

Brooklyn College Departmental Grade Appeals Procedures

In the academic community, grades are a measure of student achievement toward fulfillment of course objectives. The responsibility for assessing student achievement and assigning grades rests with the faculty, and, except for unusual circumstances, the course grade given is final.

The grade appeals system affords recourse to a student who has evidence or believes that evidence exists to show that an inappropriate grade has been assigned as a result of prejudice, caprice, or other improper conditions such as mechanical error, or assignment of a grade inconsistent with those assigned other students. The appeals process consists of the following steps:

Step One: Informal Appeal

Students who believe that they have received an inequitable or inappropriate grade are required to meet with the instructor of record to attempt to resolve the matter informally. The student must explain the grounds for the grade appeal to the instructor and the instructor must explain the reasons for assigning the grade. The purpose of the meeting is to reach a mutual understanding of the instructor's rationale for the grade and to resolve differences in an informal and cooperative manner.

If the matter is not resolved, the student has the right to appeal the grade to the Department Chair or designee.

Step Two: Appeal option

Formal Appeal to the Departmental Grade Appeals Committee:

When the department chair or designee receives a formal grade appeal following the student's informal appeal to the instructor, the chair or designee may attempt mediation and upon failure of mediation, the chair or designee shall convene a Grade Appeals Committee to investigate the appeal and to render a decision. To assure that all departmental committees conform to the principles of due process, the following procedures apply:

1. The student must submit a completed form to show that they have met with the instructor and that informal resolution failed.
2. The student must submit all relevant documentation to show that they have met the course requirements, including but not limited to:
 - A personal statement explaining how the facts justify a grade change;
 - course syllabus;
 - all documented grades (graded tests, papers, projects, etc.);
 - a list of all other grades that the student knows they received in the course and any other factors that may have influenced the grade.
3. The Grade Appeals Committee has the authority to screen out appeals that do not set forth the aforementioned ground for appeal. The convener will explain any such finding in writing to the student, the faculty member, and the department chair.

4. The department chair or the Grade Appeals Committee will notify the instructor that a formal grade appeal has been initiated and the instructor shall provide the grade distribution break down for the student and any other relevant information such as numerical cut-offs for letter grades.
5. During the regular semester, the Grade Appeals Committee will review the material presented and will advise the student and instructor of its decision, in writing, within 30 calendar days from the date the student submitted a complete formal grade appeal with ALL necessary documentation to the Grade Appeals Committee.

Time Limits for Appeal

Spring and Summer Session courses must be October 1; while Fall and Winter Intersession courses must be appealed by March 1. Appeals that are not initiated by these deadlines will not be considered.

Appeal of Departmental Grade Appeals Committee's Decision

- An undergraduate student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Departmental Grade Appeals Committee shall submit the appeal to the Faculty Council Committee on Course and Standing. Students must submit their written appeal to the Committee on Course and Standing through CAASS. The decision of the Committee on Course and Standing will be final.
- A graduate student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Departmental Grade Appeals Committee shall submit the appeal to the Faculty Council Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards. Students must submit their written appeal through CAASS. The decision of the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards shall be final.

Record Keeping and Retention

1. The Chairperson of the Department should maintain the student grade appeal files in a designated location. Each member of the committee may keep their own files while the matter is pending. After a decision has been issued, the files should be merged into one official file, with duplicate documents shredded.
2. The change of grade records shall be retained by the department for a minimum of six (6) years after the decision is rendered by the Department, or if appealed, after the decision is rendered by the Committee on Course and Standing or the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards. If the materials are submitted digitally, all the records should be printed out and maintained in hardcopy.

DEPARTMENT GRADE APPEAL PETITION

The grade appeals system affords recourse to a student who has evidence or believes that evidence exists to show that an inappropriate grade has been assigned as a result of prejudice, caprice, or other improper conditions such as mechanical error, or assignment of a grade inconsistent with those assigned other students.

Students who have sought to have a grade changed through informal appeal to the instructor without satisfactory resolution have the right to appeal the grade to the Department Chair or designee, who may attempt mediation and upon failure of mediation, will convene a Grade Appeals Committee. To file a formal appeal with the Department Grade Appeals Committee, students must complete and return this petition, together with the documentation required, to the department Chairperson. The petition and supporting documentation must be submitted by October 1 for courses taken during the Spring and Summer Semesters or by March 1 for courses taken during the Fall and Winter Intersession semesters.

A grade appeal process may result in the awarding of a *lower* grade than the student received originally.

The following documentation must be submitted together with this form:

_____ A personal statement explaining how the facts justify a grade change

_____ Course syllabus

_____ All documented grades (graded tests, papers, projects, etc.)

_____ A list of all other grades that the student knows they received in the course and any other factors that may have influenced the grade (e.g. relevant correspondence with instructor, medical documentation submitted to the instructor, etc.).

Was there an allegation of academic dishonesty in this course? Yes No

If yes, what penalty did the instructor impose? Failing grade for the course*

Failing grade on the assignment Other, explain: _____

Do you wish to appeal the academic penalty the instructor is imposing or the allegation of academic dishonesty?

Appeal the Academic Penalty Appeal the Allegation of Academic Dishonesty*

*Please note that if you are appealing the allegation of academic dishonesty, you *must* appeal that finding with the College-wide Academic Integrity Committee. For further information, please contact Office of the Provost – Graduate Studies at 718.951.5771 or in Room 3208 Boylan Hall. An appeal of the academic penalty is considered an admission of the allegation of academic dishonesty. Students should direct questions to the College’s Academic Integrity Officer. A student may not appeal both the allegation of academic dishonesty and the penalty the instructor is imposing.

