

Here are Some Key Points to Remember in Meetings or Hearings With a Chair, Associate Dean, or Dean of a Faculty

1) *Body language & tone of voice are important.* Uncross your arms and leave your body language open. This signals to the other person you are open to speaking. Keep your tone of voice neutral and calm. If you are calm-you will see this tone and body language reflected in your meeting by those attending.

2) *Prepare your main points ahead of time.* Be prepared to demonstrate your position, but not defend. What this means is that you need to treat your concern or appeal as factual as possible. For example, In final grade appeal situations, this means focusing on your academic work and demonstrating how your paper/exam may have opportunity for additional marks. Imagine you are a reporter—just dishing out the facts—no bias—You need to demonstrate a willingness to hear the other person’s point of view. What you gain at this meeting will be valuable information for you regardless of the outcome.

3) *Ask questions to gain deeper understanding.* Tip: “Why” questions will signal to another person that you are on the defense and will argue your position. “What/How/Where” or even some open-ended questions (IE: Tell me more about where you see the gaps in the analysis. Describe something critical for me so that we have the same understanding). This will demonstrate to the other person that you are ready to have a discussion rather than an argument.

4) *Show them you understand what they’re saying by paraphrasing.* (i.e., “So you’re saying this sentence doesn’t show the level of analysis you were looking for, is that correct?”) It’s a good practice to check understanding with the other person in the conversation, as it shows them that you are *actively* hearing what they are telling you.

5) *Be courteous and respectful and thank them for their time.* Remember that any meeting is beneficial for fact-finding and to get an idea of what kinds of options they are considering giving your specific situation. Be open to what they have to say as much as possible.