Grade Appeal Policy  
Bayh College of Education

In any case in which a student questions the assigned grade in a course, she or he is encouraged to talk with the instructor about the grade and attempt to resolve the questions (an informal appeals process). Students may choose to speak with the department chairperson as well. The purpose of such conversations is to clarify possible misunderstandings or to remedy failures of communication. *Such conversations constitute an informal appeal of the assigned grade as noted in Step 1 below*.

Students who wish to file a *formal* *appeal of an assigned grade* must follow the steps outlined below, including engaging first in the informal appeal process.

**Grounds for Appeal of an Assigned Grade**

An appeal may be filed by a student based on one or more of the following grounds only:

1. Miscalculation of a grade.
2. More exacting/demanding standards than were applied to other students in the same section of the same course, in the same semester, with the same instructor.
3. Assignment of a grade on some basis other than performance in the course.
4. Assignment of a grade that is a substantial departure from the instructor’s previously announced standards for that section of that course[[1]](#endnote-1)
5. Assignment of a grade that is a substantial departure from the written departmentally approved standards for a course[[2]](#endnote-2)

**Step One – The Informal Appeal PRocess**

Students must follow the informal appeal process (See attached Form 1) for questioning grades prior to engaging the formal appeal.

a. They are to, where possible, seek out the instructor for a face-to-face conversation. The instructor is encouraged to listen to the entirety of the student’s case and then to consider whether the current grade is appropriate.

b. Should no resolution occur, the student is required to contact the department chairperson (See attached Form 2). The chairperson is required to meet with the student one-on-one, to seek a conversation with the instructor one-on-one, and then highly encouraged to meet with the two of them together.

Students must initiate their informal appeal within **30 working days[[3]](#endnote-3)** of the posting of the grade. Should no resolution occur, the student may choose to engage the formal appeal process.

**Step Two – The Formal Appeal Process**

For grade appeals involving courses taught in the Bayh College of Education, students must complete the Bayh College of Education Grade Appeal Form (See attached Form 3) and submit it to the Bayh College of Education Dean’s Office. Grade appeals for courses taught in other colleges must follow that college’s process. When filing an appeal, a student must specify the basis (bases) of the appeal and do so within **30 working days of the conclusion of the informal appeal**. The student must indicate one of the following:

* 1. The instructor is unable or unwilling to communicate with the student on the appeal and the informal appeal could not proceed.
  2. No resolution resulted from the informal appeal process.

The student should attach to the appeal form as much of the relevant physical and electronic record as is possible to collect. If the basis of differential standards is asserted, the student should provide a list of the names of other students and specific assignments so that a review of the relevant materials and appropriate comparisons can be made.

**Step Three**

The Dean, or her or his designee, will verify the appropriateness of the appeal by making at most three separate attempts to contact the instructor within 30 days of receiving the appeal. The last attempt is done in writing by registered letter to the last known address. If after 10 working days of receiving the registered letter receipt, the instructor refuses to discuss the grade appeal, the dean shall convene the Bayh College of Education Grade Appeal Committee (hereafter referred to as the Grade Appeal Committee).

The Dean, or designee, will review the materials and discuss the matter with the student. The Dean may choose to discuss the matter with the instructor, the departmental chairperson, or both. If the Dean cannot create a resolution satisfactory to the instructor and student, the Dean shall convene the Grade Appeal Committee.

**Step Four**

The Grade Appeal Committee will consist of five faculty and two alternates appointed by the Bayh College of Education Congress. Only tenured faculty may serve on the committee. Members of the department may serve on the grade appeal of a departmental colleague. When the instructor in question is a member of the committee, she or he is recused and the alternate shall serve.

Without regard to the calendar, once a formal appeal has been submitted to the committee, that committee shall remain with the appeal until its conclusion. If two or more grade appeals are received regarding the same instructor and same course, the committee can determine to combine them into one process if the committee determines the students’ rights to appeal are not compromised.

The Grade Appeal Committee will review all materials from the previous steps of the grade appeal process. If necessary, the Grade Appeal Committee may request additional materials from the student and/or the instructor that are pertinent to the specific case.

Within 10 working days of the referral from the Dean, the Grade Appeal Committee, by majority vote, shall recommend to the Dean one of the following:

1. That the original grade stands.
2. That any higher grade be substituted for the original grade
3. That an incomplete grade be granted. (If this recommendation is made, the departmental chairperson shall be appointed the instructor of record for the course for this student. The conditions for completion, the default grade, and the expiration of the incomplete shall be specified by the Grade Appeal Committee)

The Dean, or designee, shall prepare a written summary of the recommendation and transmit the recommendation to the student and instructor, with copy to the Provost, department chairperson, and members of the Grade Appeals Committee. If a grade change is recommended, the Dean’s office will prepare a letter to the Registrar stating the new grade. The letter will carry the signature of the Dean and the members of the committee.

1. An instructor may alter original grading standards for an assignment as long as that change has been announced with reasonable notice in advance of the due date for the assignment. An instructor may reasonably add or subtract assignments or assessments from those that have been previously announced. Instructors are highly discouraged from altering the grading scale for the course if that grading scale has been included in the syllabus or previously announced. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Unless the appeal is on the basis of 5) above, cross-instructor or cross-section comparison appeals are not to be considered as relevant. Instructors are free to have different assignments, assessments, and standards for different sections and different instructors of the same course are free to have different assignments, assessments, and standards from one another. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. A “Working Day” for purposes of this policy includes all weekdays that the University is open. In cases where a Grade Appeal Committee or a department’s committee must meet during the summer, synchronous telephonic meetings shall be permissible. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)