



How to Make Effective Appeals

In an appeal process, a group of faculty, staff, and possibly students, are involved in reviewing the special circumstances of a case a student is presenting asking for an exception to a policy or deadline. It is the responsibility of the student making the appeal to share all the pertinent information that may have contributed to the circumstances for appeal as well as documentation that supports the special circumstances. Reviewing appeals is a time-consuming process, so the appeal must be done right the first time. Here are some tips that will help facilitate the appeal process.

- 1) Read policies related to the appeal before starting the process to be sure that you have good reason for an appeal. It may be that you just need to share a complaint with appropriate individuals if you are not eligible for an appeal. If that is the case, visit the Student Complaint website at [provide the website link]
- 2) **Follow the directions to complete the appeal carefully.**
- 3) If there is a form, be sure to complete all sections of the form required. If you have a question about an item that is being asked on the form, ask how to answer appropriately.
- 4) Share the relevant facts of the situation from your perspective.
- 5) If a form is not used to gather information related to an appeal, all written communication should be done professionally and clearly, sharing facts, evidence, and needs that you are trying to fulfill. Always include your name and student ID number in the communication and write them from your UNT Dallas email account to help authenticate who you are.
- 6) **Include evidence that supports the facts of your appeal.** Not providing copies of supporting documentation will likely result in a denial of the appeal.
- 7) **Appeals should be thorough and include all pertinent details in the first attempt.** Students should not assume that they can share more and more information if they are denied their appeal for a lack of information.
- 8) It is reasonable to ask for the timeline at which your appeal may be reviewed and the method you may receive a decision.
- 9) Follow-up emails inquiring about the status of your appeal should be written professionally and clearly providing the date of submission.

Tips for Providing Supporting Documentation for Campus Appeals

Sometimes, it is difficult to determine what evidence to provide. This guide will provide some examples to consider based on what has been submitted in past appeals that were successfully granted.

Documentation that provides a time stamp or date of the event is important to help corroborate the event impacting the special circumstances presented.

Physical, Dental or Mental Illness

- Note from a primary medical professional or medical facility on official letterhead
- Proof of payment to a medical provider
- Medical documentation of diagnosis or treatment plan (can be redacted in some cases other than for a full medical withdrawal for a semester)
- COVID positive test results from a doctor or medication prescribed for the treatment if applicable
- COVID at-home test – photo of the positive test
- Illness that did not require medical appointment - An email or text notification to others (family, faculty, work, etc.) that sharing the nature of another illness or that you had a positive at-home COVID test result that has a date stamp to corroborate when you had the illness
- Medication prescription
- Official record of healthcare appointments from a provider
- NOTE: If there is a recovery period creating a special circumstance, providing documentation of the recovery period or release date is important to include.
- **NOTE: This documentation is relevant for the student or persons the student may care for as a primary caregiver such children and immediate family.**

Death in the Family

- Program from the funeral
- Obituary with timestamp or date information for the day of the funeral
- Copy of the death certificate (redact sensitive information)
- Proof of payment for funeral expenses
- An email or text notification to others (family, faculty, work, etc.) that shares the information with a date stamp
- Letter from a counselor providing follow-up grief treatment

Impact of a Disability

- An email from the Office of Disability Services confirming that you are registered to receive services
- Medical documentation of a diagnosis from a health-care professional
- Documentation of testing from a professional clinician, counselor, or therapist
- A letter from a clinician confirming on-going treatment
- Success plan developed with a university employee to deal with future impact

Change in Living Arrangements

- Hotel or temporary housing receipt
- New utilities set up
- Notice of eviction
- Insurance claim documentation
- Change of address documentation

- An email or text notification to others (family, faculty, work, etc.) that shares this information with a date stamp
- Letter from the transitional housing program with confirmation and/or length of stay information

Changes at Work Issues outside of Student Control

- Work schedule for the timeframe creating the special circumstances
- Notice of termination
- Notice of new hire
- Written notice of requirement for travel **not the norm for the held position** including the dates and span for travel

Victim of Assault/Domestic Violence or Crime

- Police report
- Insurance claims documentation
- Medical documentation
- Court documentation
- Letter from professional advocate or health-care professional
- Divorce decree or separation filing

Significant Daycare Issues

- Letter from the former daycare provider
- Letter from the new daycare provider

Difficulty with Course Technology

- Email to the technology provider and/or faculty reporting the problem with a time stamp
- Email from the technology provider corroborating the problem with a time stamp

Grade Appeal Documentation

- ***Must*** include a syllabus for the course
- Email or messages with a time stamps to and from the faculty member teaching the course
- Directions for an assignment, assignment content, and faculty feedback on an assignment
- Complete grade record

Change in Circumstances as a Result of Another Campus Appeal or New Information Shared by University Employee

- Original documentation of the other appeal and decision with a date stamp
- Email or letter from entity sharing the new information with a date stamp
- Success plan developed with a university employee to deal with future impact
- Copy of the degree audit if can illustrate change
- Pertinent Catalog or University Policy