

**SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION**  
**Grade Appeal Policy**

As approved at the May 8, 1997 meeting of the School of Communication Full  
Faculty

I. Introduction

It is the right and responsibility of the faculty to determine student grades at Hofstra University. Each instructor's right to determine the grades assigned in his or her classes shall not be abrogated except in the most extraordinary circumstances. Nothing in the procedures that follow shall be construed to apply to or affect an individual instructor's grading standards.

II. Initial Appeal

If there is disagreement between a student and an instructor about a final grade, it is expected that the problem will be resolved through discussion between the student and the instructor. Such discussion must take place during the semester after the grade was assigned. After that discussion, the instructor has two weeks to make a decision.

If the discussion with the instructor does not resolve the problem (or the instructor is no longer in residence or is otherwise unreachable), the student may appeal in writing to the Chair of the department. (If the instructor is the Chair, then the appeal should be sent to the Dean.) This appeal should be made within two weeks following the decision by the instructor and should detail the arguments for a change of grade. The instructor may also, at this or a later point, submit a letter detailing the rationale for the original grade.

If discussion among the student, instructor and Chair still does not lead to resolution, the student may appeal to the Dean. This appeal must be in writing, and should detail the grounds for dissatisfaction with the Chair's findings, directly addressing the reasons for the decision given by the Chair. This appeal should be made within two weeks following the discussion with the Chair and instructor. The Dean will obtain from the Chair the file containing the student's letter, the instructor's letter, if any, and a letter from the Chair giving the results of the Chair's investigation. The Dean or the Dean's designate should attempt to resolve the matter through discussion with the student, instructor and Chair.

### III. Appeal Committee

If discussion with the Dean or the Dean's designate does not lead to resolution, the student may request, in writing, that an *ad hoc* Grade Appeal Committee be formed to look into the matter. This request should be sent to the Dean within two weeks after the discussion between the Dean or Dean's designate, Chair, instructor, and student. If the Dean finds the written request merits it, he or she shall convene the committee within two weeks of the receipt of the request.

The Grade Appeal Committee should consist of three tenured members of the department (excluding the Chair and the instructor) selected by the Dean and the Chair of the DPC. In the event that there are not three tenured faculty members in the department available to serve on the committee, the additional members shall be selected from tenured members of related departments. The Dean shall appoint a representative to sit on the committee as a nonvoting member and the School of Communication Student Advisory Board shall appoint a student representative to sit on the committee, also as a nonvoting member. The committee shall select one of its faculty members as chair.

The committee shall examine the file containing the student's letter, the instructor's letter, if any, the Chair's letter and a letter from the Dean or the Dean's designate giving the results of that person's investigation. The committee shall invite the student, the instructor, and any other witnesses it deems relevant to appear before it and present any relevant evidence.

If the committee, by unanimous vote, determines that there is just cause to raise or lower the grade, the faculty members of the committee shall convene separately to determine, by majority vote, the new grade. The committee shall inform the Dean, with copies to the Chair, instructor, and student, in writing of their decision and of any change in the final grade that shall be made. The Chair of the committee will submit a change of grade if necessary. The committee's decision shall be final.