

# Grade Appeal Guidelines for a Course Taught in the School of Biological Sciences in the College of Arts and Sciences

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As soon as you identify a problem with the grade you were awarded **IMMEDIATELY** speak with the instructor of the course. This should be completed **within two weeks of the start of the semester** following the semester in the regular academic year. Most appeals are resolved at this point.

## ***Within the first four weeks of the semester:***

If the appeal is not resolved with the instructor, students should submit the grade appeal in writing following the criteria outline on the SBS Grade Appeal Form. The Grade Appeal and any supporting evidence should be submitted to the School of Biological Sciences Director's Office, 402 Manter Hall, Lincoln, NE 68588-0118.

## ***Within the first six weeks of the semester.***

If the appeal is not resolved with the Director, the student has the right to appeal the decision and submit the appeal to the School of Biological Sciences (SBS) Undergraduate Affairs and Grade Appeals Committee.

The SBS Undergraduate Affairs and Grade Appeals Committee will meet and discuss the appeal. The Committee will examine the evidence and consult with the student & instructor as needed.

The Committee cannot and will not attempt to resolve disputes about a student's knowledge of any subject matter such as re-grading. Rather, the committee's only responsibility is to ensure due process in awarding the course grade.

The Committee cannot adjudicate minor complaints. It cannot and will not take a role purely on the grounds that failure to change a grade will prevent graduation, cause the loss of financial assistance or otherwise impede the student's progress.

One of three courses of action will be taken by the Committee:

1. Reject the case, giving the student full and sufficient reason in writing for its refusal to hear the case.
2. Refer the case back to the instructor or student, while suggesting that a resolution should be reached between them and giving construction suggestions in writing toward that end.
3. Accept the case unconditionally. Then it will solicit additional information from any source relevant to the case. Supplement the case with interviews if necessary. Consider the full body of evidence. Render its decision within 30 days in writing to both parties, providing reasons for the decision.

Within 30 days from the submission of an appeal, the committee will make a recommendation. The Committee cannot change grades; rather the committee will make a recommendation regarding assignment of the final grade.

The student has the right to appeal the decision and submit the appeal immediately to the College of Arts & Sciences Grading Appeals Committee, 1223 Oldfather, Lincoln, NE 68588-0312.

# Grade Appeal Form

NU ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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Semester/Term \_\_\_\_\_

Course # \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

## **Scope of Grade Appeals Committee**

The Committee attempts to protect students against arbitrary, capricious or prejudiced evaluation by the instructor. It cannot undertake to resolve disputes about a student's knowledge of a particular subject matter, and its responsibility is to ensure due process in grading procedure. In accepting an appeal, ***the Committee must be satisfied that there is reason to suspect that the awarding of the grade may have involved a denial of due process, through arbitrary, capricious or prejudiced action on the part of the instructor or elsewhere in the department.***

The Committee will not adjudicate appeals involving violation of law, violation of University rules or regulations, disruptive or insubordinate behavior or cheating on examinations, although students may appeal the grade assigned in such cases. (For further information on student conduct violations, please contact Student Affairs or the Academic Senate Office.)

## **Content of Appeal**

A student wishing to appeal to the School of Biological Sciences Grade Appeals Committee needs to provide a written statement of the grounds of his or her appeal within the first six weeks of the following semester you received the grade. The Grade Appeals Committee does not meet during the summer.

The statement should provide the following information:

1. An account of the facts surrounding the awarding of the grade.
2. Evidence that the student has sought to resolve the case in consultation with the other party.
3. Evidence that the student, failing to resolve the case, has attempted to resolve it by recourse to the Director of the School of Biological Sciences.
4. Evidence that the student has carried through the appeal with the greatest expedition possible under the circumstances.

The appellant should be as specific as possible in the evidence introduced, giving dates, places and times supplying documentary evidence when this is available (e.g., e-mail communications). The statement is intended as a source of information for the Director, members of the Committee, and the other party concerned, and should not be a vehicle for unsubstantiated charges.