

# GRADE APPEAL PROCESS (PCS STUDENTS)

This policy applies to both undergraduate and graduate courses in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies.

Only final grades may be appealed. If students receive a final grade in a course that they wish to appeal, they must appeal the grade prior to the completion of the next semester in which the course was taken—even if they are not in attendance; otherwise, the appeal will not be considered. Once students have graduated and have a degree awarded by the University, a grade appeal will not be considered.

## Complete the Grade Appeal Form

Students who believe they have received a grade that does not fairly reflect their academic performance must consider the following before beginning the process of a grade appeal:

1. Double-check the calculation of the final numerical grades for the class based on the percentages each exam/project was worth, as stated in the instructor's syllabus.
2. Objectively assess your attendance record. As partners in learning, students are expected to attend class and contribute.
3. Objectively assess the quality of class participation. If a student's grade appeal is based solely on a difference of opinion about class participation, it will be virtually impossible to resolve this issue, as only the instructor will be able to evaluate this.
4. Compare all of the above with the original class syllabus to determine whether all requirements have been fulfilled, as stated by the instructor.
5. Check that the work submitted met the requirements enumerated by the instructor. For example, if a student submitted a well-written and well-researched paper on the life of Plato, but the instructor specifically asked for a comparative study of the ideas of Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates, the grade will not be reviewed since the student did not follow instructions.

If, after all considerations, a student determines that a grade appeal is warranted, then the following process should be followed:

### Level 1: Faculty

Students should contact the instructor to discuss any concerns about their grade **prior** to beginning any grade appeal process. Students should contact the instructor by the email provided on the syllabus to detail the reason for the grade appeal. The student should initiate contact within 10 days of the posting of the final grade for the semester in which the course was taken.

### Level 2: Written Appeal to the PCS Grade Appeals Committee

If all attempts to contact the instructor have failed, the student has successfully contacted the instructor in writing and subsequent communication did not resolve the dispute by clarifying the basis on which the grade was given, or the instructor clarified the basis on which the grade was given and the student still disagrees with the instructor's assessment, the student may begin the formal grade appeal process by submitting the appeal to the associate dean for academic programs. The appeal must be received within 10 days of the faculty's response or within 10 days of when the email was sent if no response was received.

**Note:** A disagreement about the subjective evaluation of the student's performance in the class is **not** grounds for appeal. It is assumed that the instructor, as the subject-matter expert, is the one most qualified to evaluate any and all work submitted. Therefore, in order for an appeal to be considered, students must demonstrate an objective discrepancy between the way in which they were evaluated and the grading policies and procedures outlined in the syllabus.

By submitting a grade appeal, the student acknowledges that, upon review and investigation, the determination may result in a final grade:

- That may be the same as that of the original grade.
- That may be higher than the original grade.
- That may be lower than the original grade.

The associate dean for academic programs will advise the student on what materials they must submit to start the appeal process with the PCS Grade Appeals Committee. The grade appeals committee convenes once a semester, approximately six weeks after the first day of classes, to review all outstanding grade appeals. Students will be notified in writing of the decision within 30 days of the meeting of the committee.

### Level 3: Written Appeal to the Dean

If, after receiving the decision in writing from the PCS Grade Appeals Committee, the student remains in disagreement, the final step is to submit an appeal in writing to the dean of the School of Professional and Continuing Studies **within 10 days of the date on the letter**.

Grade appeals must include:

1. A letter to the dean indicating why the decision rendered by the PCS Grade Appeal Committee is being appealed.
2. A copy of the decision letter received from the PCS Grade Appeal Committee.
3. A copy of the supporting materials submitted to the PCS Grade Appeals Committee.

The dean will only consider appeals based on a lack of due process or evidence that relevant information was not taken into consideration. The final decision rendered by the dean will be the grade that appears on the student's official Fordham University transcript. The student must be prepared for a final decision that keeps the original grade, is a higher grade, or lowers the original grade, since **no further grade appeals of the same course at the University will be considered**.

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**These instructions supersede any prior versions of the PCS grade appeal process.**