



Stony Brook
University

THE OMBUDS OFFICE

*We're here to listen with an open mind.
We're here to help resolve problems fairly.*

stonybrook.edu/ombuds • (631) 632-9200

Confidential *Impartial* *Informal* *Independent*

HANDLING GRADE DISPUTES

The class instructor is the main authority with respect to a student's proficiency and grade in a course. If you disagree with a grade your instructor gave you, the first thing to do is to be sure that you understand the basis of the grade. Good grades are not an entitlement just because you paid for and attended classes. They are a reflection of the quality of your effort in the course. Check the syllabus to see how grades are determined – the grading criteria. There could be a number of reasons for an incorrect grade:

- *The grading key was wrong*
- *Some of your work wasn't graded*
- *The formula used to calculate the grade was incorrectly applied or didn't follow the syllabus*
- *Your grade was incorrectly recorded*

When you feel you have been assigned an incorrect grade, here is the process you should follow:

1. **Prepare** your case why you think the grade was wrong.
2. **Submit** your case to the instructor as soon as possible. You can do this in an email then request a meeting with your instructor.
3. **Meet** with the instructor and go over your case. Most instructors will have no problem correcting an obvious error in grading. Where you might have an issue will be when the instructor's judgment is involved. Grade determination is the prerogative of the instructor.





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4. **Send** a follow-up note if you do not receive a response to your meeting request.
5. **Contact** the head of the department if you still did **not** receive a response from the instructor.

In order to challenge a grade, you will need to keep copies of all graded exams and papers, emails and assignments. Don't make any changes on graded work. Information about *formal* academic grievance procedures may be obtained from the:

Division of Undergraduate Education (631-632-7080) or the

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (631-632-8381)

Only charges of improper academic practices will be considered (*complaints of arbitrary, capricious, or improper actions related to grading or other academic matters, etc.*). Grievances should be filed only after the student has unsuccessfully attempted to resolve the issue with the instructor, the undergraduate program director and/or the department chair.

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