dean, the basis for the Grade Appeal, the remedy sought, and any additional relevant evidence or documentation. The documentation should also include the Grade Appeal Form, with appropriate signatures. Upon receiving notification from the student of a Grade Appeal, the Provost, or designee, will request written responses to the Grade Appeal from the instructor of record, department chair, and associate dean.
- c. The Provost, or designee, will convene the Grade Appeal Panel to review the Grade Appeal.
- d. The Provost, or designee, is responsible for ensuring that those designated to serve on the Grade Appeal Panel are not directly involved with the concern, nor have any other conflict of interest. The Grade Appeal Panel will consist of the following members:
 - (i.) A department chair or associate dean, selected by the Provost or designee, who will serve as the chair of the Grade Appeal Panel.
 - (ii.) The Faculty Senate Vice President or their faculty appointee

- (iii.) A student representative
- The ASBSU Vice President or their student appointee (for Grade Appeals by undergraduate students)
 - The ASBSU Graduate Representative (for Grade Appeals by graduate students)
- e. The Provost, or designee, will convene the Grade Appeal Panel within ten (10) University business days upon receiving the student's appeal. The Grade Appeal Panel will evaluate the Grade Appeal and deliver an official written recommendation to the Provost within ten (10) University business days from the date the panel was convened.
- f. The Provost may uphold or overturn the recommendation of the Grade Appeal Panel.
- g. The Provost, or designee, will inform the parties of the final decision in writing within ten (10) University business days of receipt of the recommendation. In certain exceptional situations or extraordinary circumstances, this policy may be subject to extension. Such extensions will be considered and implemented at the sole discretion of the Provost or designee. These extraordinary circumstances may include, but are not limited to natural disasters, global pandemics, state emergencies, or any other unforeseen events that significantly impact normal operations.
- h. The decision of the Provost is final and marks the end of the process for this policy concerning Grade Appeals.

5. Forms

Grade Appeal Form

<https://wpwww-prod.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/sites/294/2022/04/Grade-Appeal-Policy-3130-4-13-2022.pdf>

6. Related Information

University Policy 1060 (Non-discrimination and Anti-harassment)

University Policy 1065 (Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking)

University Policy 2080 (Access for Students with Disabilities)

Revision History

July 1995; April 1998; November 2001; April 2010; May 2011; April 07, 2022; January 03, 2024