

# PROCEDURE TO APPEAL A FINAL GRADE

*Approved by the Faculty Senate in Spring 2019*

This procedure is predicated on the assumption that instructors are always the most appropriate judges of how students perform academically. Therefore, this appeal process applies only in cases in which a student believes their final course grade was determined in an arbitrary, capricious or prejudicial manner. Only final course grades may be appealed. Failure of—or dissatisfaction with—a course are not sufficient grounds to appeal a final grade.

Arbitrary, capricious or prejudicial grading is defined as:

1. **Arbitrary:** A final course grade assigned on some basis other than performance in the course.
2. **Capricious:** A final course grade assigned by a substantial, unreasonable or unannounced departure from the instructor's previously articulated grading standards and/or university policy.
3. **Prejudicial:** A final course grade assigned by resorting to standards different from those that were applied to other students in that course.

In such a situation, the student must first try to resolve the matter with the instructor who assigned the grade. Students may not contact clinical preceptors/instructors, fieldwork supervisors, or internship supervisors to discuss or appeal a final grade. If a student in a clinical/fieldwork course has questions regarding to whom the grade appeal should be submitted, the student should contact the program director.

To initiate a grade appeal, the student must submit a completed written grade appeal request form (available at the Registrar's Office MyQ page (<https://myq.quinnipiac.edu/Campus%20Offices/Registrar/Pages/default.aspx>)) to the course instructor within the fifth business day after date when final grades are due (see Academic Calendar (<http://catalog.qu.edu/general-information/academic-calendar/>) in the Catalog to confirm the date). This written grade appeal request must include a description of why the student believes their final grade was determined in an arbitrary, capricious or prejudicial manner, and all relevant evidence (e.g., course syllabus, exams, projects, etc.). The department chairperson should be copied on the initial written request to the instructor, so that they can follow up if necessary. The instructor will provide the student with a written decision within five business days.

If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student may submit their written grade appeal request form to the chair of the department offering the course (or their designee) within two business days of receiving the faculty member's decision. The chairperson then has five business days in which to consult with the student and instructor, seek to mediate a mutually agreeable solution, and provide the student with a written decision. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, within two business days, the student may submit to the associate dean of the school/college offering the course (or designee) a written request for the formation of an appeal committee. This written request must be accompanied by a copy of the student's grade appeal request form, the instructor's written response and the chair's written decision.

Within five business days of receiving the written request, the associate dean (or designee) will appoint a three-member faculty committee

composed of two individuals from within the department offering the course and a full-time faculty member of the student's choosing. The student must secure the participation of the full-time faculty member and provide the associate dean with written confirmation of the faculty member's willingness to participate on the grade appeal committee. As this grade appeal procedure does not apply to the School of Law, law faculty may not serve on a grade appeal committee.

In the absence of a student preference, the associate dean will appoint the third faculty member from another department or another program within the college or school. If the associate dean is unable to appoint two faculty members from within the department, they will appoint two or more faculty members from outside the department. The faculty member assigning the grade and the chairperson may not participate in this decision process. The associate dean will provide the appeal committee with copies of the student's written grade appeal request, along with the instructor's and chair's written responses.

Within five business days, the appeal committee will consult with the student and instructor, review the evidence, and forward to the associate dean a written final determination of whether the committee by a majority vote (no abstentions) affirms the final grade in the course or requires its recalculation by the course instructor, with chairperson oversight. This determination will be based on whether there is evidence that the final grade was determined in an arbitrary, capricious or prejudicial manner. After the instructor submits to the chairperson the recalculated grade, the chairperson will document the nature and date of any changes and forward the documentation to the associate dean. The associate dean will notify the student, instructor and chairperson of the final resolution and if applicable, notify the registrar's office of the recalculated grade.

If the grade appeal process results in a recalculated grade, and the recalculated grade removes an academic deficiency that was preventing the student from progressing in their program or to the next sequential course, the student may continue to progress in the program/to the next course. Recalculated grades may not be appealed.

## Special Circumstances

If the chairperson is the instructor who assigned the grade, the student will contact the associate dean after failing to resolve the matter with the faculty member. If the associate dean is the instructor who assigned the grade, the student will contact the chairperson after failing to resolve the matter with the instructor. If the chairperson is unable to mediate a mutually agreeable resolution, within two business days of receiving the chairperson's response the student may submit to the dean of the school/college offering the course (or designee) a written request for the formation of an appeal committee, as described above.

If the instructor who assigned the final grade is no longer a Quinnipiac University employee (and therefore unavailable), the above process begins with the chairperson.

If a student does not receive a final course grade by the date grades are due, but on a later date, the student may submit a completed written grade appeal request form to the course instructor, with a copy to the department chairperson, within the fifth business day after the date on which the grade is posted or the hold on the student's record is cleared.

The deadlines and time frames for courses that do not follow the standard Academic Calendar may vary and be determined on a case-by-case basis.

The grade appeal process for the First-Year Writing (FYW) program follows a different procedure that allows for a re-evaluation of a student's portfolio of writing; please contact the coordinator directly for additional information. If the FYW appeal does not resolve the issue, the student then has the option to proceed with the above Procedure to Appeal a Final Grade, beginning with the College of Arts & Sciences associate dean.