



Brandeis

UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychology Academic Appeal Instructions

Please review the Brandeis University policy for grade changes at this link:

<https://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/provisional/overview/annual-notice-to-students.html>

As a Department Chair, it is my duty to help to ensure that university and course policies, as on the syllabus, are applied consistently to all students. When disputes are referred to the Chair of Psychology, I can only review appeals when a student believes that fair and consistent grading procedures have not been followed. Such appeals cannot be based on differences in judgment or opinion concerning academic performance but must be based on problems of process, including the following situations:

- A procedural error occurred in the calculation or recording of a grade, and the student was unable to resolve this with the instructor.
- The grading decision was made on some basis other than academic performance and other than as a penalty for academic misconduct.
- The grading decision was based upon standards unreasonably different from those which were applied to other students in the same course and section.
- The grading decision was based on an unreasonable departure from previously articulated standards.

The burden of proof rests on the student to demonstrate that one or more of the above occurred. In those cases, the student should prepare a formal letter describing the basis of the appeal and providing evidence. Immediately after the final attempt to resolve the situation with the instructor, unresolved appeals can be submitted to the Department Chair. The student should prepare an appeal as **a Word or pdf document** which includes:

- The name of the student and instructor, the course name and number, and the semester.
- An explanation of how the grade is arbitrary and capricious, using the above criteria.
- The steps that have been taken to resolve the situation with the instructor.
- The course syllabus.
- Evidence (e.g., documentation of discussion with the instructor).

Please email appeals to gutchess@brandeis.edu. I plan to respond within 15 days. When there is a conflict of interest for the Department Chair, the Undergraduate Advising Head will appoint a faculty member to review the appeal.