

Graduate Grade Appeal Process

School Process

Students should commence the appeal process as soon as possible and in all events by the earlier of: (a) the end of the next regular semester (i.e., fall or spring) following the action to be appealed or (b) the completion of all degree requirements or withdrawal from the university.

Order of the appeal:

1. The faculty member or administrator responsible for the course, program or activity.
2. The department chair, program chair, or other head of the pertinent academic unit, if any.
3. The Dean or designee of the school or college offering the course, program, or activity.

Students should consult with their school or college for their specific process.

Academic Ombudsperson

Student has 20 academic days to complete the Academic Action Appeal Form and provide the required documents specified by the form, as well as any additional materials, to the Academic Ombudsperson. The Academic Ombudsperson has 20 academic days to review the merits of the appeal attempt to resolve the matter.



If the matter is resolved, then stop.

As part of their review, the Academic Ombudsperson should give the student a preliminary assessment as to whether the matter, as presented by the student at that time, meets the stated criteria for review by the FSSAC. Only after all the other steps are taken, the Academic Ombudsperson may refer the matter to the Dean of the Graduate School who will decide whether or not to refer the appeal to the FSSAC.

Graduate School

The Dean of the Graduate School decides whether or not to refer the appeal to the FSSAC.

If the matter does not meet the stated criteria for review by the FSSAC, the matter does not warrant further review.

If the matter meets the stated criteria for review by the FSSAC, it is referred to the Faculty Senate Office.

FSSAC Review

The FSSAC has 20 academic days to review/hear the appeal and submit a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Final Decision

The Dean of the Graduate School then has 20 academic days to review the recommendation of the FSSAC and to inform the student of the final decision.

Students should commence the appeal process within their school or department as soon as possible and in all events by the earlier of: (a) the end of the next regular semester (i.e., fall or spring) following the action to be appealed or (b) the completion of all degree requirements or withdrawal from the university.

The grounds for an appeal are:

- administrative or computational error in the calculation of a grade;
- the application of arbitrary or capricious grading standards that differed from those applied to other students in the course;
- the assignment of grades based on criteria beyond academic performance, including (but not limited to) violations of the University's Non-Discrimination policy, the University's anti-harassment or anti-retaliation policies, and other policies clearly defined in the Faculty Manual and/or University Bulletin; and
- substantial and unreasonable deviation from stated course requirements, policies, or grading criteria.

If the appeal is based on or related to a charge made by the student of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age or handicap, a representative of the appropriate University office (such as the Office of Workplace Equity and Inclusion) will be contacted and, as appropriate, consulted in the appeal process.

Note: This chart is a visual representation of the policies and language of the University of Miami Academic Bulletin (under the Graduate Policies and Procedures). In the event of conflict, the Bulletin language shall govern. [Please see the Bulletin for additional details.](#)

Graduate Grievance Process

School Process

Students should consult with their school or college for their specific process.

After a final written determination has been made in the students' school or college, students who believe they have grounds for appeal within the purview of these guidelines may initiate this Graduate Grievance Process.

Students may opt to formally submit their grievance directly to the Graduate School within thirty (30) academic days of final determination.

[OR]

University Ombudsperson

The University Ombudsperson will attempt to resolve the issue and do a preliminary assessment of the grievances.



If the matter is resolved, then stop.

If the matter is not resolved, the grievance will be reviewed by the Graduate School.

Graduate School

The Graduate School will assess the merits and attempt to resolve.



If matter is not reviewable by Graduate Council Grievance Committee (GCGC), the matter does not warrant further review and stops.

If matter is reviewable by GCGC, the Grievance Review Panel (GRP) is formed.

The Graduate School will give all the parties written notice of the constitution of the GRP within ten (10) academic days after a receipt of a properly-filed grievance.

Grievance Review Panel

The Grievance Review Panel (GRP) consists of four (4) members of the GCGC and one (1) student representative from the board of the Graduate Student Association.

The GRP will review the documentation and conduct a hearing. Following its deliberation and within ten (10) academic days of the hearing, the GRP will make its confidential, advisory recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Final Decision

The subsequent decision by the Dean of the Graduate School, which shall be rendered within ten (10) days of the GRP's recommendation, is final.

Grievances covered by this process:

1. Grievances alleging improper dismissal or suspension from a graduate program
2. Grievances alleging the improper withholding or termination of financial support of any kind
3. Grievances alleging any other improper treatment, either substantive or procedural, of a graduate student by a faculty member, department or program, or university agency or administrator

The grievances process is intended for cases not involving grades or matters covered by the Honor Code.

Grievances excluded from this process:

1. Allegations of improper evaluation of the quality and/or quantity of academic work (see UM Student Rights & Responsibilities);
2. Allegations of unfair recommendation for employment or further graduate study;
3. Allegations of discriminatory treatment arising from the student complainant's age, race, gender, sexual preference, handicap, national origin, or religion. (Such allegations ordinarily are handled by the Office of Workplace Equity and Inclusion).
4. Grade appeals (certain appeals are reviewed by the Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee, -FSSAC; see UM FSSAC Standard Grade Appeals Process- Graduate Students).

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