

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**PROPOSAL FROM THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE REGARDING THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF PLUS/MINUS GRADING SYSTEM FOR UNDERGRADUATES**

On behalf of the Educational Policy Committee, Professor Desmond Lawler (professor, civil, architectural, and environmental engineering and committee chair) submitted the following motion concerning the implementation of the plus/minus grading system for undergraduates at The University of Texas at Austin. The secretary has classified this proposal as *general* legislation, which will be presented to the Faculty Council at its meeting on November 12, 2007.

Sue Alexander Greninger, Secretary
The Faculty Council and General Faculty

**PROPOSAL FROM THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE REGARDING THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF PLUS/MINUS GRADING SYSTEM FOR UNDERGRADUATES**

The Educational Policy Committee offers the following motion (all of the following document) concerning the implementation of plus/minus grading in undergraduate courses at The University of Texas at Austin.

1. *The Faculty Council recommends that, in the implementation of the plus/minus grading system adopted for undergraduate courses, all references in future official university publications requiring minimum grades of (1) C be changed to C minus, (2) B be changed to B minus, and (3) A be changed to A minus. Exceptions to this change in individual courses, degree requirements, and academic policies must be made by the appropriate academic units through the normal processes.*

Rationale: When the plus/minus grading policy is implemented, as a default policy the academic performance required under the new grading policy should be the same as under the current policy. The proposed wording changes are required to preserve the current requirements in all degree programs. Since we expect, for example, the lowest “C” grades in the current system to become “C minus” grades in the new plus/minus system, the proposed wording maintains the same requirement for academic performance. However, any academic units that desire a different academic standard with the new system are free to establish it.

The most common example of a specified minimum grade requirement is for a prerequisite course. In addition, some degree plans specify that a grade of C or better must be achieved in all of a set of courses.

2. The new scale for undergraduates includes the following grades and grade points:

Grade	Grade points
A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00
D-	.67
F	0

3. The adoption of this new grading scale will not change requirements that are based on any calculated GPA; examples of GPA requirements include scholastic probation, academic dismissal, graduation, continuation in certain programs, and access to specific courses (based on performance in more than one previous course).
4. The new grading scale will be implemented on a “day forward” basis, being effective beginning in fall 2009 and thereafter. This scheduled start date will be adhered to unless the Office of the Registrar states that it cannot ensure that all of the necessary processes are in place to assure an orderly transition; in that case, it will begin at the start of the first academic year after such assurance can be made. The new grading system will not be effective until it is described in *General Information*.
5. If, as proposed, the implementation occurs in fall 2009, references in the 2008-2010 catalog to grades of C, B, or A will be interpreted to include associated (plus and) minus grades for the sake of satisfying prerequisite or degree requirements. In subsequent catalogs, all references to grades will be interpreted literally; that is, for example, a grade of C- (*C minus*) will not meet requirements for a grade of C. In

accordance with item 1, references to specific grades in academic requirements will be changed in the 2010-2012 catalog to the associated minus, unless an academic unit specifies otherwise.

6. The new scale will not be valid for grade changes made to a student's record for semesters before the grading scale became effective.
7. All undergraduate students will be subject to the plus/minus grading scale.¹
8. The new grading scale will be used for college-level courses offered through the Division of Continuing Education.
9. The new grading scale will be used for courses taken through international exchange (SAB).
10. The new grading scale is not valid for grades posted for credit by exam since letter grades are no longer valid for credit by exam.
11. The Office of Admission will calculate grade point averages for admission purposes (for both transfer and graduate students) and post transfer credit using this scale if the student originates from an institution that uses a scale with plus and minus grades.
12. The Office of Admission will update their information for applicants beginning with the admissions class of summer and fall of 2009; the review of which begins around September 1, 2008.
13. In order to earn a symbol of "CR" in the current grading system, an undergraduate must earn a grade of *D* or better, which is considered the lowest passing grade. With the adoption of the new grading scale *D* (*D minus*) will be considered the lowest passing grade.
14. Currently a grade interpretation exists for valid letter grades for undergraduates (*A* excellent, *B* above average, *C* average, *D* pass, *F* failure). The adoption of this new grading scale does not include a change to this interpretation or add interpretive values to the new grades. Since we will no longer have interpretive values to all grades, we will discontinue use of all of those terms to define grades.
15. The registrar's office will revise *General Information*, the graduate and undergraduate catalogs, the course inventory, the official transcript, the grade mailer, the Grades and Symbols web page, and University-level degree audit rules as directed by D 5316-5318 and the current proposal. If an academic unit wishes to change the course inventory, degree requirements, or academic policies because of the availability of plus/minus grading, those changes will be proposed via the normal approval processes.

¹ Friendly amendment accepted by the committee and the Faculty Council on December 10, 2007.