

NEOMED ACADEMIC POLICY	Policy No: 3349-AC-320
ACADEMIC POLICY TITLE: Grade Dispute Policy	EFFECTIVE DATE: December 5, 2018
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: College of Graduate Studies	APPROVAL AUTHORITY: Graduate Faculty Council

(A) PURPOSE

The College of Graduate Studies has established this Policy by which a graduate student can dispute a Final Grade. This policy applies only to module/course grades and does not apply to individual exams, which cannot be disputed once the Final Grade is posted.

(B) SCOPE

This Policy applies to all students enrolled in the College of Graduate Studies taking a course for credit and for which a grade is assigned. This Policy applies to courses exclusive to the College of Graduate Studies or those designed for interprofessional and/or interdisciplinary education.

(C) DEFINITIONS

- (1) "Credit-bearing Course" refers to a course offered by the College of Graduate Studies in which a student is enrolled, the course appears on the student's official transcript with either contact hours or credit-bearing acknowledgment, and a grade is assigned.
- (2) "Final Grade" refers to the cumulative assessment of a student's performance in a single module or course.
- (3) "Grade Posting" refers to when the final grade itself appears for the student to view in Banner Self-Service.
- (4) "Grade Dispute" refers to a formal request made to a course director to change a final grade.

(D) POLICY STATEMENT

- (1) Assignment of a Final Grade

The assignment of a final module or course grade is the responsibility of the course director.

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(2) Grade Disputes

- (a) A Grade Dispute should only be made when a student contends that a Final Grade assigned is “arbitrary” or “capricious,” which implies:
- (i) The student has been assigned a grade on the basis of something other than his or her performance in the course;
 - (ii) The grade calculation process and/or criteria was not included in the syllabus, was not followed, or the grade was calculated in error;
 - (iii) Standards used in the determination of the student’s grade are more exacting or demanding than those applied to other students in the course; or
 - (iv) The Final Grade is based upon standards that are significant, unannounced and unreasonable departures from those articulated in the course description/ syllabus distributed at the beginning of the course.
- (b) A Grade Dispute must be for legitimate disagreement and is not appropriate for use simply because a student disagrees with the course director’s or faculty preceptor’s judgement about the quality of the student’s work. Examples of legitimate disagreement could include, but are not limited to, the following:
- (i) Students are not informed of the basis for grade calculation in the syllabus, on the course site in the Learning Management System or prior to the assignment.
 - (ii) The student’s grade was not calculated in accordance with the stated policy in the syllabus, on the course site in the Learning Management System, or as provided prior to an assignment.

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- (iii) There is significant and unwarranted deviation from grading procedures and course syllabi established at the beginning of the course.
 - (iv) The Final Grade was assigned arbitrarily and capriciously; based on whim or impulse.
 - (v) There was an error in the computation of the Final Grade that was not corrected.
- (c) If a student disputes his or her final module or course grade, the student must submit a completed Grade Dispute form and required documentation to the program director within ten (10) working days of Grade Posting.
- (i) **Grade Dispute – Supported**

If the student’s request for a change of grade is supported, the course director must submit Grade Change Form to Enrollment Services. The decision of the program director is the final, binding resolution.
 - (ii) **Grade Dispute – Not Supported**

If the student’s request for a change of grade is not supported, the student may bring the grade dispute issue forward to the Vice Dean of the College of Graduate Studies or his/her designee. The Grade Dispute summary and required supporting documentation must be submitted to the Vice Dean of the College of Graduate Studies or his/her designee within ten (10) working days of the Program Director’s decision. The Vice Dean of the College of Graduate Studies or designee will evaluate and respond to the grade dispute within ten (10) working days. The decision of the Vice Dean of the College of Graduate Studies or designee is the final, binding resolution.

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- (d) In the event that the program director was the person assigning the grade that is the subject of dispute, the student must submit their grade dispute form and required supporting documentation within ten (10) working days of the grade assignment to the Vice Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The Vice Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, or designee, will evaluate the dispute from the student regarding the assignment of the grade within ten (10) working days of receiving the dispute. In this case, the decision of the Vice Dean, or designee, is the final, binding resolution.

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REFERENCES

FORMS – Course Grade Dispute Notification

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GRADE DISPUTE FORM

Disputes will be considered only when they meet one or more of the following criteria. Please indicate which of the following criteria is being used as the basis for the dispute: (check all that apply)

- Course director assigned grade based on something other than the student's performance in the course
- Course director did not adhere to the grading criteria specified in the syllabus
- Course director used standards more exacting or demanding than those applied to other students in the course
- Course director assigned grade based on standards that are significant, unannounced and unreasonable departures from those articulated in the syllabus
- Other (please explain)

Attach the required following supporting documentation (unless otherwise noted):

- Explanation of what occurred and how the criteria checked above applies to the situation
- Response correspondence from the course director
- Course syllabus
- Timeline of events relevant to the appeal
- Assignment or exam in question (if applicable)
- Correspondence with instructor (if applicable)
- Any other documentation supporting the dispute (information from course director if in final dispute stage)

I declare that the information on this form and all supporting documentation is true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I also understand that purposeful misrepresentation of my situation constitutes academic dishonesty and may make me subject to disciplinary action.

Student Signature

Date

Submit the completed form and required documentation to the Program director or the Vice Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.