

Mason Gross School of the Arts Grade Appeal Process

Mason Gross instructors have primary authority and responsibility for all aspects of evaluating student performance and assigning grades. The Dean's office has the authority and responsibility to intervene in changes of grades only in extenuating circumstances. Students should be aware that Program Directors, Chairs, or Deans cannot require an instructor to change an appropriately assigned course grade.

The grade value of a given assignment is decided solely by the course instructor.

Students wishing to file an official challenge to a course grade, or a grade received for a particular assignment in a course, should first attempt to resolve the matter through discussion with the Instructor. If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved between the student and the Instructor, the student may specify in writing the basis for the challenge and request a review by the [Departmental Chair or Director](#). In these situations, it is suggested that undergraduate students first discuss their concerns with their Undergraduate Advisor (also known as the Student Success Counselor). A written challenge about a grade for work completed while the course is in progress must be submitted to the Departmental Chair or Director and /or Graduate Advisor (graduate students) or Student Success Counselor (undergraduate students) no later than two weeks after notification of the grade. An undergraduate or graduate student must submit a written complaint about a final course grade to the relevant parties (i.e. Departmental Chair or Director, Graduate Advisor and /or Student Success Counselor) no later than four weeks after the end of the exam period for that semester.

An undergraduate or graduate student who wishes to appeal the decision of the department should appeal in writing to the Assistant Dean for Advising & Student Success in the Office of the Dean.

Written notification of the action taken by the Office of the Dean will be sent to the student within six weeks after the filing of the appeal, excluding the winter and spring break.

The Grade Appeal Process Procedure below pertains only to Mason Gross School of the Arts courses (those beginning with 07 or 08) and are the only courses eligible for review by the MGSA Office of the Dean. If your course begins with another code (e.g., 01:,11:,30:), please contact the corresponding school in which the course was offered.

The academic department is the starting point for the Grade Appeal Process Procedure. In most cases, the situation can be resolved within the department. Students must follow the steps below for the grade appeal to be considered.

Grade Appeal Process Procedure

Please complete the following procedure steps in order. The MGSA Office of the Dean will only review Grade Appeals after these steps have been followed.

1. Contact the Instructor. Students should first discuss discrepancies in grades with the Instructor and/or Mason Gross Academic Advisor. For appeals on assignments completed while the course is in progress, the student must approach the Instructor no later than two weeks after notification of the grade to discuss the situation. A student must submit a written appeal about a final course grade to the Instructor no later than four weeks after the end of the exam period for that semester.
2. If the issue cannot be resolved between the student and the Instructor, the student should then write to the [Chair or Director](#) of the department or program, copying their Student Success Counselor or graduate advisor, and outline their concerns, providing complete information to allow them to attempt to resolve the issue. Undergraduate students are urged to consult with their Student Success Counselor and graduate students should discuss the matter with their graduate advisor before approaching the Chair or Director of the department.
3. If the situation remains unresolved after consultation with the Instructor, Undergraduate/Graduate Advisor, and Director/Chair and a student wishes to appeal the decision of the department, the student may then proceed with an appeal to the Assistant Dean for Student Success through the Mason Gross Office of the Dean.

Students who proceed straight to step 3 will be referred back to the Instructor, Chair or Director and/or Advisor in the department.

ALL appeals MUST include the following information:

- The course number and section (e.g., 07:100:101:01), semester and year (e.g., Fall 2025), and the instructor's first and last name
- A clear explanation of the grounds for the appeal
- A copy of the course syllabus
- The course materials at issue (e.g., the graded exam or assignment, including the student's responses, grades/points marked or deducted, and comments, which may also include screenshots from any instructor feedback or comments)
- Any other relevant course information on the assignment or grade

- Clear description of any meetings between the student and the Instructor, Advisor, and/or academic department that have occurred.
- All written exchanges/documentation between the student and Instructor, Advisor, and/or department about the issue. This should include the complete unedited correspondence and the written decision of the department official who reviewed the appeal (e.g., MGSA Undergraduate/Graduate Advisor, Department Chair, etc.).

Non-Discrimination Policy

Student assertions or challenges that a grade or other academic decision was the result of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, are not reviewed as part of a school's grade appeal process, even if asserted at a later stage during a pending grade appeal. The Office of Employment Equity (OEE) is responsible for enforcing the University's policies prohibiting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation (including Policies 60.1.12 and 60.1.28), which extend to adverse academic decisions, such as the issuance of a negative grade in an assignment or course. If the assertion is made before the grade appeal process has begun, the grade appeal review will be stayed, and all action on the grade appeal will be suspended until the OEE completes its investigation concerning the discrimination allegation; if the assertion is after the grade appeal process has begun, action on the grade appeal will be immediately suspended until the OEE completes its investigation concerning the discrimination allegation.