

ACADEMIC GRADE CHALLENGES/APPEALS

If a student believes that a grade on a particular assignment (not a final course grade) received is incorrect, the student shall:

- Discuss the grade with the faculty who assigned it.
- If the grade is deemed to be correct (no miscalculation of grade occurred) then the grade stands as issued. The faculty who assigned the grade shall notify the student of the decision in writing within five (5) business days.
- If the grade issued was in error (miscalculation of grade occurred) then the faculty corrects the grade and shall notify the student of the grade change within five (5) business days.

If a student receives a grade of less than 80 (B) for a written assignment, the student may request another faculty member to conduct a second, independent, blinded evaluation of the assignment. Students seeking a second evaluation of a failing written assignment must make the request to the course facilitator within five (5) days of the graded assignment being returned to the student. After the second faculty member grades the assignment, the course facilitator and the two evaluators will review and discuss the scores and reconcile the assignment grade. If the two faculty graders cannot reach a consensus grade, the average of the two scores will be used as the assignment grade.

Final Grade Appeal

Only final course grade(s) may be appealed to the appropriate Programmatic Department Chair if the student believes there is demonstrable evidence that prejudice, or arbitrary/capricious action on the part of the instructor has influenced the grade. **The burden of proof that such an influence has affected a grade rests with the student.**

Appeal Procedure

To appeal a grade, the student shall:

- File the Final Grade Appeal Form Attachment A, available on-line (<http://nursing.ttuhscc.edu/forms/>), within five (5) business days of the beginning of the next semester with the Department Chair.

Upon receipt of the required form:

- The Department Chair shall meet with the faculty and student separately and review all materials pertinent to the grade appeal. If two or more students are involved, the Department Chair, in his or her sole discretion, may meet with the students either separately or jointly.
- After review of all materials the Department Chair shall, within five (5) business days from receipt of the grade appeal form, render a decision. The student shall be notified of the decision via certified mail. A copy of the decision is forwarded to the Sr. Director, Administration and Student Affairs.
- All records related to the appeal are retained by the Department Chair in the students advising file for three (3) years.

If the student is not satisfied with the Department Chair's decision, within five (5) business days from the receipt of the decision the student shall:

- File a Request Form (Attachment B) to convene an appeals committee (located under current student resources at (<http://nursing.ttuhscc.edu/forms/>) to the Sr. Director for Administration and Student Affairs.

Upon receipt of the required form:

- The Sr. Director for Administration and Student Affairs shall direct the request form to the assigned Appellant Department Chair. Department Chairs, on a rotating basis, will serve as the Appellant Department Chair to coordinate appeal requests for review before an Appeals Committee.
- Should the designated Appellant Department Chair be the Department Chair that just reviewed the appeal, the Sr. Director for Administration and Student Affairs shall move to the next Department Chair on the list to conduct the next level of appeal.
- The Appellant Department Chair shall convene an appeals committee to review the student's request.
- The student shall submit in writing six copies of all additional information to support the appeal to the Sr. Director for Administrative and Student Affairs.

An appeals committee is formed, use the following guidelines.

- A list of seven names, which is comprised of four faculty and three students, will be selected for the Appeals Committee by the Appellant Department Chair. The appealing student may strike one faculty member and one student from the list. The five remaining names will be the five voting members of the Committee. The Committee shall select one of the faculty members to serve as chair.
- The student may have advisory counsel present during the Appeals Committee hearing. Counsel will not be allowed to speak, argue or conduct any questioning during the proceeding. If the student desires the presence of counsel, the student shall give written notice at least five (5) business days prior to the hearing to the Appellant Department Chair
- The student and members of the committee will receive copies of all materials pertinent to the appeal.
- The SCHOOL OF NURSING reserves the right to provide the student and members of the committee copies of all materials pertinent to the appeal prior to the date of the hearing. The SCHOOL OF NURSING shall record the hearing, but not the committee deliberations.

The appeals committee will make recommendations to the Department Chair.

- The committee's written recommendation(s) shall be forwarded to the Appellant Department Chair within one (1) business day of the conclusion of the hearing. All members shall sign the recommendation indicating their vote in favor of or in dissent of the committee's recommendations. The Appellant Department Chair may accept or reject the recommendation(s) or make a different decision. The Appellant Department Chair's written decision is sent to the committee members and to the student via certified mail within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the committee's decision.
- All substantive decisions of the Appellant Department Chair are final.
- The student may only appeal issues of procedural due process to the Dean of Nursing by filing a written notice of appeal to the office of the Dean within five (5) business days of the decision of the Appellant Department Chair. The decision of the Dean will be sent to the student via certified mail within ten (10) business days from the receipt of notice of appeal. The decision of the Dean is final.
- All records will be retained in the office of the Sr. Director for Administration and Student Affairs for three years.

Complaint or Grievance Resolution (Non-Grade Related)

- Students have the opportunity to register complaints about non-grade related issues through a formal procedure. It is the policy of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Nursing to affirm the right of its students to a prompt and fair resolution of a complaint or grievance. This applies to specific written grievances arising from matters affecting students' academic standing and performance, other than grades. Such non-grade related matters include a dispute or concern regarding some aspect of academic involvement arising from an administrative or faculty decision the student claims is unjust or from faculty, staff, or fellow student interaction(s).
- Complaint resolution procedures include both informal and formal processes. Prior to filing a formal written grievance, students are encouraged to first address their complaint informally with the faculty, staff, or student involved. Students should use the formal complaint procedure only as a last resort.
- The goal of the informal process is to establish communication between the student and the appropriate staff member for the purpose of providing a forum where the student's questions or concerns can be addressed and a satisfactory resolution developed.
- The student must meet with the appropriate faculty or staff member and discuss his/her concerns. If resolution cannot be reached by talking to the appropriate faculty or staff member or when contact with the faculty or staff member would be unduly distressful or embarrassing, the student may discuss alternatives with his/her department chair.
- The student must discuss the concern with the faculty, staff, or student directly involved (or, when necessary, the department chair) within twenty (20) working days of the alleged occurrence or the student will lose the opportunity to make a formal complaint. If students are unable to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion to their concerns via informal processes, they should complete and file a Student Complaint Form – Department. The form provides guidance for completing the form and how to file the form. All forms are available at [www.
http://nursing.ttuhscc.edu/forms/](http://nursing.ttuhscc.edu/forms/)

- The student has ten (10) working days from the date of the last meeting with the appropriate faculty, staff, or fellow student to file a written formal complaint form with the Department Chair of their program. If the time period exceeds ten (10) working days, an explanation of the reason for the delay must be attached to the complaint form along with a request for an extension of the timeline. The Department Chair considering the written complaint and the student must agree, in writing, upon an extension of the time period for extenuating circumstances. If the time period exceeds ten (10) working days and the student does not have a written extension agreement, the request for an investigation may be denied.
- The Department Chair will conduct an investigation of the student's complaint. A written response to the student's formal complaint will be mailed directly to the address the student listed on the complaint form no later than fourteen (14) working days from the date the complaint form was received in the Office of the Department Chair. Students who are not satisfied with the decision of the Department Chair and have additional information to be considered may appeal the decision to the Dean.

Appeal Procedure for Non-Grade Grievance

- The student has ten (10) working days from the date of receiving formal notification of the decision of the Department Chair to file a Student Complaint Form - Dean <http://nursing.ttuhschool.edu/forms/> with the Dean's Office. If the time period exceeds ten (10) working days, an explanation of the reason for the delay must be attached to the complaint form along with a request for an extension of the time. The Dean and the student must agree, in writing, upon an extension of the time period for extenuating circumstances. If the time period exceeds ten (10) working days and the student does not have a written extension agreement, the request for an investigation may be denied.
- An investigation will be conducted by a representative from the Office of the Dean for any additional information about the student's complaint. A written response to the student's formal complaint will be mailed directly to the address the student listed on the complaint form no later than fourteen (14) working days from the date the complaint form was received in the Office of the Dean. All decisions are final.
- All written formal complaint forms and related correspondence are maintained in the TTUHSC School of Nursing Written Complaint notebook housed in the Dean's Office. No party, committee member, other participant, or observer in the complaint/ grievance process shall reveal any facts, documents, or testimony gained through participating in or observing the complaint/grievance process to any other person, unless required by a court of law to do so or upon the advice of the TTUHSC legal counsel.

Timeline

Due to documented extenuating circumstances, timelines for course related grade appeals might be altered by the Department Chair.

***A business day is defined as a Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. when the SCHOOL OF NURSING offices are open even though students may not be attending classes or clinical assignments.

CODE OF ETHICS

Students are expected to function within the framework of the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code for Nurses. Students may purchase the Code for Nurses by contacting the American Nurses Association Publishing Company or it can be downloaded at <http://www.nursingworld.org/ethics/chcode.htm>.

COURSE LOADS

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Traditional Undergraduate Studies

▪ Traditional BSN Track

Undergraduate enrollment in 12 or more credit hours per semester (6 hours in each summer session or 12 hours in a full summer session) is considered a full time student. The number of semester credit hours a student may carry (course load) is regulated by the Department Chair. In determining this load, the Department Chair takes into account the quality of prior scholastic work performed and the types of courses involved. Permission is needed to enroll in more than 20 semester credit hours.