

WRITING A GRADE APPEAL LETTER  
(Step 3 of the Grade Appeals Procedure)

The NIU Office of the Ombudsman recommends that the following format be utilized in the development of a letter to appeal a grade at Step 3 of the grade appeals process. This is by no means the only acceptable format, and you should certainly personalize your letter to address your specific circumstances. Be sure to carefully review the definition of "capricious grading" as delineated in the Grade Appeal Procedures.

The staff in the Office of the Ombudsman is available to go over a draft of your letter with you before it is sent should you desire us to do so. We do not write letters for you but can perhaps identify wording in your draft that might be altered to more clearly communicate your intent.

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(Date)

Dr. (insert name of dept. chair in which course was offered)  
Department of (insert name of department)  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, IL 60115

Dear Dr. (insert last name),

The first paragraph should briefly state the purpose for the letter, i.e., to appeal your grade to the departmental Grade Review Committee. Be sure to include the course name, number, and section, and the semester in which the course was taken.

The next section should present the reasons why the grade was assigned in a capricious manner as defined by the grade appeal procedures. It should include evidence for supporting that conclusion, including reference to enclosed copies of a syllabus, any graded tests and class assignments, or other materials that might pertain to your case.

The last paragraph should indicate whether or not you wish to attend the hearing (we recommend that you do, so that you can respond to questions from hearing board members) and thank the chairperson for his or her assistance.

Sincerely,

(your name)  
(your Z-ID number)  
(your address)  
(your phone number)