
Undergraduate Student Academic Appeal Procedures

Appeal of Course Grades

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Approver: ALES Faculty Council

Scope: Undergraduate Student Academic Appeal Procedures – Appeal of Course Grades

ALES undergraduate students have the right to appeal course grades. Students should only appeal in cases where they believe that an error has been made or there are legitimate reasons why the grade is inappropriate. **The procedures described in this document apply to courses offered by the Faculty of ALES.** For courses offered by other Faculties, students should refer to procedures established by those Faculties.

If students have concerns about their course grade, they should first contact the course instructor and/or department to exhaust avenues of appeal at those levels. These steps are outlined in subsequent sections.

If the student is not satisfied with the responses from the instructor and department, they may then submit a written appeal to the Faculty. The Faculty of ALES Dean delegates to the Associate Dean (Academic), or designate, authorization to hear this appeal.

Communication

Effective delivery of appeal-related materials is governed by [GFC Policy Section 1.5.3 \(Service and Notice\)](#). In accordance with the University's Electronic Communication Policy for Students and Applicants, (University Calendar), electronic communications sent by the University will be deemed received the next University business day after the day the email was sent.

All official written communication will be via email, although students have the option of communicating in person with Student Service Staff for informal guidance. All email communication will be sent to the student's ualberta.ca email account. Email communication from the student must also come from their ualberta.ca account.

Grounds for Appeal

The following constitute grounds for an appeal:

- errors in calculation
- procedural errors
- failure to consider all relevant factors
- bias and/or discrimination

The following does not constitute grounds for appeal:

- Disagreement with the instructor's marking scheme
- Falling just short of the instructor's threshold for a higher grade
- Disputes regarding the instructor's assessment of the quality of submitted work

Contacting the Instructor and Chair

Meeting with the Instructor

Students wishing to appeal a course grade should first request a meeting with the instructor of the course. The deadlines for making this request are as follows:

- February 1 for Fall term courses
- June 1 for Winter term (or two-term) courses
- September 1 for special sessions (Spring / Summer) courses
- One month after posting of a deferred final examination mark

The student should explain to the instructor the grounds for the appeal and provide any relevant documentation or evidence. The instructor should provide a clear response in writing to the student explaining the reasons for upholding the original course grade and/or the action that will be taken.

Meeting with the Department Chair

If the student is not satisfied with the response from the instructor and wants to pursue the appeal further, they must submit a written statement to the Chair of the Department in which the course is offered. This statement must include the following information/documentation:

- Student name and University of Alberta identification number
- Student contact information (telephone number, and email address)
- Relevant information or details about any errors in grading, procedural errors, extenuating circumstances or failure to consider all relevant factors, bias or discrimination against the student

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- Supporting documentation (where relevant), including the details of the meeting they had with the instructor and instructor's decision

The Department Chair will meet with the student to discuss the appeal, and will then consult with the instructor. The Department Chair will notify the student in writing of their decision.

Appeal to the Associate Dean (Academic)

First Appeal Submission Procedure and Deadlines

If the student is not satisfied with the response from the Department Chair concerning the course grade and wants to pursue a further appeal, the student may submit an appeal to the Associate Dean (Academic) through the Appeals Submission Form found on the ALES Student Services website (uab.ca/ALESsso) according to the below deadlines. Appeal documents should be submitted to ALES Student Services by email to alesacad@ualberta.ca.

The deadlines for submitting such an appeal are as follows:

- March 1 for Fall term courses
- July 1 for Winter term (or two-term) courses
- October 1 for special sessions (Spring / Summer) courses
- Two months after posting of a deferred final examination mark

Appeal Content

The student should complete the Appeals Submission Form which includes a written section. The appeal submitted by the student should provide a clear rationale or justification for the course grade appeal. The written portion of the Appeals Submission Form must include the following information and documentation:

- Course and grade initially received
- Relevant information or details about the student's initial request
- Summary of instructor and chair decision and explanation of why the student does not agree with those decisions.
- Relevant information or details about any errors in grading, procedural errors, extenuating circumstances or failure to consider all relevant factors, bias or discrimination against the student

Appeal documents should be submitted to ALES Student Services by email to alesacad@ualberta.ca.

Questions about the appeal process and relevant Faculty and university regulations should be directed to the ALES Student Services Office, at questions.ales@ualberta.ca or 780-492-4933. Student Service Staff are not authorized to speculate on the probability of an appeal's outcome. In order to maintain impartiality, Student Service Staff are also prohibited from providing guidance on the content of the appeal. While they may offer general information about the appeals process and necessary documentation, they should not offer advice or suggestions regarding the content of the appeal itself.

Assistance with the content and submission of appeals is available from the Office of the Student Ombuds (uab.ca/ombuds). Appellants are advised to consult with the Student Ombuds prior to submission of their appeal.

Appeal Process and Outcome

When an appeal is submitted, the Associate Dean (Academic) may request assistance from Student Services Staff to gather relevant student data and communications pertaining to the appeal. Student Services Staff will access relevant student records, including academic transcripts, enrollment history, and communication and advising records.

Student Services Staff will compile a summary of relevant student data and communications and provide it to the Associate Dean (Academic) in a timely manner. Staff members may provide insights or interpretations of the data to assist the Associate Dean (Academic) in making an informed decision; however, adjudication of the appeal is the sole discretion of the Associate Dean (Academic).

Information obtained for the purpose of appeal assistance should be accessed and shared only on a need-to-know basis and used solely for the appeals process.

The Associate Dean (Academic) will review the First Appeal submission and may meet with the student to discuss the appeal. The Associate Dean (Academic) may then discuss the appeal with the instructor and Department Chair. The Associate Dean (Academic) will normally provide a written decision via email approving or denying the First Appeal within 14 calendar days of receiving the First Appeal. The decision will be communicated to the student, course instructor and Department Chair.

Further Appeal

If the First Appeal is denied by the Associate Dean (Academic), a further appeal can be made to the Faculty Academic Appeals Committee (AAC). A copy of the procedures for Appeals to the Faculty AAC is available from ALES Student Services website (uab.ca/ALESsso).