

Hofstra College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

GRADE APPEAL POLICY

(Adopted by the Faculty December 8, 2011)

It is the right and responsibility of each faculty member to determine student grades at Hofstra University. Each instructor's right to determine the grades assigned in his or her classes shall not be abrogated except in the most extraordinary circumstances. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to apply to or affect an individual instructor's grading standards. Only final grades may be appealed. Appeals for grades received in the fall semester must be initiated by the end of the third week of the following spring semester. Appeals for grades received in January, spring, and summer must be initiated by the end of the third week of the fall semester.

If there is a disagreement between a student and an instructor about a final grade, it is expected that the problem will be resolved through discussion between the student and the instructor. If such discussion does not resolve the problem (or the instructor is no longer in residence or is otherwise unreachable) the chair of the department may be called upon to help. (If the instructor is the chair, then the HCLAS Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs may be called upon.)

If discussion among the student, instructor and chair still does not lead to resolution, the student may appeal in writing to the HCLAS Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs, detailing the arguments for a change of grade. The HCLAS Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs will review the issues and merits of the case. The HCLAS Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs may choose to dismiss the case if there is no material basis for the appeal, to mediate, or to instruct the departmental chairperson to immediately empanel an ad hoc appeals committee.

The ad hoc committee will review the final grade and decide whether it should be raised, lowered, or remain the same.

The ad hoc committee shall consist of three tenured members of the department (excluding the chair and instructor) selected by the department's chairperson, and, in an advisory capacity, the HCLAS Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs. (In the event that there are not three tenured faculty members in the department available to serve on the committee, the additional members shall be selected from tenured members of related departments by the HCLAS Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs in consultation with the chair of the department.)

The student must submit a letter to the committee detailing the arguments for a change of grade. After selecting a chair from among its faculty members, the committee must invite the student, the instructor, and any other witnesses it deems relevant to appear before it and present any relevant evidence. The committee will not disclose to the student the grades of other students in the course or any other information it deems private. The committee may determine that a change of grade is appropriate only if one or more of the following is demonstrated to be true:

1. A demonstrated bias by the instructor is reflected in the grade.
2. The student's final grade is inconsistent with the other grades he or she earned in the course and cannot be justified by other pedagogical considerations.

If the committee by a unanimous vote determines that there is just cause to alter the grade, the three faculty members on the committee shall convene to determine, by a unanimous vote, the appropriate new grade. The full committee shall inform the student, instructor, chair, and HCLAS Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs in writing of their decision, and of any change in the final grade that shall be made.

Both a faculty member and a student have the right to request a review by the Provost of the decision by the HCLAS Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs (in the event that an ad hoc committee is not convened) or by the ad hoc appeals committee. In such instances, the Provost shall begin with the presumption that the HCLAS Associate Dean's or the ad hoc appeals committee's determination is correct. The Provost determines if the proper procedure was followed. If he or she determines that there is cause for reconsideration, the Provost shall convene (or reconvene) the ad hoc appeals committee for further consideration of the matter. In all cases the ad hoc appeals committee's decision shall be forwarded to the student who made the appeal, the instructor involved, the HCLAS Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs, and the Provost.