

3341-3-3 Appeals policies- Graduate.

Applicability	All University Units – Graduate Students
Responsible Unit	Office of the Provost
Policy Administrator	Graduate College

(A) Policy Statement and Purpose

This policy describes the types of graduate student appeals, pre-appeal procedures, and formal appeal procedures. This includes information on grade appeals, non-grade academic appeals, and assistantship-related appeals.

(B) Policy**(1) Types of Appeals**

- (a) This policy describes the three types of appeals a graduate student may seek.
 - (i) Grade appeals, including a grade assigned for a graduate course;
 - (ii) Non-grade academic appeal, including academic standing, qualifying, comprehensive, or preliminary examination results, thesis or dissertation defense, or program dismissal.
 - (iii) Assistantship-related appeal, including training, work assignments, or financial disputes involving graduate assistant contracts or awards.
- (b) This policy includes only the above types of appeals. This policy does not apply to cases of academic honesty, cases

related to student conduct, or cases related to sexual, racial, ethnic and other forms of harassment and discrimination.

(2) Pre-Appeals Procedures

- (a) Prior to initiating a formal appeal, a student should have the opportunity to consult with the instructor (grade appeal), graduate program coordinator (academic appeal), or supervisor (assistantship-related appeal). The Graduate College encourages students to seek a solution to all issues at the most local level, ensuring the least disruption to the learning experience.
- (b) If the issue is unable to be resolved with this informal consultation, a formal appeal may be initiated by the student.

(3) Formal Appeal Procedures

(a) Initiating the Formal Appeal

- (i) If an issue is not able to be resolved with the above informal consultation, a formal appeal can be initiated with a letter to the instructor (grade appeal), graduate program coordinator (non-grade academic appeal), or supervisor/graduate program coordinator (assistantship-related appeal), with a copy sent to the Graduate College Dean's designate.
- (ii) It is the student's responsibility to initiate the appeal, and follow the procedure outlined in this policy. To be considered, the formal appeal procedure must be initiated within thirty-five calendar days following the decision under appeal.
- (iii) To ensure a comprehensive review, the student's formal appeal letter should include the following information:
 - (a) The type of appeal being filed;
 - (b) All relevant information related to the issue being appealed;

- (c) Any evidence to be considered during the appeal review; and
 - (d) The student's desired outcome.
 - (iv) The Graduate College Dean's designate should be included in all communications related to appeals.
 - (b) Formal Appeal Levels of Review
 - (i) A formal grade appeal includes a separate review at each of the following levels.
 - (a) Instructor;
 - (b) Graduate Program Coordinator;
 - (c) Department Chair / School Director; and
 - (d) Graduate College Appeal Committee/ Graduate College review.
 - (ii) A formal non-grade academic appeal includes a separate review at each of the following levels:
 - (a) Graduate Program Coordinator;
 - (b) Department Chair / School Director; and
 - (c) Graduate College Appeal Committee/ Graduate College review.
 - (iii) A formal assistantship-related appeal includes a separate review at each of the following levels.
 - (a) Supervisor (if applicable);
 - (b) Graduate Program Coordinator;

- (c) Department Chair / School Director; and
 - (d) Graduate College Appeal Committee/
Graduate College review.
 - (iv) In cases in which there are multiple academic or non-academic units involved in an appeal, the student should contact the Graduate College, which will determine the appropriate levels of review.
 - (v) A written response should be sent to the student following each level of review. This response should include a clear statement of support or lack of support for the student's requested outcome. The written response should be sent to the student within five working days of the completion of the review.
 - (vi) After each level of review, it is the student's responsibility to forward the appeal to the next level of review with all relevant documents. If the student does not forward their appeal within five working days, the appeal will be closed.
- (c) Graduate College Appeal Hearing
- (i) A Graduate College Appeal Committee will only be formed if the appeal is based on new evidence, misinterpretation of evidence, or significant procedural error. Cases not based on new evidence, misinterpretation of evidence, or significant procedural error will receive a final review and letter from the Graduate College Dean's designate without a committee hearing.
 - (ii) Appeal Committee Membership
 - (a) The Appeal Committee outlined below includes faculty, staff and graduate students who have had no conflicts of interest with

parties involved in the appeal. They must all be from outside the student's program.

(b) The committee is comprised of the following members:

(i) An Associate Dean from the student's college (serving as committee chair);

(ii) A graduate student in good academic standing (in the case of a doctoral student's appeal, a reasonable effort will be made to have a doctoral student serve on the committee);

(iii) A regular member of the Graduate Faculty; and

(iv) A representative of the Office of Student Employment Services (Assistantship-related appeal only).

(c) If it is necessary for the Graduate College to change the above committee membership, all parties will be notified as early as possible.

(iii) Hearing Procedures

(a) The hearing and investigation by the appointed Appeal Committee shall be conducted in closed session with only members of the committee and invited or approved persons present.

(b) Both the student and the instructor / graduate program coordinator / supervisor may be accompanied by someone of their choosing during the hearing. These 'advisors' are not permitted to participate directly in the

hearing or speak for the student or instructor / graduate program coordinator / supervisor. If an advisor is invited, the Graduate College must be notified and contact information must be shared prior to the hearing.

- (c) An audio recording will be made of the appeal hearing and a summary will be prepared by personnel from the Graduate College. Copies of the summary will be distributed to the appropriate parties concerned and be kept on file in the Office of the Graduate College as appropriate.
- (d) Both the student and the instructor / graduate program coordinator / supervisor have the right to present and question information at the hearing. The committee's final recommendation is to be based on only information provided prior to the hearing and information presented at the hearing.
- (e) If the student or the instructor / graduate program coordinator / supervisor fail to attend the hearing, the hearing will be held in their absence. A hearing will only be rescheduled based on compelling extenuating circumstances.
- (f) Committee deliberations are not recorded.
- (g) The Appeal Committee will reach a consensus and the chair of the committee should provide a written recommendation to the Graduate College Dean's designate within five working days of the hearing.

(d) Due Process Rights

- (i) The student and the instructor / graduate program coordinator / supervisor will both have the right to:

- (a) Receive official notice of the time and place of the hearing;
 - (b) Supply evidence to be reviewed at the hearing;
 - (c) Review evidence prior to the hearing;
 - (d) Question evidence at the hearing;
 - (e) Be accompanied an advisor; and
 - (f) Receive notice of the final recommendation made by the committee.
- (e) Graduate College Final Letter
- (i) The Graduate College Dean's designate will review the recommendation from the Appeal Committee chair and make a final recommendation in the case. The Graduate College will convey the final recommendation in writing to the appropriate parties within five working days. In addition to the final Graduate College recommendation, the appeal hearing summary and the Appeal Committee recommendation will also be shared with all appropriate parties.

(4) Appeal Review Outcome

An appeal cannot be pursued past the Graduate College level. For grade appeals and non-grade academic appeals, recommendations following an appeal review are advisory, and the original individual/committee/body retains the right of final decision. For assistantship-related appeals, the Graduate College retains the right of final decision.

(5) Timeline

Although the above timelines are created to ensure prompt resolution of appeals, there may be situations where exceptions are warranted. All timeline exceptions require approval by the Graduate College. Upon approval, all appropriate parties will be informed.

Registered Date: March 3, 2015

Amended Dates: December 3, 2015, November 2, 2016, October 25, 2018