

OCTOBER 16, 1996

The first meeting of the Twin Cities Campus Assembly for 1996-97 was convened in the Whiting Proscenium Theater, Rarig Center, Minneapolis campus, on Wednesday, October 16, 1996, at 2:00 p.m. Checking or signing the roll as present were 81 voting faculty/academic professional members, 16 student members, 3 ex officio members, and 3 nonmembers. Professor Virginia Gray, Chair of the Assembly Steering Committee, presided.

**I. MINUTES FOR APRIL 18, MAY 2, MAY 16, AND MAY 30, 1996****Action**

The Assembly minutes are available on the World Wide Web at the following URL:  
[www.umn.edu/usenate/tcca/tcca.html](http://www.umn.edu/usenate/tcca/tcca.html).

**APPROVED****II. EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE****Uniform Grading and Transcript Policy****Action****Preamble**

At its May 2, 1996, meeting, the University Senate approved a motion to ask the UMC, UMD, UMM, and UMTC campus Assemblies to consider the following proposed policy and report their actions to the University Senate during fall quarter 1996.

**MOTION:**

To approve the following proposed Uniform Grading and Transcript Policy:

**University of Minnesota**  
**Uniform Grading and Transcript Policy**

**I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. There are two distinct grading systems on each campus of the University of Minnesota, A-B-C-D-F (with pluses and minuses) and S-N. The S-N system is a self-contained alternative to the A-F system and the two may not be combined for a particular student in a particular course. Students may receive grades or symbols only from the grading system under which they have registered for a course.
2. There are, in addition, registration symbols identified and described in this policy that carry neither grade nor credit.
3. No student may receive a Bachelor's degree unless at least 75 percent of the degree-qualifying residence credits carry grades of A, B, C, or D (with or without a plus or minus attached to it). Colleges and units may choose not to accept academic work receiving a D (with or without a plus or minus).
4. Each college, campus, and program shall determine to what extent and under what conditions each of these two systems may be available to its students and to its faculty, consistent with the provisions of this policy. Any college, campus, or program may specify what courses or proportion of courses taken by its students or its prospective students must be on one or the other grading system. No campus, college, or program is required to offer a course on the S-N grading system. Any unit may choose to limit grades in a particular course to the A-F or the S-N system.

5. When both grading systems are available to a student, he or she must declare a choice of system as part of the initial registration for the course. The choice may not be changed after the end of the second week of classes (the first week in summer sessions).
6. Except as provided in this policy in Sections I (8) and IV (5), no college may use any grading system other than the one established by this policy.
7. The University's official transcript, the chronological record of the student's enrollment and academic performance, will be released by the University only at the request of the student or in accord with state or federal statutes; mailed copies will include the official seal of the University imprinted on them. Students may obtain an unofficial transcript of their own academic work at their request, except when they have a transcript hold on their record.
8. The Law School and the Medical School are exempt from the provisions of this policy, but shall report their grading systems, and any changes therein, to the Senate. Any other units which believe that the national norms of their profession require a different grading system may make application to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy for an exemption from this policy; all such exemptions must be approved by the University Senate.

II. PERMANENT GRADES FOR ACADEMIC WORK

1. **There are five permanent grades which shall be acceptable for the completion of a single course**, which will be entered on a student's official transcript. Grades include pluses and minuses, as follows, and carry the indicated grade points. The S grade shall carry no grade points but the credits shall count toward the student's degree program if allowed by the college, campus, or program.

These definitions apply to grades awarded to students who are not enrolled in graduate programs, but the grade points are the same no matter the level or course of enrollment. It is understood throughout the University that grades at the graduate level have different meaning.

A	4.00 . . . .	Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
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A-	3.67	
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B+	3.33	
B	3.00 . . . .	Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
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B-	2.67	
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C+	2.33	
C	2.00 . . . .	Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
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C-	1.67	
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D+	1.33	
D	1.00 . . . .	Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails fully to meet the course requirements.

D- 0.67

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S -0- Represents achievement that is **satisfactory**, i.e., is equivalent to a 2.00 and meets or exceeds the course requirements in every respect.

2. **There are two permanent grades given for a single course for which no credit shall be awarded and which will be entered on a student's official transcript.**

F (or) N Represents **failure** (or) **no credit** and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I (see item 4). Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course. Neither the F nor the N shall carry any grade points.

Students who enroll for a course on the A-F grading system shall receive an F if such grade is warranted; students who enroll for a course on the S-N system shall receive an N if such grade is warranted.

3. In connection with all symbols of achievement, and especially for the S, instructors shall define for a class, at one of its earliest meetings and as explicitly as possible, the performance that will be necessary to earn each (subject to the provision in this policy that the amount and quality of work required for an S may not be less than that required for a C [2.00]).
4. Every student shall have calculated, both at the end of each grading period (quarter or semester) and cumulatively, a grade point average, which shall be the ratio of grade points earned divided by the number of credits earned with grades of A-F (including pluses and minuses). Both the periodic and cumulative grade point average will appear on each student's record.

All special grade point averages calculated at the request of a college or unit, if approved by the appropriate chancellor, provost, or vice president, will be accommodated by the Office of the Registrar in such a manner that they do not appear on the student's official transcript or any unofficial transcript which might be issued.

### III. OTHER TRANSCRIPT SYMBOLS

1. There shall be a temporary grade I, **incomplete**, awarded to indicate that the work of the course has not been completed.

The I shall be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The assignment of an I requires a written agreement between the instructor and student specifying the time and manner in which the student will complete the course requirements during the student's next period of enrollment.

For undergraduates and adult special students, work to make up an I must be submitted within 72 hours of the last final examination of the student's next period of enrollment at the University; if not submitted by that time, in the sixth week of the next term the I will automatically change to an F (if the student was registered on the A-F system) or an N (if the student was registered on the S-N system) for the course.

When an I is changed to another symbol, the I is removed from the record. Once an I has become an F or an N, under the provisions of the preceding paragraph, it may subsequently be converted to any other grade, upon petition by the instructor (or the department if the instructor is unavailable) to the college.

A student does not need to be registered at the University in order to complete the work necessary to convert an I to a grade with credit in the time and manner previously agreed upon between the student and the

instructor. The instructor is expected to turn in the new grade within four weeks of the date the work was submitted by the student.

2. There shall be a symbol T, **transfer**, posted as a prefix to the original grade, to indicate credits transferred from another institution or from one college or campus to another within the University when reevaluation is required.
3. There shall be a symbol V, **visitor**, indicating registration as an auditor or visitor, which shall carry no credit and no grade.
4. If a student officially withdraws from a course during the first two weeks of classes, there shall be no record of that course registration entered on the student's transcript.

There shall be a symbol W, **withdrawal**, entered upon a student's record when the student officially withdraws from a course in accordance with procedures established by the student's college or campus. The W will be entered on the transcript irrespective of the student's academic standing in that course if the student withdraws from the course during the third through sixth week of class (second or third weeks of summer sessions). Withdrawal in the seventh or later week of classes (fourth or later in summer sessions) shall require approval of the college and may not be granted solely because a student is failing the course; there must extenuating non-academic circumstances justifying late withdrawal.

Each student may, once during his or her undergraduate enrollment, withdraw from a course without college approval, and receive the transcript symbol W, after the sixth week of class and at any time up to and including the last day of class for that course.

5. There shall be a symbol X, indicating a student may continue in a continuation course in which a grade cannot be determined until the full sequence of courses is completed. The instructor shall submit a grade for each X when the student has completed the sequence.
6. There shall be a symbol K, assigned by an instructor to indicate the course is still in progress and that a grade cannot be assigned at the present time.

#### IV. OTHER PROVISIONS

1. In those instances when a college or campus permits a student to repeat a course, (a) all grades for the course shall appear on the official transcript, (b) the course credits may not be counted more than once toward degree and program requirements, and (c) only the last enrollment for the course shall count in the student's grade point average. Section (IV [1] [b]) of this policy shall not apply to courses using the same number but where students study different content each term of enrollment; all such courses falling under this provision must be approved by the college.
2. Any college or campus may set special scholastic or other standards for registration in a particular course, for scholastic probation, admission, honors, continued residence, degrees, and other purposes they deem appropriate.
3. All grades for all courses each period (quarter or semester) shall be submitted to the Office of the Registrar no later than 72 hours after the last final examination for that term.
4. This grading system shall go into effect fall quarter 1997, thereby replacing all previous University, campus and college grading systems except those of the Law School and the medical schools. Its grades, symbols, and provisions may not be applied retroactively to any grades or symbols awarded before that time. Each transcript will clearly identify the procedures under which it was produced and will be maintained and released under policies in effect during the time of the student's registration.
5. Only the Senate Committee on Educational Policy shall have the authority to grant to individual colleges or

campuses permission to use alternative grading methods outside the provisions of this official University system, for a specified period (but no longer than five years), and only for the purpose of experimenting with a new grading system for possible system-wide adoption. Such permission may be granted if the proposal does not interfere significantly with the registration options of students from other colleges, campuses, and programs. Such alternative systems shall be reported for information to the University Senate as soon as permitted and, after the specified period, shall be re-evaluated, either to be discontinued, or with Senate approval on recommendation from the Senate Committee on Educational policy, made part of the system-wide policy. Except for the provisions of this section 6, no college or program may use any grading system except for the one contained in this policy.

Because alternative grading systems, once used, must be maintained by the University for decades afterward (to preserve the integrity of the transcripts), the Senate Committee on Educational Policy will rarely grant permission for alternative grading systems. It will consider doing so only when (1) those who propose it can make a persuasive case that the alternative is a more accurate and effective way to measure and record student academic performance, and (2) there is strong reason to believe that the proposal will be useful to all colleges and campuses of the University (except the Law School and medical schools).

6. The chancellors and provosts shall resolve disputes between and among colleges and campuses should procedures developed for this grading system result in unacceptable complications for students registering across college lines or across campuses. They should bring to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy issues they are unable to resolve informally through negotiation, with recommendations for resolution.
7. A student shall have the right to petition the college scholastic committee or other appropriate body concerning any of the provisions of this policy.

LAURA COFFIN KOCH, Chair

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Professor Laura Koch introduced the Uniform Grading and Transcript Policy and recalled for senators the May 2, 1996, Senate action to ask the UMC, UMD, UMM, and UMTC campus assemblies to individually consider the proposal and report their action to the Senate during fall quarter 1996. The Morris Campus Assembly approved the proposal last spring and the Crookston and Duluth campuses are expected to take action soon. Professor Koch then briefly reviewed the proposal.

With regard to withdrawals, a senator inquired about the type of documentation that will be required to withdraw from a course and whether it will be a departmental decision. Professor Koch replied that each student may, once during his or her undergraduate enrollment, withdraw from a course without college approval. After that, collegiate approval will be required.

In response to a question concerning the meaning of the phrase, "it is understood throughout the University that grades at the graduate level have different meaning," Professor Koch said that in many graduate programs a "C," for example, is not considered a passing grade and that the policy recognizes that kind of differentiation. She clarified that the policy applies to both undergraduate and graduate students, but that the meaning of a grade may differ between the two groups.

Another senator asked whether that difference in meaning will appear in the Graduate School bulletin and Professor Koch thought it would.

Next, concern was expressed that U of M students may not look competitive with comparable students from schools that do not have the plus/minus system and asked how that can be prevented. About 65-80% of peer institutions use a plus/minus grading system, responded Professor Koch. She did not believe students would be at a competitive disadvantage.

"Is the plus/minus aspect of this policy mandatory?" inquired a senator. It is mandatory in the sense that it is a system that the students will expect, said Professor Koch. Professors will not be required to give plus or minus grades

if there are no students who meet those requirements.

Another senator noted that with all the pluses and minuses, there are many division lines. When an essay exam is given, it becomes extremely difficult to make a distinction between each of the grade divisions and this might put pressure on people within the University to give fewer of these kinds of exams.

At this time the question was called and the proposal, as presented, was approved on a voice vote by a majority of members presenting and voting.

**APPROVED**

**III. EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE  
Twin Cities Undergraduate Course and Curriculum Committee  
Action**

**MOTION:**

To amend Article III of the Bylaws of the Twin Cities Campus Assembly to add a new Bylaw 9, as follows:

**ARTICLE III. TWIN CITIES CAMPUS ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES**

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**9. UNDERGRADUATE COURSE AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

The Undergraduate Course and Curriculum Committee shall establish guidelines and procedures, within the framework of the educational policies adopted by the Senate and Twin Cities Assembly, to review all undergraduate course proposals that have been approved by the appropriate college curriculum committee in order to consider factors that would affect curriculum and policies across collegiate units and across the campus as a whole.

**Membership**

The Undergraduate Course and Curriculum Committee shall be jointly appointed by the Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Committees and the Provosts of the Twin Cities campus and shall be composed of tenured or tenure-track faculty and students. It shall have 19 faculty members: 1 from each college (appointed by the curriculum committees); 3 dean designees (appointed by the provosts -- two from Arts, Sciences, and Engineering and one from Professional Studies), 3 undergraduate students (appointed by the Committee on Committees), and ex officio representation as specified by vote of the Assembly.

The chair shall be a tenured faculty member, shall be appointed by the Provost for Arts, Sciences, and Engineering, in consultation with SCEP, and shall serve as an ex officio member of the Educational Policy Committee. Until September 1, 2000, the position of the chair shall be a 50-percent time funded appointment.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

- a. To develop guidelines for use by college curriculum committees. The criteria for course approval shall include policies adopted by the University Senate and the Twin Cities Campus Assembly, including but not limited to those that govern the relationship between credits and contact time, the relationship between credit and student academic effort, time constraints for completion of a degree program, and the number of credits necessary for graduation.
- b. To review all undergraduate majors and program proposals. This includes reviewing the overall undergraduate curriculum of the Twin Cities campus, including programs offered, the breadth and sufficiency of course offerings, and the requirements of the programs (including those established by the Council on Liberal Education).

- c. To settle disputes regarding possible duplications in courses that have been approved by college curriculum committees and proposed for the change to semesters. This includes consideration of the similarity between and among courses that are offered in more than one college. The committee will determine, with consultation from the college curriculum committees, faculty proposing the courses, and college administrators, the necessity of offering similar courses and whether one or several courses shall be offered. Such disputes will ONLY be considered when brought to the TCUCCC by one or more collegiate units. Recommendations of the committee shall be forwarded to the Provosts.
- d. To establish timelines for submission of course proposals to the committee.
- e. To report to the Assembly Committee on Educational Policy and the Twin Cities campus provosts.
- f. To recommend to the Committee on Educational Policy such actions or policies it deems appropriate.
- g. To submit an annual report to the provosts and to the Assembly.

**COMMENT:**

The Assembly Committee on Educational Policy (ACEP) received a suggestion from the Change to Semesters Coordinating Group that it should consider recommending the establishment of a Twin Cities campus undergraduate course and curriculum committee. ACEP, after discussing it, was persuaded that there are several reasons that such a committee should be established.

Following comments at the Assembly meeting of May 2, ACEP revised the charge to the committee and now presents it for action by the Assembly.

(1) All courses proposed for the semester system should be reviewed to ensure adherence to the Semester Conversion Standards, other Senate policies, and to guard as much as possible against course duplication and overlap.

(2) The committee would review majors and programs for semester system implementation.

(3) The committee would establish guidelines for use by the college curriculum committees in the approval of semester courses.

(4) Once semester courses have been established, the committee would be responsible for adjudicating disputes between colleges about curriculum and course offerings when brought forth by collegiate units.

(5) The committee will NOT duplicate the work of college curriculum committees, nor would it, except in rare instances, review the substantive content of courses. (For example, an exception might be when two colleges appear to be offering courses with the same content.)

(6) This proposal goes beyond the impending change to semesters. It responds to issues of the University's financial environment and the belief of ACEP that the Twin Cities campus needs to be financially responsible. This issue has been raised by the Steering Committee on RCM in its identification of the need to "establish or assign to a permanent academic committee the responsibility to monitor the consequences of the proposed changes to program offerings, research and curriculum of the institution."

The temporary funding for the chair's position, staff and general support, and summer salary supplements for (1997) for the membership, will be provided by central administration.

LAURA COFFIN KOCH, Chair

**DISCUSSION:**

Professor Koch recalled for senators that the proposal to establish a Twin Cities Undergraduate Course and Curriculum Committee was brought to the Assembly during spring quarter but failed to receive the required votes

necessary to enact the Bylaw change. The Educational Policy Committee (SCEP), she said, has since modified the proposal taking into account the senators comments. One change, she noted, is that the committee will be larger and will include a representative from each of the Twin Cities college curriculum committees.

Professor Koch clarified that it was not the SCEPs intention that the committee would take over the work of the individual college curriculum committees. In other words, it will not review in depth each course proposed for the semester system. It will, however, review undergraduate major and program proposals, looking across all colleges on the Twin Cities campus.

The committee will also settle disputes if there are course duplications. This will become very important, said Professor Koch, with the onset of Responsibility Centered Management (RCM).

In response to a question about the guidelines for settling disputes, Professor Koch replied that the committee's recommendations are to be forwarded to the Provosts. The committee would be making recommendations in an advisory capacity to the Provosts. Without the committee, decisions will be made solely by the Provosts without faculty input.

At this time the vote was taken and the motion failed to receive the 90 affirmative votes necessary for approval. [vote: 64 yes, the 'no' vote was not called for]

**NOT APPROVED**

#### **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

**NONE**

#### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

Senator Purple read the following statement:

"The Faculty Senate leadership declared in September that it had to postpone all considerations of the tenure code by the Faculty Senate and by its committees in order to comply with the cease and desist order. That order for the status quo is still in effect. Why have they now decided to bring the tenure code considerations back in front of the Faculty Senate in obvious violation of their own position and that of the status quo order? While the Law School is not under the cease and desist order, the Faculty Senate, as a 'defacto' part of the Administration is. The Law School faculty can keep the negotiation window open to their hearts content, and can keep the Faculty Senate informed of their negotiations, but the Faculty Senate cannot participate in such negotiations directly without violating the law. Because the Regents have decided to violate the status quo order on their own, does not mean that the Faculty Senate should follow suit."

In response, Professor Virginia Gray, Chair of the Faculty Consultative Committee, explained that consultation was suspended in September because the proposals on the table were for units under the Status Quo Order. The proposals now on the table are for the Law School, which does not fall under the Order. Moreover, at the most recent Board of Regents meeting, the Board directed the Faculty Senate to provide consultation. The Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) has been advised by its counsel that if the Faculty Senate does not provide consultation, it can be perceived as having waived that right. The FCC believes it is important to try to structure an outcome in which the Regents will adopt a tenure code that faculty feel good about. Therefore, it is in the best interests of the faculty if the Faculty Senate does not waive its right to consult.

"Is the Faculty Senate under the Status Quo Order?" inquired Professor Purple. Professor Gray replied that



the Faculty Senate will only be consulting with respect to the Law School and that it will be up to the Faculty Senate to decide what action it wants to take. The Status Quo Order does not prevent faculty from discussing tenure.

Another senator raised a separate concern. As a faculty member who teaches in St. Paul, he said it is not uncommon for approximately 30 percent of his class to come in late because the students just got off the intercampus bus and another 25 percent to leave early to catch the bus back to the Minneapolis campus. He urged the Educational Policy Committee to reconsider the issue of staggering the starting time for classes on the two campuses.

Ironically, Professor Koch said, the Educational Policy Committee discussed that very issue just prior to the Assembly meeting and is planning to discuss it with the Council of Deans on the St. Paul campus. Hopefully, if some agreement can be reached, the schedule will be changed for Spring Quarter which is the earliest time a change could be implemented. It would then stay that way until the change to semesters in the Spring of 1999.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

**Martha Kvanbeck**  
**Abstractor**