



Student Course Grade Appeal Checklist

Please refer to the Middlesex Community College Grievance Procedure for the full policy.

While Grade Appeals are considered grievances under the College's Grievance Procedure, this document serves as a guide to the process. Students and faculty should make every effort to resolve questions about grades without seeking a formal Grade Appeal, which is the last resort. A Grade Appeal will be pursued only if there is a valid basis and evidence of inappropriate grading standards – such as treating students differently, unfair alteration of assignments or grading criteria, improper calculation, or failure to document a finding of plagiarism. The responsibility for presenting the case for changing a grade rests with the student making the appeal.

GRADE APPEAL PHILOSOPHY

Middlesex Community College believes in the right of all students to experience a fair and equitable review process in a grade dispute. To that end, the college's Grade Appeal Policy is based on the following principles:

- Both students and faculty have rights and responsibilities in the grading process.
- Students and faculty should communicate regularly and openly about course requirements, assignments, tests, grading procedures and grades.
- A student's grade should be based on course components, as specified in the course syllabus, and reflect the student's mastery of the subject matter of the course.
- Course grades are assumed to be correct. It is the responsibility of the student who appeals an assigned grade to demonstrate clerical error, prejudice or capriciousness in the assignment of a grade; otherwise, the judgment of the faculty member is final.
- A grade dispute is most effectively handled and resolved by those closest to the problem, who have the best understanding of the issues and have the ability to formulate a mutually acceptable resolution.

LEVEL ONE – INFORMAL PROCEDURE

1. Initiate the Grade Appeal by contacting the faculty member who awarded the course grade in an attempt to resolve the issue. This must happen by email, phone, or in person within 30 calendar days from when you knew about the grade (typically considered the date grades are posted).
2. At the same time, you must email the **Student Grievance Officer (SGO)** for Grade Appeals (Rebecca H. Newell, Assistant Dean of Students) to inform the **SGO** of the intent to appeal and receive guidance on the procedure.
3. The faculty member has 10 calendar days to respond to your complaint (as initiated in Step 1).
4. At any time, you or the faculty member may request mediation* which will be arranged by the **SGO**.
5. If there is no resolution, you may proceed to Level Two.

NOTES: 1. In the event the faculty member is unavailable, the appropriate department chairperson shall substitute for the faculty member. *Mediation is a negotiation to resolve differences conducted by an impartial party.

LEVEL TWO – FORMAL PROCEDURE

1. When a complaint was not resolved informally, the **SGO** will notify you and the faculty member in writing.
2. Within 10 days of receiving notification, you may file a formal written grievance via a Grade Appeal Form (see www.middlesex.mass.edu/linktba). This must be submitted by email, mail or in person to the **SGO**.
3. The **SGO** will deliver the Grade Appeal Form and all supporting documents, if any, to the responding faculty member within 5 days.
4. The faculty member will forward a written response to the **SGO** within 10 days of receipt of the Grade Appeal Form.
5. The **SGO** will deliver the response to you within 5 days.
6. If you are not satisfied with the response (or if there is no response), you have 10 days to request that the **SGO** forward the Grade Appeal Form to the faculty member's supervisor (Academic Dean) and Senior Academic Officer.
7. The Academic Dean must investigate and confer with the Senior Academic Officer (or designee) and forward a written decision to the **SGO** within 10 days of receipt.
8. The **SGO** will deliver the response to you within 5 days. This is the final decision.