

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General

How do I communicate with the Department Head?

Please direct communications to Biology.Head@uregina.ca.

Important notes:

- a) Please send your email from your uregina email account.
- b) Please include your name and student number.
- c) Please do not CC anyone else on your email.
- d) Please do not use the word “urgent” in the subject line or body of your email.

Please direct questions about graduate student openings or research opportunities to the Department Head’s personal email address.

I emailed the Department Head but I didn’t receive a response.

The Department Head will usually respond within a few days of receiving your email. Please monitor your “Junk” or “Spam” folder.

Please do not send multiple emails about the same issue, or to multiple individuals. Please send only one email to the Department Head only, and your email will be redirected or escalated as needed. Please do not CC anyone else.

Academic Advising (Course Sequence, Program Advice)

Who do I speak to if I want to discuss my program, find out how to arrange my schedule, or need help determining a path to graduation?

Please contact the Academic Hub and request an appointment to speak to an Academic Advisor.

Courses and Registration

Can I request a prerequisite override for a course?

Prerequisites are in place to ensure that students taking a particular course will have the necessary foundation to be successful. Prerequisite overrides are granted only in exceptional circumstances, and only for some electives. Override decisions are based solely on academic grounds, and usually following a recommendation by an Academic Advisor. Prerequisite overrides will not be granted for new/incoming students.

Please ensure that you speak to an Academic Advisor on how to plan your program to avoid having to request prerequisite overrides.

How do I go about requesting entry into a course that is already full?

There is no need to email the Department Head when a course is full. Course capacities are constantly being evaluated and adjusted to accommodate as many waitlisted students as possible. Course capacities begin to be adjusted approximately one month prior to the beginning of the semester. In addition, there are frequently course drops at the beginning of each semester as students make changes to their semester schedules.

Please add yourself to the waitlist to ensure that you are in the best position to register for the course in the event a seat opens up. Importantly, some Biology courses have a maximum enrolment capacity because of lecture hall or laboratory fire codes, laboratory safety, or fieldwork constraints.

How do I go about requesting entry into a lab section that is already full?

Depending on the course, there are sometimes extra spaces available in each lab, and we will attempt to accommodate those students who have a time conflict with another course. Please contact the Department Head no earlier than two weeks before the beginning of the semester.

Can I get a lab exemption if I am retaking a course that I failed so I don't have to do the lab all over again?

No lab exemptions are permitted; students repeating the course must also repeat the laboratory component.

How do I go about requesting permission to take more than five 3-credit hour courses in a semester?

The maximum number of registered credit hours a student may have in the fall and winter terms is normally 15. For the spring or summer terms, the normal maximum number of registered credit hours a student may have is 12.

Registering for more than the maximum allowed for any given semester, permission is required from the Faculty of Science Associate Dean Academic. Please contact the Academic Hub for further guidance.

I failed the same course twice. How do I go about getting permission to take it a third time?

This requires permission from the Associate Dean Academic. Please contact the Science Academic Hub for further guidance.

How do I go about requesting that a specific course be offered?

The Department of Biology may sometimes not be able to offer a specific course due to instructor sabbaticals, teaching releases, or other accommodations. All courses that can be offered will be offered. Please do not contact the Department Head or the Dean's Office to ask that a specific course be offered.

Issues with Current Courses or Instructors

How do I go about appealing a grade I received for an exam or course/lab assignment?

Grade appeals are described in the Academic Calendar (see the Academic Calendar for the most up to date information). For both procedural and substantive appeals, students must submit their appeal within 20 business days of receiving the grade for a piece of course work. In the case of an appeal of final grade the appeal must be made within 20 business days of the final grade being posted to their UR Self-Service account.

Procedural (ie. handled by the course instructor)

A procedural appeal of grade is initiated when a student believes that there has been a procedural error in the calculation of their grade. In these cases, the student will contact the instructor of the course and make a request for the calculation of their grade to be reviewed. The instructor will review the grading records and, if an error is found, the grade will be changed accordingly. A student who is unable to contact the instructor should contact the faculty, federated college, or academic unit offering the course so that it can be escalated to the appropriate faculty member for assistance. Grade changes will be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

Substantive (ie. handled by the Department Head)

A substantive appeal of grade is initiated when:

1. a student believes a grade to course work was assigned on some basis other than academic achievement;
2. or the published evaluation standards differ from the evaluation standards applied to the assigned grade.

Please note that substantive grade appeals based on something other than one of the above two scenarios will be denied.

A substantive appeal of grade is initiated by the student through having an informal discussion of the grade with the course instructor. This informal discussion can help to facilitate misunderstandings about the grade as well as to help the student understand how the grade was determined. If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal discussion, they may submit a formal appeal of grade to the Registrar's Office.

The following must be submitted:

- a completed Appeal of Grade form;
- a letter specifying the grounds for the appeal and the date of the informal discussion with the instructor;
- the original (graded) copy of the course work (students are responsible to retain original (graded) copies of their course work, including downloading copies of graded course work from UR courses).
- the required fee.

What do I do if my professor isn't responding to my emails?

Please consult the course syllabus for the best method to contact your professor. If you are attempting to use URCourses mail (either email or instant messaging), please ensure that your professor has indicated that this is an acceptable communications method.

Occasionally, some emails, particularly those from "yahoo.ca" and "yahoo.com" may be flagged as spam. If the instructor is still not responding, please send an email to the Department Head to ask for assistance.

Illness and Absences

How do I make up for coursework if I am leaving the country during the semester?

Instructors in the Department of Biology are unable to accommodate students who choose to leave the country in the middle of the semester for personal or leisure travel.

Students are expected to attend all lectures and labs for all in-person courses, and to complete all coursework. The 2024/2025 Academic Calendar states:

Regular and punctual attendance at classes provides a foundation for academic success and is expected of all students. When the persistent lateness or absence of a student jeopardizes the learning or the evaluation of the work of other students in the course, the student may be subject to penalty. One written warning will be provided to a student before action is taken. This includes, but is not limited to:

- *being dropped from the course;*

- *being barred from writing the final exam; or,*
- *being barred from attending a class or components of a class.*