

Basis for Appeal

A student may appeal a grade granted by any instructor of any course. The student may appeal the grade based on one or more of the following:

1. **Error.** An error in the calculation of the grade.
2. **Disparate Treatment.** The assignment of a grade to a particular student by application of more exacting or 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. **Inappropriate Basis.** The assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than performance in the course.
4. **Departure from Announced Standards.** The assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the instructor's previously announced standards for that section of that course. (Note: 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.)
5. **Departure from Departmental Standards.** The assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the written departmentally approved standards for a course.

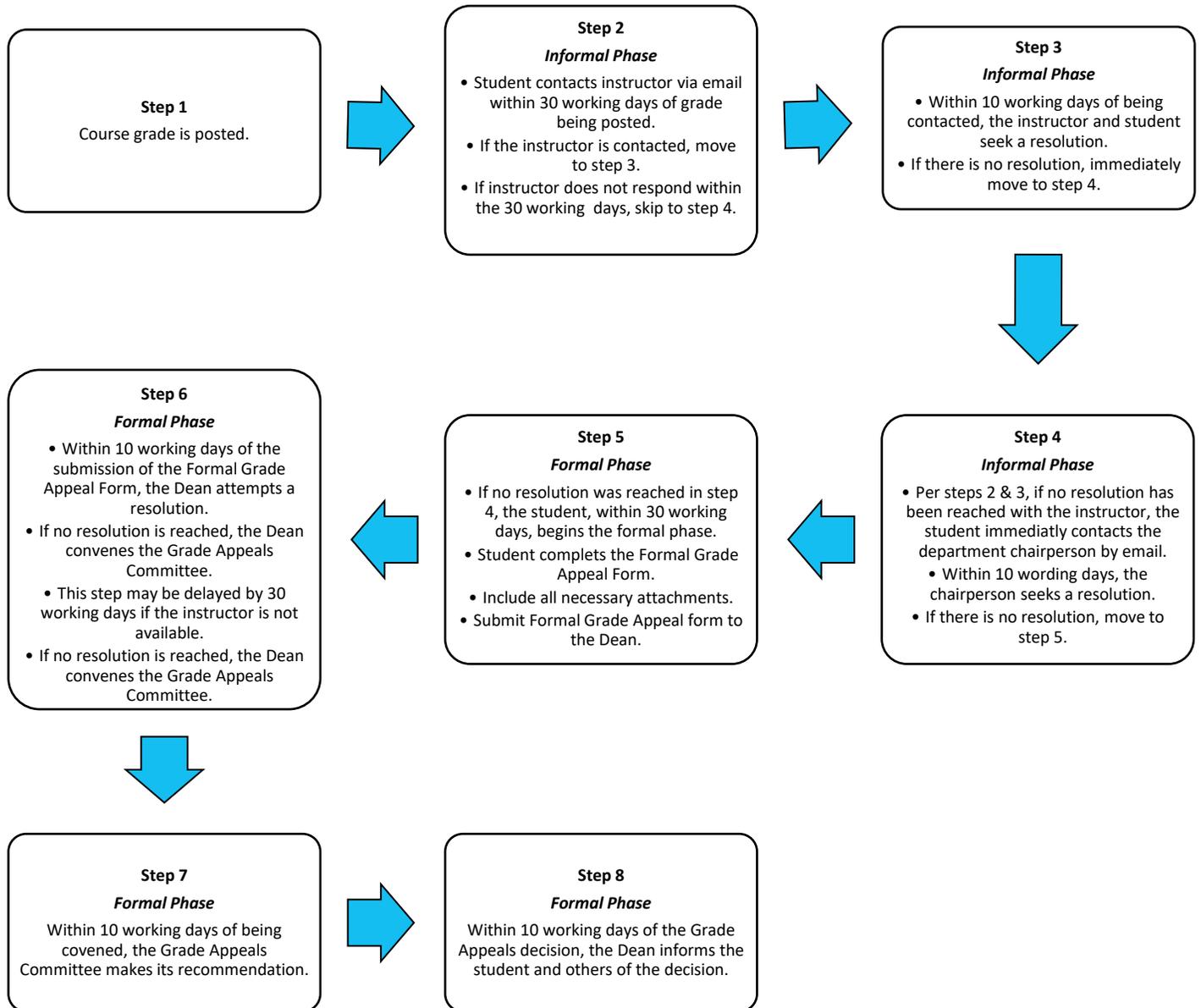
Any other grounds for appeal shall be considered irrelevant. Note: Unless the appeal is on the basis of *departure from departmental standards*, cross-instructor or cross-section comparison appeals are not to be considered as relevant. Instructors are free to have different assignments, assessments, and standards for different sections and different instructors of the same course are free to have different assignments, assessments, and standards from one another.

Follow the steps below to appeal your grade. These steps summarize the university policy:

	STEP	ACTION TO TAKE	TIME FRAME
	Step 1	Course grade is posted	
Informal Phase	Step 2	Student contacts instructor via email <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If instructor is contacted move to step 3 • If instructor does not respond within time frame move to step 3 	30 working days from grade posted
	Step 3	Instructor and student seek a resolution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If no resolution, immediately move to step 4 	10 working days from being contacted
	Step 4	Student contacts the department chairperson via email. Chairperson seeks a resolution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If chairperson cannot reach resolution in 10 working days, move to step 5 	10 working days from being contacted
Formal Phase	Step 5	Student completes the Formal Grade Appeal Form with all necessary attachments and submits everything to the Dean	30 working days
	Step 6	Dean seeks a resolution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Dean cannot reach resolution, Dean convenes Grade Appeals Committee (GAC) 	10 working days from submission
	Step 7	Grade Appeals Committee makes its recommendation	10 working days
	Step 8	Dean informs the student and others of the decision	10 working days of the GAC's decision

Flowchart of Process

Following is a flowchart that summarizes the grade appeal process.



Notes:

- The appeals process is terminated if by student inaction any of the above time limits are exceeded.
- Working days are all weekdays that the University is open.
- The student is responsible for reading and understanding the entire policy. Contact the department chairperson or Dean for assistance.

Informal Appeal

All students must follow the informal appeals process for questioning grades prior to engaging the formal appeal. Students must initiate their informal appeal within 30 working days of the posting of the grade. Should no resolution occur by the informal appeal, the student may choose to engage the formal appeal process.

Student to Meet with Instructor. In so doing, they are to, where possible, seek out the instructor for a face-to-face conversation. This contact is initiated be done by email to document the attempted contact.

Instructor to Give Due Consideration. The instructor is encouraged to listen to the entirety of the student's case and then to consider whether the current grade is appropriate.

Student to Contact Department Chairperson. Should no resolution occur, the student is required to contact the department chairperson. This is contact initiated by email to document the attempted contact. 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.

Filing a Formal Appeal

A formal appeal is made in writing to the dean of the college of the instructor, hereafter referred to as the "Dean." 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:

Instructor Unwilling to Communicate. The instructor is unable or unwilling to communicate with the student on the appeal and the informal appeal could not proceed, or

No Resolution. No resolution resulted from the informal appeal process.

Contents of Formal Appeal

The contents of the appeal should include as much of the relevant physical or electronic record as is possible for the student to collect. If the basis for the appeal is *disparate treatment*, the student shall 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. The student must obtain express written permission from each student whose work is to be included in a grade appeal. If the basis for the appeal is *inappropriate basis, departure from announced standards, or departure from departmental standards*, shall provide specific documentation so that a review of the relevant materials and appropriate comparisons can be made.

Verification of Appropriateness of Appeal

An instructor "cannot respond" if (s)he has died or has suffered a debilitating physical or mental condition. For appeals of grades submitted by instructors who have been terminated, resigned, or retired, it is the Dean's responsibility to manage the notification process. In doing so, the Dean shall make three separate attempts at contact within 30 days, with the last one in writing by registered letter to the last known address. If after ten working days of the Dean's receiving the registered letter receipt the instructor still refuses to discuss the grade appeal, the Dean shall convene the Grade Appeal Committee.

Instructor Has Denied the Appeal. If an instructor has denied the grade appeal after having met with the department chairperson, the Dean must review the materials and discuss the matter with the student. The Dean may choose to discuss the matter with the instructor, the chairperson, or both. If the Dean cannot create a resolution satisfactory to the instructor and student, the Dean shall convene the Grade Appeal Committee.

Composition and Purpose of the Grade Appeal Committee

Committee Formation. The ISU Grade Appeal Committee will be comprised such that:

- It has only tenured faculty; and
- It has no fewer than 5 members with one alternate.
- A quorum shall be 3 members.
- Decisions shall be by simple majority.

No Conflict for Departmental Colleagues. Members of a department may serve on the Grade Appeal Committee of a departmental colleague.

Recusal in Cases of Conflict. When the instructor in question is a member of the Grade Appeal Committee, he/she is recused, and the alternate shall serve in his/her place.

Consistency. Without regard to the calendar, once a formal appeal has been submitted to the Grade Appeal Committee, that committee shall remain with the appeal until its conclusion.

Notification for Similar Appeals. If two or more appeals are received by the Dean about the same instructor and the same course, the Dean shall inform the Grade Appeal Committee.

Combining Appeals. If the Grade Appeal Committee determines that the appeals are of identical character and that the students' rights to appeal would not be compromised by combining the appeals into one process, the Grade Appeal Committee may make this determination. The Grade Appeal Committee has the sole authority to make this determination.

Grade Appeal Committee Actions

The Grade Appeal Committee, by majority vote, shall within 10 working days recommend one of the following:

- That the original grade stands, or
- That any higher grade be substituted for the original grade, or
- That an incomplete grade be granted. (If this recommendation is made, the 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.)

Transmission

To the Student. When a recommendation is made by the Grade Appeal Committee, the Dean shall prepare a written summary of the recommendation and transmit the recommendation to the student and the instructor.

To the Provost, Chairperson, and Committee. A copy of the recommendation shall be transmitted to the Provost, the department chairperson, and the members of the Grade Appeal Committee.

To the Registrar. When the Grade Appeal Committee recommends a changed grade or an incomplete grade, the Dean shall prepare a letter to the Registrar stating the new grade. The letter shall carry the signatures of the Dean and the members of the Grade Appeal Committee. No such letter is required if the grade does not change.

Definition of Working Day

A "Working Day" for purposes of this policy includes all weekdays that the University is open. In cases where a Grade Appeal Committee's or a department's committee must meet during the summer, synchronous telephonic meetings shall be permissible.

Time Limits

If any working day limits are exceeded due to student inaction, including failing to supply required forms and attachments, the appeals process is terminated.

Interpretations

Interpretations of this policy approved by the Faculty Council shall be appended, with date and vote, to the end of this policy.

Clerical Errors and Formatting

The Faculty Council Secretary may correct minor typographical errors in this policy and may reformat this policy as long as doing so does not alter the content of the policy. The Faculty Council Secretary must notify the Faculty Council of such changes.

The Dean may format forms and tables used in the submission process as long as formatting and submission methods do not alter the content of the policy.

Formal Grade Appeal Form

Note that this policy sets forth the content of the form and not the layout and physical format. The form could be online and/or submitted electronically. The Dean has discretion concerning formatting and submission method; any formatting and submission methods must comply with this policy. Except for the instructor and department chairperson signatures, the student completes the form and supplies any attachments. Signatures may be electronic.

Instructions for Formal Grade Appeal Form

Before completing the form, make sure you have read the Grade Appeals Policy and have completed the informal steps of the process. Consult the flowchart as a guide and be aware of time limits. You must complete this form and must try to obtain the instructor and department chairperson signatures (or indicate that the instructor or department chairperson did not respond). You must supply all necessary attachments. Contact the department chairperson or Dean for assistance. Submit the Formal Grade Appeal Form and all attachments to the Dean.

Contents of the Formal Grade Appeal Form

- Student Name
- Student ID #
- Student mailing address, state, and zip code
- Student phone
- Student ISU e-mail
- Course number, title, and section
- Course semester
- Instructor name
- Grade Assigned
- Basis of appeal (select all that apply)
 - Error
 - Disparate treatment
 - Inappropriate basis
 - Departure from announced standards
 - Departure from departmental standards
- Date of first contact with instructor concerning the grade
- The contact method: email, phone, or in person
- The instructor's signature and date indicating that the instructor discussed the grade with you, but that no resolution was reached

or

- Indicate that the instructor did not respond to your request to discuss the grade. You must allow at least 10 working days from initial contact for the instructor to respond. You are encouraged to make multiple attempts to contact the instructor (office visit, email, or phone).
- Date of first contact with department chairperson concerning the grade
- The contact method: email, phone, or in person
- The department chairperson's signature and date indicating that the department chairperson discussed the grade with you, but that no resolution was reached.

or

- Indicate that the department chairperson did not respond to your request to discuss the grade. You must allow at least 10 working days from initial contact for the department chairperson to respond. You are encouraged to make multiple attempts to contact the department chairperson (office visit, email, or phone).
- Statement that the student has read and understands the Grade Appeals Policy
- Student signature
- Date of student signature

Attachments to Form

The following are attached by the student to the Formal Grade Appeal form:

- The course syllabus
- A statement that explains the basis (or bases) of appeal, as well as information the student feels would justify a change in the assigned grade
 - If the basis is disparate treatment, the student will include Tables 1
- Copies of any emails, letters, or memos from the instructor that indicates that he/she communicated with you concerning the grade, but that no resolution was reached. If you could not contact the instructor, attach copies of all letters or emails by which you attempted to contact the instructor concerning the grade.
- Copies of any emails, letters, or memos from the department chairperson that indicates that he/she communicated with you concerning the grade, but that no resolution was reached. If you could not contact the department chairperson, attach copies of all letters or emails by which you attempted to contact the department chairperson concerning the grade.
- You may include other material or documents that support the assertion of the basis for appeal and a change in the assigned grade.

Table 1: Classmate Permissions

Note that this policy sets forth the content of Table 1 and not the layout and physical format. The form could be online and/or submitted electronically. The Dean has discretion concerning formatting and submission method. The student completes the table and supplies any attachments. Signatures may be electronic.

Instructions for Table 1

Complete Table 1 only if the basis is disparate treatment. Table 1 lists the names of other classmates so that a review of the relevant materials and appropriate comparisons can be made. The classmates must be from the same section, of the same course, in the same semester, with the same instructor. At least three other classmates must be listed. Each name must be accompanied by contact information and a signature from the student named, indicating her/his willingness to have her/his graded assignment(s) included in the materials reviewed by the Dean and Grade Appeal Committee. You must include your and other students' specific graded assignments in which you are claiming differential grading standards were used. You must attach copies of the graded assignments to Table 1 when submitting the appeal. When the basis of appeal is disparate treatment, failure to supply Table 1 or the graded assignments with Formal Grade Appeal ends the appeals process.

Contents of Table 1

- Classmate name
- Classmate ID #
- Classmate ISU e-mail
- Classmate signature
- Specific graded assignments (yours and other students) in which the student is claiming differential grading standards were used