

# GRADUATE STUDENT APPEAL POLICY

## APPEAL OF GRADES IN GRADUATE-LEVEL COURSES

- I. Appeal of grades in graduate-level courses shall be made through the graduate student grade appeal procedures of the campus through which the grade was awarded. Graduate students holding admission with Non-degree status in the Graduate College, admission with a Master's objective, or a Specialist's objective should appeal as follows:
  - a. Students who believe their evaluation in a course has been prejudiced or capricious must first attempt to resolve the matter with the course instructor.
  - b. If denied, the student should then appeal to the Graduate Program Chair or Director through which the course was offered. The appropriate Graduate Program Committee will meet to consider the student's appeal.
  - c. If denied, the appeal may be made to the UNK Graduate Council. The appeal should be filed with the UNK Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Outreach. The Dean will forward the appeal to the Faculty/Student Affairs Committee of the Graduate Council. Since awarding grades in courses occurs at the individual campus level, the decision of the Faculty/Student Affairs Committee of the Graduate Council on behalf of the campus Graduate Faculty shall be final and is not subject to further appeal.
- II. If a student feels the grade he/she received in a class is incorrect, he/she must contact the instructor of record or in the absence of the instructor, the appropriate Graduate Program Chair or Director, within 30 days of the end of the term for which the grade was assigned. Failure to notify the instructor/department of record within the allotted time will render the initial grade final and no changes will be permitted. If the grade appeal cannot be resolved with the instructor, a formal, written appeal must be filed with the Graduate Program Chair or Director within 60 days of the end of the term for which the grade was assigned. If the instructor of record is also the Graduate Program Chair or Director, the formal appeal should be made to the UNK Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Outreach.
- III. A student selecting to appeal must complete the student appeal packet found under "Student Resources" of the UNK Graduate Studies webpage and send to unkgradoffice@unk.edu. The packet will include the student's written statement specifying what the appeal is, the reason(s), what outcome he/she is requesting, and specification of an initial or final appeal. The packet will include the following documents: course syllabus, verification material of attempt to resolve the matter with the course instructor (including dates met (in person/zoom), and additional correspondence evidence such as email, etc.), the student's written appeal submitted to the Graduate Program Chair (GPC) or director, written communication regarding the initial appeal denial from the GPC or Director, and/or other documents pertinent to the course under appeal.

### IV. OR

The appeal must be the student's written statement specifying what the appeal is, the reason(s), what outcome he/she is requesting, and specification of an initial or final appeal. The following documents should be included within the appeal by the student: course syllabus,

verification material of attempt to resolve the matter with the course instructor (including dates met (in person/zoom), and additional correspondence evidence such as email, etc.), the student's written appeal submitted to the Graduate Program Chair (GPC) or director, written communication regarding the initial appeal denial from the GPC or Director, and/or other documents pertinent to the course under appeal.

## APPEAL OF GENERAL ACADEMIC MATTERS RELATED TO STUDENT PROGRAMS (OTHER THAN GRADE APPEALS)

- I. Graduate students holding admission with Non-degree status in the Graduate College, admission with a Master's objective, or a Specialist's objective should appeal as follows:
    - a. Initially, the appeal may be submitted to the student's advisor.
    - b. If denied, the appeal may be submitted to the UNK departmental Graduate Program Chair or Director responsible for the student's graduate program. The Student's Graduate Program Committee will meet to consider the appeal.
    - c. If denied, the appeal may be made to the UNK Graduate Council. The appeal should be filed with the UNK Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Outreach. Normally, this will be the final appeals body (for exceptions, see section IV (p. 1)).
  - II. When a student's graduate program consists of registrations essentially or entirely on the UNK campus, the UNK Graduate Council will constitute the appeal board. When a student's graduate program includes substantial registrations on a campus other than the one administratively responsible for the program, three members of the Graduate Council for the other campus will be designated by the Dean for Graduate Studies on that campus to augment the Graduate Council on the campus administratively responsible for the program. In this case, the augmented Council will constitute the appeal board. The decision concerning augmentation of a campus Graduate Council for a specific appeal involving registrations on a campus other than the one administratively responsible for the student's program will be made by the Deans for Graduate Studies on the campuses involved.
  - III. In all cases, appeals should be made in writing to the appropriate advisor, committee or council. In those cases where the appeal concerns graduate-level qualifying exams, comprehensive exams or final oral exams, the following deadlines must be observed. It is the responsibility of the student to make reasonable efforts to ascertain the results of the examination within 30 days after its completion.
- The initiation of the appeal, in writing, by the student must be filed within 30 days following the student's receipt of notification of the evaluation. In those cases involving an appeal of termination of program, initiation of the appeal, in writing, by the student must be filed within 30 days following the student's receipt of the official written notification by the campus Office for Graduate Studies.
- IV. a. There is no absolute right of appeal to the University of Nebraska Executive Graduate Council. The Executive Graduate Council will accept appeals only in those cases where in the exercise of its sole discretion it shall first find that one or more of the following grounds for accepting the appeal exist:< >That the campus Graduate Council has violated some element of fair procedure (example: has failed to allow the parties concerned to present their cases fully to their campus Graduate Council);

That the campus Graduate Council has failed to examine or give adequate weight to important evidence relevant to one party's position; That the campus Graduate Council has given undue weight to evidence not pertinent to the case; or That some gross miscarriage of justice would be perpetrated if the decision of the campus Graduate Council is allowed to stand. Appeals to the Executive Graduate Council must be made in writing to the University of Nebraska Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost and must specifically outline the grounds for the appeal. Such appeal must be made within 20 working days of the day the decision of the campus Graduate Council is received (working days shall not include those days the University is not in session.)

- b. The Executive Council must make a decision to hear the appeal or not to hear the appeal within 30 working days after receipt of the appeal. Acceptance or denial of jurisdiction over the appeal will be made in writing.
- c. The decision of the Executive Graduate Council on the merits of the case will be made and transmitted to the concerned parties within 40 working days after the decision to hear the appeal.
- d. No person who was a member of the department or campus Graduate Council involved in the case will be eligible to participate in the decisions of the Executive Graduate Council either to decide whether the case should be heard or to decide the merits of the case. However, the Dean for Graduate Studies may replace members of the Executive Graduate Council not eligible for participation in the decision to hear the appeal or in the appeal itself.