

University of Michigan
Graduate Students Course Grade Grievance Procedures

This document outlines procedures to be followed in cases of course grade disputes between students taking graduate political science courses and their instructors.

Grading complaints should be referred initially to the faculty member who assigned the grade. Every effort should be made to gain agreement between the student and the faculty member without further intervention.

In extraordinary cases, where the issues cannot be resolved in this manner, a student may initiate formal grade grievance procedures. Departmental grievance procedures are intended to result in a recommendation, for or against change, to the appropriate faculty member. A grade given by a faculty member may be changed only by that faculty member. A grade given by a Graduate Student Instructor may be changed by that instructor or by the faculty supervisor of the course.

A student may invoke the departmental grievance procedures within the first eight weeks of classes of the first regular full term (Fall or Winter) following the completion of the course, or within eight weeks of the issuance of a grade removing an Incomplete.

In cases where a student wishes to submit a grade complaint to grievance procedures the following steps are to be followed in sequential order:

- A. The student will submit to the Department's Student Services Assistant a written complaint outlining the reasons why the grade is being contested. The complaint should be accompanied by all written assignments completed for that course.
- B. The Student Services Assistant will invite the instructor to reply in writing to the objections of the student, and will provide the student with a copy of any such communication.
- C. If the above procedure does not lead to resolution, the student may petition the Chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee for a hearing by a graduate grievance subcommittee constituted for that purpose. The Subcommittee consists of the Director of Graduate Studies (or a substitute faculty member from the Graduate Affairs Committee chosen by lot), one student member of that committee, and the Student Services Assistant who shall provide staff support. Within three weeks of receiving the petition the Chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee will inform the student and the Graduate Affairs Committee whether and when the Grade Grievance Subcommittee will be convened.
- D. If the grade grievance subcommittee is convened both parties to the dispute will be encouraged to participate. No additional persons will be permitted at the hearing.

without the advance approval of the hearing committee. If the graduate grade grievance subcommittee assents to the presence of any such persons, it will see to it that same privileges are extended to both sides.

- E. The grade grievance subcommittee will arrive at a recommendation, suggesting what action (if any) it feels should be taken. Copies of the recommendation will be sent to the student, the instructor who assigned the contested grade, the course supervisor (if the former is a GSI), and the Department Chair.
- F. If the Department declines to convene a grade grievance subcommittee, or if the student is dissatisfied with the subcommittee's decision, any further appeal that the student may wish to pursue should be directed to the departmental Executive Committee within two weeks of receiving notice of the above decisions.
- G. In unusual circumstances, the time limits specified above may be extended by the Department Chair.
- H. This document is not intended to cover grades from dissertation related evaluations or preliminary examinations

After the Department has taken action on a formal grade complaint, a student may appeal this decision to Rackham. The student should consult the grievance procedures (outlined in the Rackham handbook).