

**Jacksonville State University
School of Education**

Grade Appeal Process

Basis for Appeal

Policies at the university level take precedence over this school process. This process is intended to conform to the current faculty and student handbook.

A student may appeal a course grade if he/she has reason to believe the grade was assigned in a malicious, capricious, erroneous, or arbitrary manner. For the appeal to be valid, the student must follow the steps outlined below in the order indicated and within the given time lines.

Furthermore, the appeal at each additional step in the process must be in writing. The following steps provide a guideline for the appeals process.

Steps in the Appeal Process

1. Appeal to the Faculty Member for Review of Assigned Grade

To initiate the grade appeal process, the student must discuss the assigned grade with the faculty member within 3 weeks of the grade posting. If it is found that the assigned grade is incorrect in the judgment of the faculty member, he/she will initiate the appropriate grade change process. If a grade change is made at this point, the matter is concluded and the department head and dean are notified using the established grade change procedure. If the faculty member is not available or is no longer with the university, the student will proceed directly to the next step (Appeal to the Department Head).

2. Appeal to the Department Head

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 department head of the department in which the course was taught. The written appeal to the department head must be made by the end of the fourth week following the grade posting. The student will include all known information relative to the appeal. The department head shall review with the student and the faculty member the basis of the student's appeal and seek to determine its validity.

If the department head determines the assigned grade is inappropriate, he/she will recommend to the faculty member the grade be changed. The faculty member may or may not concur with the department head's recommendation.

The department head will notify the student in writing, within two weeks after receiving the written appeal, whether or not the assigned grade is changed (to the student's satisfaction). If the grade will not be changed, the department head will also advise the student of the right to appeal to the Dean of the School of Education.

If the grade will not be changed, copies of written communication discussed above will be sent by the department head to the dean of the school as described below.

3. Appeal to the Dean of the School of Education

If the grade is not changed at the department level, the student may appeal the assigned grade, in writing, to the dean of the school. The written appeal to the dean must be made within two weeks of receipt of the notice from the department head that the faculty member will not change the grade.

The dean will meet with the student to discuss the facts and contentions pertinent to the grade appeal. The dean will also meet with the faculty member and the department head to gather all relevant information concerning the course, its grade structure, and the assignment of the grade to the student making the appeal. Following the review, the dean will grant the appeal, deny the appeal, or send the case to the Jacksonville State University Dean's Advisory Committee for further review.

The Dean's Advisory Committee shall conduct a hearing and shall review all pertinent information presented by the student, the faculty member, and any others who may be called to assist the committee. The committee will give a written report on its recommendation to the dean, within one month from the time the matter was referred.

The written report will indicate the number of votes for granting the appeal and the number against granting the appeal. Reasons for and against granting the appeal will be listed and all appropriate information and documentation will be given. The dean will then review the committee's report and all other grade appeal documentation and endorse, reject, or modify the committee's recommendation. The dean shall then notify the student, the faculty member, the Dean's Advisory Committee, and the department head in writing of his/her decision concerning the appeal.

In the absence of further appeal, the opinion rendered by the dean becomes final two weeks from the date of the letter indicating the dean's decision.

4. Appeal to the Provost/Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs (VPASA)

If the grade is not changed at the school level, the student may appeal the assigned grade, in writing, to the Provost/VPASA. A copy of this letter is to be sent to the Dean of the School of Education so that all materials pertinent to the appeal (including the committee's report and the dean's opinion) can be forwarded to the Provost/VPASA for review.

If the grade has been changed at the school level, the faculty member may appeal, in the same manner, to the Provost/VPASA. The written appeal to the Provost/VPASA must be made within two weeks of the date of the dean's letter indicating his/her decision. The dean is to receive a copy of the letter, so that all materials pertinent to the appeal (including the committee's report and the dean's opinion) can be forwarded to the Provost/VPASA for review.

In the absence of further appeals, the opinion rendered by the Provost/VPASA becomes final two weeks from the date of the letter of his/her decision.

5. Appeal to the President

The decision of the Provost/VPASA is final. However, if either the student or the faculty member believes that due process has not been afforded, a written appeal may be made to the President. Such an appeal, based on denial of due process, and specifically identifying the failure of the process, must be initiated within two weeks from the time of the Provost/VPASA's decision on either the student's or faculty member's appeal.

6. Recording the Grade

The Dean of the School of Education will notify the University Registrar if it is determined a grade change is to be made. The dean will also inform the student, the faculty member, the Dean's Advisory Committee, and the department head of the grade change.

Grade Appeal Stipulations

1. Documents

Documents submitted for the purpose of the grade appeal become the property of the Dean's Advisory Committee, the School of Education, and Jacksonville State University. The said documents will be used for the purpose of the appeal and the appeal alone.

If the student submits copyrighted materials, he/she is required to provide a specified number of copies as determined by the Dean's Advisory Committee.

2. Participants

Parties in the dispute over grade or other issues under consideration by the Dean's Advisory Committee are not permitted to bring an attorney(s) or other persons to the committee meeting. The role of the Dean's Advisory Committee is advisory, not judiciary. The student and/or faculty member is, however, permitted to request that the committee interview parties that may provide evidence/testimony specific to the grade appeal being considered.