

Grade Appeals

The faculty of Longwood University is unequivocally committed to the principle that evaluation of student work and assignment of grades is a responsibility and a prerogative to be exercised solely by the individual instructor.

Should a student believe the final course grade received was unfairly awarded, the student has the right to appeal. Students should be aware of the fact that the appeal procedure may result in a grade being raised, lowered, or remaining unchanged. The student must initiate the appeal in writing by February 1 (for grades awarded in the fall semester or intersession) or by September 15 (for grades awarded in the spring semester or in summer). The appeal uses the following procedure:

- 1) The student discusses the grade with the instructor. The student will provide evidence about why she or he believes the grade was inaccurately awarded.
- 2) If, after this discussion, the student is still unsatisfied, the student may appeal in writing to the relevant Department Chair. This appeal should outline the reasons why the student believes the grade was incorrect and include relevant documentation (e.g., graded material, syllabi, etc.) in support of the grade change. The Chair will notify the faculty member within five business days of the appeal, and the faculty member will have five business days from notification to supply to the Chair a written response to the student's appeal.
- 3) The Chair must decide within five business days of receiving the faculty member's written response whether or not the student's case merits further investigation. If the Chair decides that the student's case merits further investigation, then the Chair appoints an *ad hoc* committee composed of three tenured members of the faculty in the department (other than the faculty member involved). If the committee cannot be filled from within the department, the Chair may ask a department chair in a related discipline for recommendations to fill out the committee.
- 4) If the Chair decides that the student's case does not merit further investigation, the student may appeal this decision to the appropriate Dean, supplying the same supporting materials as presented to the Chair. If, after discussion with the Chair, the Dean also decides the case does not merit further investigation, the appeal is closed. If the Dean decides that the student has a case that merits further investigation, the Dean may appoint an *ad hoc* committee of the same composition as described above to investigate the student's case.
- 5) The committee reviews the case, asking for additional information as necessary through the person who appointed the committee. The committee reaches a decision by majority vote. The decision of the committee is final. The committee will report its decision in a letter signed by all three members and addressed to the Chair, with a copy to the appropriate Dean, the faculty member, the student, and the Office of the Registrar, who will record the grade. The review must be completed so that the grade will be final by the end of the eighth full week of classes.

Should the appeal involve a grade assigned by a department chair, the Dean of the appropriate College will also assume the role normally assigned to the Chair. Should the appeal involve a grade assigned by a Dean, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall assume the roles normally assigned to the Chair and Dean.