

Grade Appeal Policy
University of Mississippi School of Law
Approved and Effective September 14, 2020

A final grade is the instructor's evaluation of the student's work and achievement throughout a semester's participation in a course. Factors upon which the final grade may be based include: attendance; recitation and class participation; written, oral, and online quizzes; reports; papers; final examinations; and other class activities. There is a presumption that the instructor who has conducted the course is professionally competent to judge the student's work, and in the absence of convincing evidence to the contrary, has evaluated it fairly. In all cases, the complaining student shall have the burden of proof with regard to all allegations in his/her complaint and in his/her request for review or hearing. Students may only appeal their final grade in a course.

Basis for Appeal/Standard of Review

The only appropriate basis for appealing a grade is if the student believes the grade was "based on prejudice, discrimination, arbitrary or capricious action, or other reasons not related to academic performance." Appeals will only be granted on this basis.

Grade Appeal Procedure

Step 1. Review by Instructor

No later than 30 calendar days after the first day of the next full semester (excluding summer terms), a student wishing to appeal a grade must submit a written memorandum to the instructor setting forth the basis for appealing the grade.

Before this submission, students are strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss the matter. It is a part of the professional obligation of members of the faculty to meet with students who wish to avail themselves of this academic grade appeal procedure for the purpose of reviewing the grade assigned and attempting to resolve the matter.¹

No later than 30 calendar days after receiving the student's written memorandum, the instructor must make a decision in writing whether to grant or deny the student's requested grade change.

Step 2. Appeal to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

¹ The AALS Statement of Good Practices in the AALS Handbook provides that a student who requests an explanation of the grade assigned should be given such an explanation. See <https://www.aals.org/about/handbook/good-practices/ethics/>

If a student wishes to appeal a grade further, the student must submit a written appeal to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs no later than 30 calendar days after receiving a decision from the Instructor. The Associate Dean shall attempt to resolve the appeal in consultation with the faculty member and the student. No later than 30 calendar days after receiving the student's appeal, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs must make a decision in writing whether to grant or deny the student's appeal.

Step 3. Appeal to Academic Appeals Committee

If a student wishes to appeal a grade further, no later than 15 calendar days after receiving the Associate Dean's decision in Step 2, the student must submit a written request, including the student's name, ID, the course/section, and instructor, to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (Provost) via the myOleMiss Grade Appeal, asking for a review by the Academic Appeals Committee. This request should state the factual basis for the appeal of the Associate Dean's decision. This request for appeal is the primary document setting forth the contention of the student that the decision made by the Associate Dean should be reversed. Therefore, this request for appeal should be carefully drawn and supported by attachments of all relevant documentary material. In addition, an email will be sent to each party (associate dean, instructor and student), explaining that they are able to enter or upload any pertinent correspondence and materials.

The Academic Appeals Committee will then review the information provided to reach a recommendation. The committee's procedures are described in the University of Mississippi Academic Grade Appeal Policy and Procedure. (See: <https://policies.olemiss.edu/ShowDetails.jsp?istatPara=1&policyObjidPara=10818079>)

Step 4. Review by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (Provost) will review the recommendation by the Academic Appeals Committee and shall render a final decision on the appeal. The Vice Chancellor's decision cannot be further appealed.

Retention of Records

As part of the University's grade appeal procedure, faculty members are required to keep grade-related materials until the completion of the next regular (spring or fall) semester. Material that applies to an ongoing grade appeal process must be retained for six months following completion of the grade appeal process.