

Minnesota State University, Mankato University Policy	
<b>Policy Name:</b> Grade Appeals	<b>Effective Date of Last Review:</b> August 1, 2025
<b>Custodian of Policy:</b> Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs	<b>Date of Last Review:</b> September 2024
<b>Date of Adoption:</b> September 1992	<b>Date of Next Review:</b> September 2030

## Policy

All students have the right to expect thoughtful and clearly defined approaches to course grading, but it must be recognized that standards and individual approaches may vary by discipline or instructor, and many forms of evaluation of student learning are valid. Course grading methods should be thoroughly explained to students at the beginning of the semester and must appear on the course syllabus.

Students have the right to ask an instructor for an explanation of any grade received. The student bears the burden of proving there are sufficient grounds for changing a final course grade, so they should include records of their coursework from the class and communication with the instructor about their grade as part of the appeal. Students should retain copies of all materials associated with this process for their records.

A student may appeal the final grade in a course if they believe that one or more of the following conditions exist:

- **Mathematical or Clerical Error:** The final grade was incorrectly calculated or recorded, including errors in adding up scores or transcribing grades.
- **Arbitrary Grading:** The grade was based on criteria or standards that were not available or understandable to students or that were inconsistently applied.
- **Failure to Follow Published Grading Criteria:** The grade was assigned without adherence to the syllabus or other published guidelines and rubrics for grading.

Disagreement with the academic standards, workload, or the grading scale does not constitute grounds for a grade appeal.

If a student believes that discrimination due to the student’s race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected status as defined in Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.1, was a factor in the determination of the course grade awarded, the student should

file a complaint with the Office of Equal Opportunity & Title IX (014 Morris Hall; (507) 389-2986; eotitleix@mnsu.edu).

A grade appeal received by an instructor, department chair, college dean or designee, or Academic Affairs, which indicates discrimination due to a protected class was a factor in the determination of the course grade awarded, must be referred to the Office of Equal Opportunity & Title IX for review.

The first step in any grade appeal is an attempt at informal resolution with the instructor of the course. Students may consult with the Department Chair prior to speaking with the instructor. If the student is unable to resolve the grade complaint informally, they may begin the procedure of formally appealing the final grade.

Students needing assistance at any step in appealing a grade may contact the Academic Affairs Coordinator of Student Government (280 Centennial Student Union; phone 389-2611).

The University will not tolerate any form of retaliation against any students for making a good faith report and participation in the Grade Appeals procedures.

### Alternate Resolutions

- A student may appeal a grade reduced for academic dishonesty through the Academic Honesty Appeal Policy.
- Students appealing last date of attendance (LDA) claims should refer to the Last Date of Attendance policy.
- Student complaints and concerns about issues other than final course grades are to be resolved under the Student Complaints and Grievances policy.

### Scope

This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at the university. It covers appeals related to final course grades and does not apply to appeals concerning individual assignments or examinations.

## Definitions

### Grade Appeal

A written complaint raised by a student about a final course grade assigned by a faculty member. In order to have a right to the entire grade appeal process, the claim must meet the grounds described in this policy.

## Retaliation

Punishment inflicted on a student in revenge for behavior inside or outside of a course, including the act of filing a grade appeal.

## Arbitrary

A decision that appears to be based on individual preference or convenience rather than by policy, procedure, necessity, or logic.

## Rationale

Students have the right to ask an instructor for an explanation of any grade received.

## Associated Policies and Procedures

Grading Policy

Last Date of Attendance Policy

Student Complaints and Grievances Policy

Board Policy 1B.1 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education

## Bibliography

<https://www.minnesota.edu/about/policies-and-procedures/grade-appeal-policy#:~:text=Minnesota%20State%20Community%20and%20Technical,changing%20a%20final%20course%20grade>

<https://www2.winona.edu/regulations/Images/Fall%202016%20Revised%20Grade%20Appeal%20Policy%20re-write-5-1.pdf>

<https://registrar.ecu.edu/grade-appeal-policy-and-process/>

<https://www.metrostate.edu/sites/default/files/2024/Procedure%202009%20Academic%20Appeals.pdf>

<https://catalog.smsu.edu/policies-procedures/academic-appeals/>

<https://www.mnstate.edu/about/policies-procedures/list/grade-appeal/>