**Student Academic Related Appeals in the Bayh College of Education**

The *Indiana State University Handbook* states that each college must have written policies that ensure student, faculty, and staff rights of procedural due process on matters related to activities that fall within its jurisdiction. The policy information that follows focuses on student and faculty rights in this regard within the Bayh College of Education (BCOE).

Procedural due process is defined here to mean the opportunity to grieve a matter or appeal a decision to a BCOE Grievance and Appeals Committee as prescribed herein, then to a University-level hearing body. In the case of students, it focuses on the right to grieve a matter where the student feels that his or her rights have been impinged by a faculty member or supervisor as well as to appeal an academic matter related to (a) denial of admission to a program, (b) course grading, (c) academic dismissal from the University, and (d) fulfillment of requirements for graduation. In the case of faculty, it focuses on decisions that a faculty member feels violated his or her rights as defined in Section 246.14.1 of the *University Handbook*.

The below procedures do not apply to issues regarding Retention, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT). Issues involving RPT are provided in Section 305.8 of the *University Handbook.* The following procedures also do not apply to discrimination on the basis of sex, race, age, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or veteran status. Issues of discrimination are handled through the Indiana State University Office of Affirmative Action.

**Procedures for Appeals of Student Academic Matters**

The following procedures describe the process of pursuing academic appeals and grievances for students in the BCOE, including:

1. Appeals relating to dismissal from the University for academic reasons (undergraduate);
2. Appeals relating to the fulfillment of requirements for graduation (undergraduate);
3. Appeals that question the grading practices of a professor.

It should be understood that appeals concerning academic matters generate tension for the parties involved. Throughout the appeal process, efforts will be made to minimize the tension by endeavoring to conduct matters efficiently and in ways that will respect the concerns of those involved.

1. ***Appeals Relating to Academic Dismissal From the College or Program***

Undergraduate appeals that relate to academic dismissal are made directly to the Bayh College of Education Dean’s Office. The associate dean responsible for student affairs will hear individual petitions for reconsideration on the basis of extenuating circumstances. Students seeking to enroll in classes prior to the end of the mandatory period away from classes following an academic dismissal will be asked to complete the **Petition for Return From Dismissal** form, which is available from Education Student Services.

The associate dean’s decision may be appealed to the dean of the College, who has the final authority for admission of undergraduate students majoring in the Bayh College of Education.

In the enforcement of retention standards, it is accepted by the Office of the Dean as a working principle that the University standards for probation and retention are to be maintained in all but the most extraordinary cases.

1. ***Appeals Relating to the Fulfillment of Requirements for Graduation***

Undergraduate appeals which relate to the requirements for graduation in degree programs or requirements in the teacher education program in the Bayh College of Education are made to Education Student Services. Students seeking a waiver of a requirement for their degree or licensure program must complete a Petition form, which is available in Education Student Services. All curriculum petitions must be approved by the chairperson of the department in which the student is majoring and, at times, by a departmental committee. Curriculum petitions concerning general education requirements normally will be reviewed by the Coordinator of the General Education Program as well.

Final appeal in modifying degree requirements is made to the dean of the Bayh College of Education, who has final authority to certify completion of requirements for graduation.

Because curricular requirements for degree programs are set by the faculty members of the University as an area within their primary authority, waivers or substitutions will be approved only for the most extraordinary reasons.

1. ***Appeals That Question the Grading Practices of a Professor***

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*.

Students who wish to file a *formal* *appeal of an assigned grade* must follow the steps outlined below.

**Grounds for Formal Appeal of an Assigned Grade**

A formal 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
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 engage the informal appeal process for questioning grades prior to engaging the formal appeal. 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. Should no resolution occur, the student is required to contact the department chairperson. 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** 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 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 his or her designee, will verify the appropriateness of the appeal by making at most 3 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 Grievance Committee.

The dean, or his or her designee, will 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 Bayh College of Education Grievance Committee.

**Step Four**

Without regard to the calendar, once a formal appeal has been submitted to the Grievance Committee, that committee shall remain with the appeal until its conclusion. If 2 or more grade appeals are received regarding the same instructor and same course, the committee can determine to combine them into process if they committee determines the students’ right to appeal is not compromised.

Within 10 working days, the Bayh College of Education 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 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.)

The dean, or his or her 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 Bayh College of Education 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.

**GRADE APPEAL FORMS**

**The grade appeal process has two stages. The first stage is the informal appeal process in which the student negotiates with the instructor and the chairperson of the department in which the course was taught. If no resolution is reached in the informal appeal process, the student may engage the formal appeal process by appealing to the Associate Dean of the Bayh College of Education. Filing a formal appeal with the dean requires the completion of Forms 1, 2, and 3 below.**

**Students MUST complete and document the following steps of the informal grade appeal process before submitting a formal grade appeal to the dean:**

* Review the section titled “Basis for Appeal” in the Grade Appeal Policy to be sure you have legitimate grounds for appealing your grade. Any grounds for appeal other than those listed will be considered irrelevant.
* Contact the instructor within 30 working days of the posting of the grade and try to reach a resolution concerning the grade. This step must be documented by filling out Form 1 below.
* If no resolution was reached with the instructor, contact the chairperson of the department in which the course is taught and try to reach a resolution concerning the grade. This step must be documented by filling out Form 2 below.

If no resolution was reached with the chairperson, a formal grade appeal may be submitted to the dean using Form 3 below within 30 working days of the conclusion of negotiations with the chairperson. Forms 1 and 2, along with any relevant supporting material, must be included when Form 3 is submitted to the dean.

**Special note for students who are graduating at the end of the semester the grade was assigned:** You MUST contact the dean within one week of the posting of the grade to inform him/her that you plan to appeal the grade and are beginning the informal appeal process by contacting the instructor and chairperson. Appealing a grade that was assigned in the semester you plan to graduate will likely prevent your graduation that semester.

**Special** **note for students who are claiming the second basis for appeal listed in the Grade Appeal Policy:**

2) 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.

If the appeal proceeds to the dean and/or grade appeal committee, you will be required to 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. You MUST obtain express written permission from each student listed before including his or her name in the grade appeal

**Grade Appeal Form 1**—Documentation that the Instructor was Contacted.

**You are encouraged to, where possible; seek out the instructor for a face-to-face conversation.**

**1.** Date, AFTER the posting of the final grade, when you first contacted the instructor concerning the grade: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**2.** Include ONE of the following:

a) Instructor’s signature on the line below, indicating that he/she discussed the grade with you, but that no resolution was reached.

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

OR

b) Attach a copy of an email, letter, or memo from the instructor which indicates that he/she communicated with you concerning the grade, but that no resolution was reached.

OR

c) Check here: \_\_\_\_\_\_ to indicate that the instructor did not respond to your request to discuss the grade. You must allow at least 2 weeks from initial contact for the instructor to respond. You are encouraged to make multiple attempts to contact the instructor (office visit, email, and phone).

**3.** Attach copies of any and all letters or emails by which you attempted to contact the instructor or communicated with the instructor concerning the grade, as well as any and all letters of correspondence received from the instructor.

If you do not reach a resolution after communicating with the instructor, or if the instructor does not respond after 2 weeks to your attempts to contact him/her, you are required to contact the chairperson of the department in which the course is taught before proceeding to submit a formal grade appeal to the dean. This step must be documented by filling out Form 2 below.

**Grade Appeal Form 2**—Documentation that the Chairperson was Contacted.

**You are encouraged to, where possible, meet with the chairperson for a face-to-face conversation.**

**1.** Date which you first contacted the chairperson concerning the grade: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**2.** Include ONE of the following:

a) Chairperson’s signature on the line below, indicating that he/she discussed the grade with you, but that no resolution was reached.

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

OR

b) Attach a copy of an email, letter, or memo from the chairperson which indicates that he/she communicated with you concerning the grade, but that no resolution was reached.

OR

c) Check here: \_\_\_\_\_\_ to indicate that the chairperson did not respond to your request to discuss the grade. You must allow at least 2 weeks from initial contact for the chairperson to respond. You are encouraged to make multiple attempts to contact the chairperson (office visit, email, and phone).

**3.** Attach copies of any and all letters or emails by which you attempted to contact the chairperson or communicated with the chairperson concerning the grade.

**4.** Attach copies of any letters or emails in which the chairperson responded to you concerning the grade.

**5.** Date which negotiations with the chairperson concluded: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Note: if you intend to proceed to the next step of submitting a formal appeal to the dean, the formal appeal must be submitted within 30 working days of the conclusion of negotiations with the chairperson.)

If you do not reach a resolution after communicating with the chairperson, or if the chairperson does not respond after 2 weeks to your attempts to contact him/her, you may submit a formal grade appeal to the dean using Form 3 below within 30 working days of the conclusion of negotiations with the chairperson. Forms 1 and 2, along with all relevant attached materials, must be included when Form 3 is submitted to the dean.

**Grade Appeal Form 3**—Formal Grade Appeal to the Associate Dean of the College.

**This form may be submitted to the dean only after following the steps of the informal appeal process as outlined on Forms 1 and 2. When submitting Form 3 to the dean, Forms 1 and 2 and all relevant supporting materials must be included in the submission. All materials must be submitted to the dean within 30 working days of the conclusion of negotiations with the chairperson.**

A. Basis for appeal: please circle one (or more if appropriate)

1. An error in the calculation of the grade.

2. 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. The assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than performance in the course.

4. The assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the instructor’s previously announced standards for that section of that course.

5. The assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the written departmentally approved standards for a course.

B. Reason for initiating the formal appeal: please circle one

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.

C. Summary of Appeal. Attach an additional document to provide a detailed explanation of the basis (or bases) on which the grade is being appealed, as well as information you feel would justify a change in the assigned grade.

D. Check off the supporting materials you have included with this submission of Form 3

\_\_\_\_\_ Form 1 and all attachments specified on that form (REQUIRED)

\_\_\_\_\_ Form 2 and all attachments specified on that form. (REQUIRED)

\_\_\_\_\_ Any material or documents that support the assertion of the basis for appeal and a change

in the assigned grade. In most cases a copy of the course syllabus is appropriate.

(OPTIONAL)

\_\_\_\_\_ If the second basis in part A above (differential standards) is asserted, provide an

additional document containing 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. Each name MUST be accompanied by contact information, including the student’s identification number (991 no.) and ISU e-mail address and a signature\* from the student named, indicating his or her willingness to have his or her assignment(s) included in the record reviewed by the dean and Grade Appeal Committee. (Required ONLY when 2nd basis is asserted.)

\*In the case of distance education students, or students who are no longer on campus, an attached email statement sent from the student’s ISU email address giving permission to include his or her name will substitute for a signature.

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| E. Provide your personal information below  Student name: |
| Student ID (991 no.): |
| ISU email address: |
| Local mailing address: |
| Local telephone number: |
| Course: |
| Instructor of course: |
| Signature: |
| Date of submission of this formal appeal: |

F. Submit all materials to:

Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs

Bayh College of Education

Indiana State University

University Hall 109

Terre Haute, IN 47809

Phone: 812-237-2888

Fax: 812-237-4348

After receiving all appeal materials from a student, the associate dean will follow the procedure specified in the Grade Appeal Policy. This will involve discussing the matter with the student, and possibly with the instructor and/or chairperson. The dean may need to convene the Grade Appeal Committee which will then consider the appeal, in which case the appeal will remain with the Committee until its conclusion.

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)