



Department of Kinesiology

Final Grade Dispute Policy

The Kinesiology department and its faculty are dedicated to fair and accurate appraisal of students' coursework. When disagreements arise over final grade assigned in a course, the Department of Kinesiology asks that students and faculty follow its established procedure for dispute resolution. This policy applies to courses offered in the Kinesiology (KINS) and Physical Activity (PHED) programs. This policy does not apply to grade disputes arising over alleged violations of the university's Academic Integrity Policy; such disputes are considered by the Academic Performance and Integrity Committee. The department keeps a written copy of the established final grade dispute resolution procedure for consultation by students taking courses in the department.

Informal Final Grade Dispute Procedure

First steps in resolving a final grade dispute are informal. A student who disputes a final grade should discuss the reason for the final grade with the faculty member who assigned the final grade prior to initiating any formalized final grade appeal. No student should discuss any final grade-related complaint with a faculty member's department chair or dean without first discussing the complaint with the faculty member.

Formal Final Grade Dispute Procedure

- No formal final grade dispute procedure will be invoked when the magnitude of disagreement is less than one full letter grade with the exception of those grades that could result in dismissal from, or delay in progress of, the Kinesiology program (Examples: A- vs. A, no dispute; B vs. A, can be disputed; D+ vs. C-, can be disputed).
- 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 final 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 departmental colleagues who teach in the same field. The student should understand that external referral may lead to a recommendation or lowering the final grade as well as to a recommendation of raising the final grade or to no change at all.
- Students who wish to formally contest a final grade to a dean/department chair must do so within the first 28 days of the next semester.
- The complaint must be in writing with full explanation and supporting materials. If the complaint is not against the associate dean, it should be sent to the associate dean. If it is against the associate dean, it should be sent to the dean.
- When a student files a formal final grade complaint, a standing or ad hoc final grade dispute panel comprised of three faculty will convene to hear the dispute. The complaint will not simply be referred to the faculty member's dean or department head for an imposed recommendation, particularly in cases where allegations of gross unfairness are made.

- The final grade dispute panel may request 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 students, the final grade dispute panel will inform the faculty member and the student of its recommendation in writing.
 - The final grade dispute panel will provide the responsible faculty member with a recommendation that supports the original final grade, or supports the submission of a final grade either higher or lower than the original grade, or supports the implementation of some other remedy, (e.g., additional examinations or assignments). Authority to change a student's final grade will remain with the faculty member responsible for submitting the final grade, except in cases of discrimination or harassment.
 - The panel will also inform the student that if the faculty member who assigned the original final grade declines to follow the panel's recommendation, the student may as a further recourse pursue the matter under the university's grievance procedures.
- Decisions reached in formal departmental final grade dispute procedures may be appealed to the University Grievance Committee on the following grounds:
 - departmental procedures were not properly followed, or an instructor has refused to comply with a decision; or
 - the resolution of the dispute was fundamentally unfair to student or instructor.