

School of Business Policy and Procedures for Resolving Grade Disputes

Grade Dispute Policy

PLU School of Business is dedicated to fair and accurate appraisal of students' coursework. When disagreements arise over grades assigned in a course, students and faculty should first follow the School's established procedure for informal grade dispute resolution. If the informal procedure is unsuccessful in resolving the dispute, students and faculty will undertake the School's formal grade dispute resolution procedure. A written copy of informal and formal grade dispute resolution procedures is available for consultation by students in the School of Business.

Informal Grade Dispute Procedure

- A student who disputes a grade should discuss the reason for the grade with the faculty member who assigned the grade prior to initiating any formalized grade appeal. No student should discuss any grade-related complaint with the Dean or with any other faculty member or committee, except his or her advisor, without first discussing the complaint with the faculty member who assigned the grade.
- No formal grade dispute procedure will be invoked when the magnitude of disagreement is less than one full letter grade (i.e., disagreement over A- versus B+ should not trigger a formal grade dispute resolution procedure).
- A student who has completed informal efforts at resolution, has a disagreement amounting to at least one full letter grade, and wishes to invoke the formal grade dispute procedure should understand that in the course of pursuing the dispute, his or her coursework may with the faculty member's consent be referred to qualified external graders, most likely the faculty member's school or department colleagues who teach in the same field. **The student should understand that external referral may lead to a recommendation for lowering the grade as well as to a recommendation for raising the grade or to no change at all.**

Formal Grade Dispute Procedure

- A formal grade complaint must be submitted to the dean by six weeks into the following semester.
- When a student files a formal grade complaint, the Dean will convene a Grade Dispute Panel comprised of faculty, and possibly students, to hear the dispute. The complaint will not simply be referred to the Dean for an imposed recommendation, particularly in cases where allegations of gross unfairness are made.
- The Grade Dispute Panel may request that signed statements be submitted by the student and faculty member prior to a recommendation being made.
- The Grade Dispute Panel may request for the faculty member's consent that the student's coursework be referred to one or more qualified external graders prior to a recommendation being made.
- To preserve academic freedom for faculty as well as to uphold standards of fairness for faculty and the students, the Grade Dispute Panel will inform the faculty member and the student of its recommendation in writing.
- The panel will also inform the student that if the faculty member who assigned the original grade declines to follow the panel's recommendation, the student may as a further recourse pursue the matter under the university's grievance procedures.