Writing Proficiency Evaluation Appeal Process

The University of Massachusetts, Boston Writing Proficiency Evaluation is a junior-level evaluation to determine if your writing skills will satisfy the writing demands of upper-division courses. During WPE grading, each student’s work is evaluated by at least two and as many as four different faculty evaluators, who are UMB faculty from across colleges and disciplines. Evaluation of your writing is based exclusively on the standards described in the Elements of Writing Proficiency. The Writing Proficiency evaluation score is based solely on whether or not the writing that you submitted demonstrates proficient writing—as described in the Elements of Writing Proficiency.

WPE Appeals Process

The appeals committee will read your appeal letter first. Next, the committee will review your timed-essay exam or portfolio and the readers’ report, both to evaluate if your writing supports your argument, and to determine whether your arguments are convincing.

The Appeal Committee’s decision is final.

The Appeal Letter

Your letter of appeal should be addressed to the Appeals Committee; the letter should be 1-2 pages in length, properly formatted, professional, and proofread. The appeals committee will review your letter and the entire contents of your Writing Portfolio or your timed-essay exam. You will be notified in writing of the decision. You should deliver your letter to the Writing Proficiency Office, CC 1/1300 by 4:00 p.m. on the due date.

A letter of appeal should address the issues raised in the readers’ reports and make a clear, strong argument for seeing your timed-essay exam or portfolio as a pass.

Your task in the appeal letter is to:

- Demonstrate that you understand the criteria used to evaluate your portfolio or timed-essay exam
- Demonstrate that you understand the issues raised by the readers’ reports
- Analyze your writing and the criteria in order to convince the appeals committee that your writing is proficient
- Convince the appeals committee that your writing really does the work demanded by the Elements, the essay question, and the reading set
- Explain how your essay demonstrates critical reading, writing, and thinking, as described in the Elements
- Quote your paper and readers’ comments that are relevant to your argument.

It is not relevant to raise any issue that does not directly relate to how your timed-essay or portfolio demonstrates your writing proficiency.