

College of Science and Technology Grade Appeal Policy, Procedure, and Guidelines

The following Grade Appeal Policy, Procedures and Guidelines document was approved for use effective May 15, 2017. Revisions were approved for use effective May 15, 2022.

1. Grade Appeal Committee Purpose and Formation

- 1.1. The Grade Appeal Committee (Committee) for the College of Science and Technology (the College) will review cases involving challenges to the final posted course grade received by a student in a course taught in the College and will recommend action on such challenges to the Dean of the College.
- 1.2. The Committee shall consist of full-time faculty members from the College (at least one faculty member per department), appointed by the Dean of the College each academic year. The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and Academic Affairs will serve as an ex-officio member. If the Associate Dean is the instructor involved in the grade appeal, then the Assistant Dean for Student Success will serve as the ex-officio member, should the grade appeal reach the Grade Appeal Committee level. In such a case, the student should submit the appeal to the Assistant Dean for Student Success.
- 1.3. An additional faculty member will be selected to serve as an alternate as needed, so that at least three Committee members may participate in the appeal procedure for any given appeal.
- 1.4. The Dean of the College will appoint the Committee Chairperson. The Committee Chairperson, with the help of a faculty Committee member, is responsible for calling meetings, communicating with the individuals involved with the appeal, and writing the final report explaining the Committee's decision.
- 1.5. In cases when there are conflicts of interest, the Associate Dean will appoint an Acting Chairperson.

2. Grade Appeals Process

2.1. Appeal to the faculty member for review of the assigned grade

- 2.1.1. Within 15 business days of the beginning of the next term, excluding summer school, the student must communicate, in writing, with the faculty member of the class, indicating that the assigned grade was not the correct grade. The student must present documentation to support the student's claim.
- 2.1.2. Within 10 business days of receiving the student's written appeal, the faculty member will provide a written response to the student concerning the faculty member's findings. If a change is made at this point, the matter is concluded.

2.2. Appeal to the Department Chairperson for review of the assigned grade

- 2.2.1. If the issue was not resolved for the student, he/she may appeal to the department chair.
- 2.2.2. If the faculty member is no longer with the university, the student should confer with the department chair, who will then make every effort to receive written input concerning the matter from the former faculty member. If it is not possible to receive information from the former faculty member regarding the grade, then the student

may appeal the grade as described below and the department chair will represent the interests of the faculty member who issued the grade appeal to the Department Chair.

- 2.2.3. If the question of the assigned grade cannot be resolved between the student and the faculty member, the student may appeal in writing to the chair of the department in which the course was taught. This written appeal must be submitted to the Department Chair within 10 business days of the student receiving the written response from the instructor. The student should include in the written appeal all known information relating to the grade. After receiving such an appeal in writing from the student, within 10 business days, the chair shall call for a meeting with the student and the faculty member and review the substance of the student's appeal and seek to determine its validity. Having consulted with the student and the instructor, the department chair will notify both the student and the instructor of the scheduled date and time of the meeting. The meeting must be scheduled for a day no longer than 15 business days out from the date of that consultation, unless the chair agrees that there are extraordinary circumstances justifying an extended date. The student and the instructor are required to confirm their attendance within 3 business days. If there is a time conflict, the meeting will be rescheduled. Both the student and the instructor are required to attend the meeting. If an adjunct instructor is unable to schedule during regular business hours because of another occupation, the chair will represent the adjunct instructor. If the student fails to confirm his/her attendance within the 3 business days, or if the student does not attend the scheduled meeting after having confirmed, the meeting will be canceled. The student will be given a second (and final) opportunity for an appeal meeting. If the student fails to confirm within 3 business days or fails to attend the meeting the second time, the case will be dismissed, and a letter of dismissal will be sent via email to the student by the chair and copied to the Associate Dean and the instructor. If the student communicates a refusal to attend the meeting because the instructor is attending, or leaves the meeting, then the appeal will be dismissed for the student's breach of policy.
- 2.2.4. If the chair determines that the assigned grade, in his/her judgment, is inappropriate, the chair may recommend to the faculty member that the grade be changed. The faculty member may or may not concur with the chair's recommendation. The faculty member must respond within 5 business days to the chair regarding accepting or rejecting the chair's recommendation.
- 2.2.5. The chair will notify the student in writing, within 10 business days following the meeting with the student and faculty member, whether or not the assigned grade will be changed. If the grade will not be changed, the chair will also advise the student of the right to appeal to the Dean of the College through the Grade Appeal Committee.

2.3 Appeal to the Dean through the Grade Appeal Committee.

- 2.3.1 If the grade is not changed to the satisfaction of the student at the department level, the student may appeal the assigned grade. The student must complete the formal Grade Appeal Form, found on the College's website. The completed form must be sent to the College's Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and Academic Affairs. By submitting the form, the student agrees to check the email address provided by the student on the form for all communications. If the Associate Dean is the instructor involved in the grade appeal, then the submission must be submitted to the Assistant Dean for Student Success. With the written appeal, the student should provide all information possible relating to the appeal. A copy of this form will be forwarded to the chairperson of the Grade Appeal Committee, the chairperson of the department, and the instructor. The chairperson of the Committee will forward this information to all members of the Committee.
- 2.3.2 The written appeal must be made within 10 business days of receipt by the student of the notice from the department chair. *Detailed Guidelines for Students to help determine whether or not to appeal a grade can be found on the final page of this document. See section 5.*
- 2.3.3 The Grade Appeal Committee is the final level of appeal within the College.
- 2.3.4 Within 30 business days of receiving the student's appeal, the Committee shall conduct a hearing and shall review all pertinent information presented by the student and the faculty member.

3. Grade Appeal Committee Meeting Guidelines

- 3.1 The Committee will determine its meeting time for each appeal case. The quorum for a hearing on a grade appeal is three members of the Committee, including the Chairperson of the Committee. The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and Academic Affairs will be present in the meeting as an ex-officio member. The Committee will not meet outside of the 9-month academic year.
- 3.2 After reviewing the student's written appeal, the Committee Chairperson will contact the student and the instructor (via e-mail or phone call) within a period of 10 business days and schedule the date for the hearing. The chairperson of the department will be copied on or notified of this communication.
- 3.3 The Committee Chairperson will notify both the student and the instructor of the scheduled date and time of the hearing. The student and the instructor are required to confirm their attendance within 3 business days. If there is a time conflict, the hearing will be rescheduled. Both the student and the instructor are required to attend the hearing. If an adjunct instructor is unable to schedule during regular business hours because of another occupation, the department chair will represent the adjunct instructor.
- 3.4 If the student fails to confirm his/her attendance within the 3 days, or if the student does not attend the scheduled meeting after having confirmed, the meeting will be canceled. The student will be given a second (and final) opportunity for an appeal hearing. If the student fails to confirm attendance within 3 business days or attend the hearing, the second time, the case will be dismissed, and a letter of dismissal will be sent to the student and copied to the Dean, the chairperson of the department, and the instructor. If the student communicates a refusal to attend the hearing because of concerns about

committee membership or communicates a refusal to attend because the instructor is attending, or leaves the hearing, then the appeal will be dismissed for the student's breach of policy.

- 3.5 Appearance before the Grade Appeal Committee is part of the duties and responsibilities of instructors. If an instructor is no longer employed at North Carolina A&T State University, the chairperson of the department will attend the hearing in place of the former instructor.
- 3.6 The student and the instructor should bring pertinent supporting documents (syllabus, assignments, grade book printouts, email correspondence, etc.) to the hearing. Committee members may wish to photocopy these materials for review during their deliberations.

4. Grade Appeals Hearing Procedure

- 4.1. **Opening Statements.** The involved parties shall be admitted to the hearing. Neither the student nor the instructor may bring a support person to the hearing. The goal is to resolve the issue upon hearing evidence provided by the two parties involved. The hearing will open with a statement by the chairperson that describes the Committee's understanding of the relevant issues and, where appropriate, those issues considered irrelevant. The student and the faculty member will be given ten (10) minutes each in which to state their respective cases.
- 4.2. **Open Questioning.** During the period the student, faculty member, and/or Committee members may ask questions of either involved party. However, all questions of the involved parties to each other must be directed to the Committee.
- 4.3. **Summary Statement.** After questions have ceased, or when the chairperson is satisfied that additional questions will not provide further clarification of issues, the student and faculty member will be given an opportunity to make summary statements. Such statements should be brief and in no case exceed five minutes.
- 4.4. **Closed Hearing.** Following summary statements, interested parties shall be dismissed and Committee members shall deliberate the outcome in a closed session.
- 4.5. After deliberations, a vote will be taken and recorded.
- 4.6. **Reporting.** The chairperson or a designated member of the Committee shall prepare a written statement of the Committee's recommendation (including the vote of the Committee), the basis for the recommendation, and the reasoning of the Committee in reaching the recommendation. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Dean's office for review. A copy of this recommendation **will neither** be shared with the student nor faculty member in question. A copy of this recommendation shall be kept on file by the committee chairperson.
- 4.7. Once the Dean's Office has reached a final decision, the Associate Dean will forward the written decision in the form of an electronic letter to the student (at the email address provided on the Grade Appeal form) and the instructor (at the email address) within fourteen (14) business days. Copies of this letter will be sent to the department chairperson and to the Dean of the College.

5. **Guidelines for Students: How to Determine If Your Appeal Is Appropriate***

5.1. The Grade Appeal Committee will consider the appeal of a final grade only in exceptional cases and only when the student presents evidence that strongly supports his/her claim.

5.2. Examples that may merit a grade appeal include but are not limited to:

- The instructor miscalculated the final grade.
- The instructor did not comply with the grading policies outlined on the syllabus without reasonable cause and without informing the class.
- There was no evidence of clear academic criteria how the student's work was evaluated.

5.3. Examples that will not merit a grade appeal include, but are not limited to:

- The instructor's grading policies differ from the grading policies of other instructors in the department, College, or University.
- The instructor's attendance policy differs from the attendance policy of other instructors in the department, College, or University.
- The instructor's Late Work policy differs from the Late Work policy of other instructors in the department, College, or University.
- The grade distribution in the class in question is lower than it is in other sections of the same course.
- The student's grade in the course is significantly lower than grades the student earned in similar courses.
- The grade in question will trigger Academic Probation, Suspension or Dismissal or the loss of Financial Aid.
- The grade in question will prevent graduation.

5.4. Note that simple disagreement about what constitutes fair grading is not grounds for an appeal. The North Carolina A&T State University *Student Handbook* and *Faculty Handbook* and the instructor's syllabus define standards for grading in a course. When a student elects to remain in a class after reading these materials, the student is understood to have accepted the grading terms of the course.

* The "Guidelines for Students" above were adapted from the "Grade Appeal Policy," <http://www.uncg.edu/aas/resources/documents/GradeAppealPolicy.pdf>.

Grade Appeal Form

College of Science and Technology
2004 Smith Hall
1601 E. Market Street
Greensboro, NC 27411

Please complete each item and send this form along with supportive documents to the **CoST, Office of the Dean, Attn: Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and Academic Affairs**. This form should be submitted only after the student has discussed the concern first with the instructor and then with the Department Chairperson of the instructor.

Student Requesting Grade Appeal

Name:

Banner ID:

Major:

E-mail:

Phone:

By submitting this form, you agree to check the email address provided for all communications.

Course Information

Course Name:

Course Number: (e.g., PSYC462.201710)

Course CRN: (e.g., 17473)

Semester/Year Enrolled: (e.g., Spring 2017)

Instructor's Information

Instructor's Name:

Department:

E-mail:

Phone:

Campus Address:

(Attach Page 2)

Grade Appeal Form
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Please type below the reason(s) for requesting an appeal of a final posted assigned grade. Attach additional pages if needed. Read carefully the CoST Grade Appeal Policy before submitting this form. The policy can be found on the CoST web page.