

Faculty Senate Agenda

November 3, 2003
3:30 p.m.

Call to order

Approval of Minutes

October 6, 2003

Report from the President: Senator Glasser

Report from the Executive Committee Chair: Senator Johnson

Report from the Faculty Regent: Senator Schlomann

Report from the COSFL Representative: Senator Siegel

Report from the Provost: Senator Cook

Report from the Student Senate: Kristina O'Brien

Report from the Standing Committees:

Budget Committee: Senator Siegel

Rules Committee: Senator M. Yoder

Rights and Responsibilities Committee: Senator Dunston

Elections Committee: Senator DeBolt

Committee on Committees: Senator Wolf

Welfare Committee: Senator G. Yoder

Unfinished Business:

Sabbatical Leave Policy

Plus/Minus Grading Final Report

Adjournment

Faculty Senate Minutes October 6, 2003

The Faculty Senate of Eastern Kentucky University met on Monday, October 6, 2003, in the South Room of the Keen Johnson Building. Senator Johnson called the second meeting of the academic year to order at approximately 3:30 p.m.

The following members were absent:

M. Baxter*, D. Carter*, J. Dickey, D. Discepoli, S. Fister*, S. Hyndman, D. Jackson, R. James, A. Jones*, D. Jones, M. McNew, L. Patterson, J. Payne, F. Souther, M. Winslow and J. Wolf*.

***Indicates prior notification to the Senate Secretary.**

Visitors to the Senate: Allen Ault, College of Justice & Safety; Martin Diebold, SED; Claire Good, Student Affairs; Cassandra Kirby, *The Eastern Progress*; Laura Koppes, Institutional Effectiveness; Kristina O'Brien, SGA; Matt Schumacher, SGA; John Shafer, Athletics; Aaron Thompson, Enrollment Management; Daniel Thorne, Accounting, Finance, Information Systems; Elizabeth Wachtel, Academic Affairs; and James Wells, Correctional & Juvenile Justice Studies.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The September 8, 2003 minutes were approved with no changes.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Senator Glasser.

Senator Glasser reported that the Faculty Senate dinner was a success. The food and camaraderie were excellent. Senator Glasser expressed interest in hosting a brunch for the senators toward the end of the fall semester.

This year's Family Weekend was better attended than in previous years. Senator Glasser hosted a barbecue for over 1100 parents. This event was a wonderful way to reconnect with the families and to reassure them that their sons and daughters are doing well at Eastern.

Last week was EKV Pride Week which celebrated the diversity on campus in terms of academics, fine and performing arts, and Athletics. One of the highlights was the first theater production of the year, "The Merchant of Venice". The students did an outstanding job. Another well attended event was the pep rally, attended by faculty, students and staff prior to the second home football game.

EKV was prominently featured on WLEX-TV on Tuesday morning from 5:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Senator Glasser has received many positive comments from people all over Lexington. EKV was also featured in the Louisville Courier Journal yesterday, and in the Lexington Herald the day before on the largest increase in enrollment in twelve years. The residence halls are filled and the equally good news is that academic standards and ACT scores for incoming freshmen are also up this year.

EKU will be hosting the Lieutenant Gubernatorial debates on October 15 at 8:00 p.m. in the Student Services Building. The gubernatorial candidates will be asked questions by a panel and then the audience will have an opportunity to ask questions. Senator Glasser encouraged faculty, students and staff to participate in this important event.

The education reform is a long term investment; and budget projections continue to look dismal at best. The next budget projection will be available by October 15. Senator Glasser distributed to the Senators an article she wrote and submitted to the media on her perspective, and ECU's perspective that education is an investment in the quality of life, not just an investment in higher education. Senator Glasser stressed the need to continue voicing the importance of the education reform to the gubernatorial candidates. Both candidates indicate that constituents mainly complain about medicaid, medicare for the elderly, crime and public safety. If there is support for higher education, some of those issues would be easier to address.

The University presidents met in Frankfort last week and all of the institutions have proposed to CPE preliminary tuition increases. Senator Glasser submitted preliminary tuition increase projections of 10% for the new two years. Other institutions have proposed anywhere from 14% to 20% increases, and two institutions are considering mid-year tuition increases for this year.

Capital projects continue to look grim. Our first priority continues to be the Business and Technology Center, thanks to funding received. The second priority is phase II funding for the Fitness and Wellness Center, and the newest priority is the new science facility for the campus. Realistically speaking, funding may not be forthcoming in terms of capital this year.

While the administration is cognizant of the fact that faculty and staff are being asked to do more with less, the work done in the classrooms is resonating with the students and obviously the message is getting out because over 70% of the freshmen class indicated that Eastern was their first choice institution.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT: Senator Johnson.

Senator Johnson reported that the Executive Committee met briefly on September 22, 2003 to discuss the Senate's agenda.

Senator Cook announced that he received several suggestions regarding the distribution of the development funds. He decided to give half of the funds to the deans for distribution and the other half directly to those faculty who apply through the Provost's office. The Faculty Welfare Committee has been charged with developing the process for distributing these funds to faculty.

FACULTY REGENT'S REPORT: Senator Schlomann

Senator Schlomann stated that the Board would not meet again until December. However, the regents did attend the Governor's Conference on Postsecondary Education Trusteeship. The theme for the conference was economic development and partnership with communities, but perhaps the real theme was "the cupboard is bare". One thing that was reiterated is that other constituents are presenting their requests very dramatically, probably Medicaid the most so. One of the major problems is that when cuts are made in education, the connection with cuts from Frankfort rarely is obvious. Instead, constituents respond to the reduction in services and the tuition increases as local (at the university level) problems. Complaints are therefore voiced to the universities and don't reach Frankfort. Faculty need to help get the word out that higher education is crucial to quality of life in Kentucky and that cuts in higher education, in the long term, will have impact on all areas of life.

COSFL REPORT: Senator Siegel

Senator Siegel reported that COSFL met on September 13. Elections were held for the 2003-2004 officers and the following were elected: Rick Feldhoff, President; Carol Bredemeyer, Vice President; Carolyn Siegel, Treasurer; and Tucker Landy, Secretary.

The AAUP/COSFL conference scheduled for October 18 was discussed and panel participants identified.

Richard Freed, faculty representative on the CPE, made a comprehensive presentation regarding CPE activities. He distributed a list of the members of SCOPE, the Strategic Committee on Postsecondary Education, which is the oversight committee for postsecondary reform in Kentucky. Many initiatives are currently under way. After House Bill I was passed, the CPE received money and power to initiate change; the focus now is on keeping the momentum of reform going. Some of the issues Dr. Freed discussed included the seamless transfer system, criteria for selecting regents, the budget shortfall, the P-16 Committee and the CPE key indicators of progress.

COSFL members expressed interest in having CPE develop reports on freshman profiles across the state universities. They are also alert to a possible move in the legislature to cap university tuition increases.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT: Kristina O'Brien

Ms. O'Brien announced several events that will be occurring during the next month. "Take Back the Night" is an annual event which will be held at the Madison County Courthouse on Tuesday evening at 5:30 p.m. On Wednesday, SGA is sponsoring transportation for faculty and students to the governor's debate at UK. The debate is scheduled for 3:00 p.m., and the bus is scheduled to leave EKV from the Daniel Boone statue at 1:30 p.m. Participants should be back on campus in time for evening classes. SGA's Safety Walk is scheduled for October 14 at 6:30 p.m. in the Powell Building. On October 15, SGA is sponsoring the Black Eyed Peas concert. On the same evening, SGA will also be cosponsoring the Lieutenant Governor's debate at 8:00 p.m. in the Student Services Building. SGA is sponsoring a 7:00 p.m. reception in the SSB lobby prior to the debate. On October 22 SGA will be sponsoring the trick or treating event from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Keen Johnson Building. Faculty, staff and their families are invited to participate in this event.

Student surveys will go out via e-mail within the next two weeks. There are approximately 20 questions on the survey.

Applications are available in the Powell Building for the next two weeks for student organizations to apply for office space.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Budget Committee. Senator Siegel reported that the committee met on October 2. The committee reviewed the Libraries budget with Dr. Lee Van Orsdel, Dean of Libraries, in attendance. Dr. Van Orsdel provided a detailed and finely organized analysis of the effects of the current budget situation on the provision of services and materials to faculty, staff, and students.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of agenda items for the remainder of the fall semester and the role of the Faculty Senate Budget Committee as an information-gathering and/or dissemination group.

Faculty Welfare Committee. Senator G. Yoder reported that the committee met on October 1 to discuss an amendment to the salary adjustments motion. That amendment will be proposed later in the meeting.

The committee also began to work on a faculty survey to aid in establishing guidelines for the disbursement of the development funds from the Provost's office. The survey should be available within the next couple of weeks and will be administered online.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Foundation Professor Motion. Senator Siegel moved, seconded by Senator Callahan, to separate the Foundation Professor motion into two separate motions, one to deal with the process and procedures and the other to deal with the effective date.

Motion one, to approve the process and procedures was approved by the Senate.

Motion two, effective date of 2003-2004. Senator Marchant moved to amend motion two, seconded by Senator Collins, to delete "2003-2004" from the title and have the effective date begin for 2004-2005. The senate was in agreement to amend the motion. Motion two, in its amended state, was approved by the Senate.

Salary Adjustments Motion. Senator Rahimzadeh, seconded by Senator G. Yoder, moved to amend the original motion to include the following statement after number five: "The Welfare Committee also recommends that the Provost periodically update the Senate regarding specific details of the adjustment process." The amendment was approved by the Senate.

Senator Dean moved, seconded by Senator Smith, to amend the motion to add the words "in no particular order of priority" after the word "factors". This amendment was approved by the Senate.

Senator D. Pierce moved, seconded by Senator McKenney, to delete number four from the motion. The Senate was not in agreement and the amendment failed for lack of support.

Senator Kristofik, seconded by Senator Gossage, moved to amend number four to the following: "Because departmental involvement is important to the success of a long-term adjustment program, the Committee recommends that the individual chairs and deans be consulted during the process of making adjustments." The Senate was in agreement and the motion to amend was approved.

Senator Cropper moved, seconded by Senator Kelley, to strike the following sentence from number three: "For example, to insure that at least fifty salaries are adjusted, the maximum salary adjustment would be set at 2% of the funds available." The motion to delete this statement carried with a vote of 17 to 16 in favor.

The salary adjustment motion, in its amended state, was approved by the senate.

NEW BUSINESS:

Plus/Minus Grades Final Report. Dr. Daniel Thorne was present to introduce the plus/minus grades final report. Senator Flanagan moved, seconded by Senator Dunston, to accept the report and the recommendations made by the committee. Senator Johnson ruled the motion substantive and deferred further discussion to the October Senate meeting.

Council on Academic Affairs Report. Senator Cook moved, seconded by Senator Sexton, to delete the Specialists in Education Ed & Ad Supervision program. The motion was approved by the Senate.

Sabbatical Leave Motion. Senator Cook moved, seconded by Senator Sexton, to approve the Sabbatical Leave Motion. Senator Johnson ruled the motion as substantive and deferred further discussion to the October Senate meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Senator Cook moved to adjourn at approximately 5:30 p.m.

JG

FINAL DRAFT
May 1, 2000

Sabbatical Leave Policy

Eastern Kentucky University maintains and promotes a program of sabbatical leaves for faculty as a part of its overall efforts to maintain high quality academic programs and energized faculty. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to apply for a sabbatical leave when eligible.

Sabbatical leaves are designed for professional improvement by providing release time for a specified period from assigned contractual obligations current faculty members to pursue scholarly activities which will strengthen the teaching, research, service and/or any combination therein at the department, college, or institution levels. Sabbatical leave requests are to be closely related to the faculty member's teaching area, and are not to be utilized for the completion of a faculty member's advanced degree and other related activities without the expressed consent of the Dean of the faculty member's college prior to submitting the request.

University sabbatical leave pool funds are derived from the University budget and other funds which may be allocated by the University. Additionally, individual colleges may fund sabbatical leaves for faculty members through college development funds, indirect cost allocations, private sources designated for the college, or other approved sources. Faculty members are encouraged to seek outside sources of funding to supplement the sabbatical leave.

To be eligible to apply for a sabbatical leave, faculty members must:

- A. Complete fourteen (14) semesters of full time service to the University;
- B. Submit a timely and appropriate request document in accordance with the faculty member's college criteria;
- C. Request a sabbatical leave within three (3) years of the date of the submission of the sabbatical leave request document
- D. Acquire all required approvals and receive written approval from the Provost. Faculty members should be aware that a sabbatical leave is a privilege and not a right. Sabbatical leaves are not automatic with the accumulation of fourteen semesters of service.
- E. Prepare and submit a report to the Dean of the College within ninety (90) days from the completion of the sabbatical leave. Submit for publication a

- C. A departmental review committee for screening and making recommendations to the Chair.
 - D. A College review committee and making recommendations to the Dean.
 - E. In evaluating a request for sabbatical leave, the departmental and college committees are encouraged to develop evaluation criteria taking into account the benefits of the leave for the faculty member, the department, the college, and ultimately the students.
4. The Dean of the College shall transmit the selected sabbatical leave requests to the Provost and Research by November 1 of the preceding academic year in which the leave will begin or for up to 3 years from the date of the sabbatical leave applications.
 5. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and Research will evaluate and transmit the selected sabbatical leave requests to the President by December 15. The President will notify selected faculty members following the action by the Board of Requests.
 6. A faculty member who is approved for a sabbatical leave is expected to carry out the plan set forth in the leave application and file a comprehensive open-file report to the Dean of the College identifying the accomplishments within ninety (90) days for return to contractual assignment and publish, if appropriate, the findings of the sabbatical leave within six (6) months.

A sabbatical leave can be a rejuvenating and re-energizing experience for a faculty member permitting time to pursue avenues to improve academic quality in the pursuit of excellence. All eligible faculty members are encouraged to apply for sabbatical leave.

AGREE

DISAGREE

_____	_____	Dr. Karl Kuhn	_____
_____	_____	Dr. Ella Hunter	_____
_____	_____	Dr. David Dailey	_____
_____	_____	Dr. Robert Reynolds	_____
_____	_____	Dr. Thomas Schncid	_____

document based upon the topic of the sabbatical leave within six (6) months from the date of the completion of the sabbatical leave. The Dean may extend this time period at his/her prerogative for publications and related projects.

Tenured faculty members on full-time appointments may apply for a sabbatical leave of two semesters at half salary, one semester at full salary, or one-half time leave for two semesters at full salary. The faculty member must designate the type of sabbatical leave requested as well as the semester or year requested in the application. The University and College will assist, when possible, for faculty members requesting a full year sabbatical leave at half pay with appropriate contributions to the faculty member's retirement program and related benefit programs.

It is fully expected that the recipients of a sabbatical leave will return to ECU for a minimum of one year following the sabbatical leave. In the event that the faculty member does not return to ECU for the specified period, the recipient shall reimburse ECU in full for the salary and fringe benefits received during the leave.

Procedures

1. Each College shall develop specific guidelines as to the criteria, quality and weight provided to specific categories of research, service and scholarly activities which serve as the basis for a sabbatical leave. These guidelines shall be clear and concise and address the process, procedures and expected results. These guidelines shall be published for all faculty members and each college shall establish an education and assistance program to assist faculty members in the development of high quality sabbatical leave requests within one (1) year from the publication of this policy.
2. Faculty members seeking sabbatical leaves must submit in a timely manner a full and complete request for sabbatical leave with supporting information to their Chair at least one semester prior to the requested leave. Faculty members may apply for a sabbatical leave up to three (3) years prior to the requested leave initiation date.
3. Each college shall develop policies, procedures, and guidelines approved by a majority of the faculty of the college, for the submission and review of sabbatical leave applications. These policies and procedures shall include the following elements:
 - A. Timetable for receiving the sabbatical leave request
 - B. Perimeters for the development of the reasonable request document and supporting materials.

Sabbatical Policy

September 8, 2003

Purpose and Principles

Eastern Kentucky University maintains and promotes a program of sabbaticals for faculty as a part of its overall efforts to maintain high quality academic programs and an energized faculty. A sabbatical can be a rejuvenating experience for a faculty member, permitting time to investigate avenues for improving academic quality in the pursuit of excellence. All eligible faculty members are strongly encouraged to apply for sabbaticals.

Sabbaticals are designed for professional improvement of current faculty members by providing, for a specified period, time away from the usual contractual obligations. This time enables faculty members to pursue scholarly activities that will strengthen teaching, scholarship, service and/or any combination therein at the department, college, library, or university levels. Sabbatical requests are to be closely related to each faculty member's teaching area but are not granted for the completion of an advanced degree or for any other activities related to that goal.

Since a sabbatical is a privilege and not a right, sabbaticals are not granted automatically after the required semesters of service. A sabbatical may be granted to a faculty member who has demonstrated an above-average ability in teaching, scholarship, and service and who has completed an application which meets the sabbatical requirements.

Funding and Salary Payment

University sabbatical pool funds are derived from the University budget and other funds which may be allocated by the University. The distribution of available funds is given to the colleges based on the proportion of full-time, tenure-track faculty. Additionally, individual colleges may fund sabbaticals for faculty members through college development funds, indirect cost allocations, private sources designated for the college, or other approved sources. Faculty members are encouraged to seek outside sources of funding to help supplement their sabbatical request.

The three types of sabbaticals for which eligible faculty members on full-time appointments may apply are as follows: (1) one year at half salary, (2) one semester at full salary, or (3) one-half time for two semesters at full salary. The salary will be based upon the amount that would have been received for the academic year had the sabbatical not been taken. In the application, the faculty member must designate the type of sabbatical requested as well as the effective semester or year.

Since preference is given to one-year sabbatical requests at half salary, these candidates are encouraged to seek scholarships, fellowships, or other honorary stipends to supplement their sabbatical salaries.

Eligibility and Application Process

To be eligible to apply for a sabbatical, faculty members must meet the following requirements:

1. Complete twelve (12) semesters of full-time service to the University before the first sabbatical or between subsequent sabbaticals.
2. Submit an appropriate request document with supporting information in accordance with the faculty member's college criteria.
3. Submit requests to the department chair no later than September 15 of the year preceding the academic year of the sabbatical. (Requests may be submitted two years in advance for approval. If the request is denied, a new application may be filed the following year.)
4. Obtain all required approvals at the department and college levels and receive written approval from the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs.

College Procedures

Each college will assure that the University-approved procedures have been followed and that the sabbatical recommendations concur with the goals and needs of the college. The following procedures apply to the colleges:

- A. Each college will develop specific guidelines regarding the criteria, quality, and weight assigned to specific categories of scholarly activities and service which are the basis for a sabbatical. These guidelines will be clear and concise and will address the process, procedures, and expected results. These guidelines will be published for all faculty members; and each college will establish an education and assistance program to help faculty members in the development of high quality sabbatical requests within one (1) year from the publication of this policy.

Preferred purposes for sabbaticals include, but are not rank-ordered or limited to, the following:

1. A carefully designed scholarly/creative project related to the discipline.
2. Scholarly writing or other comparable form of creative activity with a goal of publication or presentation.

3. A clearly defined program of independent study related to instructional responsibilities.
 4. A clearly defined program of a major course revision and/or new course development.
- B. Each college will develop policies, procedures, and guidelines approved by a majority of the faculty of the college for the review of sabbatical applications. These policies and procedures will include the following elements:
1. Timetables for receiving the sabbatical request.
 2. Parameters for the development of the reasonable request document and supporting materials.
 3. Evaluation criteria that will take into account the benefits of the sabbatical for the faculty member, the department, the college, and, ultimately, the students.
 4. A departmental review committee for screening and making recommendations to the chair. (A faculty member who will be considered for a sabbatical will not be eligible to serve on this committee. The same rule applies to anyone with a significant conflict of interest, e.g., the candidate is a member of one's immediate family.)
 5. A college review committee for making recommendations to the dean.
- C. The dean of the college will forward the selected sabbatical requests to the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs by November 1.
- D. The Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs will evaluate and forward the selected sabbatical requests to the President by December 15. The President will notify selected faculty members following action by the Board of Regents.

Faculty Rights During a Sabbatical

Successful candidates will retain the following rights during their time spent on a sabbatical:

1. The faculty member may share in the salary increases awarded by the University.
2. Retirement contributions depend on the faculty member's retirement plan. KTRS is a Defined Benefit Plan, and the Non-KTRS programs are Defined Contribution Plans.

- a. If the candidate is a KTRS participant, retirement contributions are not withheld and the University does not make retirement contributions during the sabbatical period. However, as stated in the KTRS guidelines, participants may purchase service credit within the “interest-free period” and the University will pay the difference between the service credit purchase price and the amount that would have otherwise been deducted from the candidate’s pay. By purchasing the service credit, the sabbatical year or semester counts toward retirement service.
 - b. Retirement withholdings for non-KTRS candidates and contributions by the University on their behalf will continue at the rates in effect before the sabbatical began.
3. The candidate who is a member of a University insurance coverage plan or a family plan will continue to receive coverage at the same rates while on a sabbatical.
 4. The sabbatical period counts toward requirements for promotion.

Faculty Obligations After a Sabbatical

The successful applicants will accept the following obligations regarding the sabbatical:

1. A faculty member who is approved for a sabbatical is expected to carry out the plan set forth in the application and forward a comprehensive open-file report to the dean of the college identifying the accomplishments within ninety (90) days from the completion of the sabbatical and to publish, if appropriate, the findings of the sabbatical within six (6) months.
2. A recipient of a sabbatical will return to ECU for a minimum of one (1) academic year following the sabbatical. (Unless otherwise agreed in advance by the faculty member and chair or dean, the sabbatical recipient will return to his or her former position within the University.) In the event that the faculty member does not return to ECU for the specified period, the recipient will reimburse ECU in full for the salary and fringe benefits received during the sabbatical.

Exceptions to the University Policy

The President, in concurrence with the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, has the option of making exceptions to the above-stated policy when deemed in the best interest of the University.

Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading, 2002-2003

Final Report
August 2003

Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading:
Thom Fisher, Ph.D. (Chair), Meredith Wells, Ph.D., James Wells, Ph.D.,
Daniel Thorne, Ph.D., Martin Diebold, Ed.D., Matt Schumacher, Lance Melching
Academic Year 2002-2003

Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading, 2002-2003

“Teachers in making their final reports should not use the plus and minus signs in their grades. The official grading scheme of the institution does not provide for plus and minus grades.”
EKU President Donovan, July 11, 1932

Introduction

In February 1999, the Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Inflation submitted a report to the Faculty Senate in which they argued that grade inflation was a problem on the Eastern Kentucky University campus. In an effort to curb grade inflation, the Committee made three recommendations and proposed five motions. One recommendation was to establish a plus/minus grading system. During the 2001-02 academic year, plus/minus grading was instituted. However, there was resistance from both faculty and students from around the campus. Issues that were raised included the lack of an A+, ambiguity about a C-, as well as the impact on GPAs, scholarships, retention, and recruitment. In April 2002, after a year of plus/minus grading, the Faculty Senate placed a temporary moratorium on plus/minus grading.

After the April 2002 Faculty Senate meeting, the Faculty Senate Chair established the Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading. The Committee’s charge was to study the impact of plus/minus grading using data from ECU benchmark institutions, other Kentucky public universities, and ECU’s experience with plus/minus grading and give a final report and recommendations about continued use of plus/minus grading to the Faculty Senate.

The Committee consisted of one faculty member from each college (Thom Fisher, Health Sciences; Meredith Wells, Arts and Sciences; James Wells, Justice and Safety; Daniel Thorne, Business and Technology; and Martin Diebold, Education), one undergraduate student (Lance Melching) and one graduate student representative from Student Government (Matt Schumacher).

Methods

The Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading met monthly and sometimes weekly from September 2002 to April 2003. From the charge, the Committee determined that six research questions needed to be answered. These were accepted by the Faculty Senate on November 4, 2002:

1. Do ECU benchmarks and other Kentucky public universities use plus/minus grading? If yes, how? If no, why not?
2. What are the benefits of plus/minus grading?

3. What are the drawbacks of plus/minus grading?
4. Does plus/minus grading significantly minimize grade inflation?
5. What is the ECU experience of plus/minus grading (e.g., usage rates, like vs. dislike)?
6. Do ECU faculty and students prefer to use plus/minus grading or not?

The Committee developed a plan to answer each of these questions using data from ECU faculty and ECU students; grade data from the ECU Registrar's Office; data from ECU benchmark institutions and other Kentucky public universities; peer-reviewed, published literature on the effects of plus/minus grading; the Executive Summary from the Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Inflation 1999; as well as reports from other universities who have had experience with plus/minus grading.

Procedure

The Committee began its work by examining the scientific literature and the ECU Executive Summary from the Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Inflation 1999 on the usage, benefits, drawbacks, and effectiveness of plus/minus grading. (See results section for review of these articles.) The Committee then designed structured phone interviews for the ECU benchmarks and other Kentucky public universities and written surveys of ECU full-time faculty and students. These surveys, the Phone Interview of ECU's Benchmark Institutions and Kentucky Public Universities, the ECU Faculty Survey on the Plus/Minus Grading System, and the ECU Student Survey on the Plus/Minus Grading System, are located in the Appendix.

Upon completion and review of these documents in February 2003, Committee members used their Phone Interview of ECU's Benchmark Institutions and Kentucky Public Universities to conduct structured phone interviews with Provosts or Registrars from all 18 ECU benchmark institutions and the seven other Kentucky public universities. The Committee was able to complete these interviews with 16 of the 18 benchmark institutions and all seven other Kentucky public universities. Thus, the response rate for this sample was 92%.

Simultaneously, the ECU Faculty Survey on the Plus/Minus Grading System was distributed by campus mail to all university faculty, and the ECU Student Survey on the Plus/Minus Grading System was distributed by campus mail to a random sample of 1500 students. Surveys were sent to all 611 university faculty, and 331 (55%) were completed and returned. This response rate allows us to be 95% confident that our data is accurate within plus or minus 3.61 percentage points. Of the 1500 student surveys distributed, 326 (22%) were completed and returned. This response rate allows us to be 95% confident that our data is accurate within 5.3 percentage points.

All the surveys (the phone interview, the faculty survey, and the student survey) were scanned, and the results were tabulated. Additional comments from respondents were typed and evaluated. Due to the ordinal nature of most of the data, analyses performed were primarily descriptive statistics such as frequencies and modes. However, some comparisons of means also were performed. In all three surveys, participants were asked whether plus/minus grading had a

positive effect, no effect, or a negative effect on a variety of academic issues such as student recruitment, student retention, student motivation, scholarships, grade inflation, etc. The mode (most common response) for each issue is reported. In order to examine the Committee's research questions pertaining to the benefits and drawbacks of plus/minus grading, modes falling in the "positive effect" response category are interpreted as benefits of plus/minus grading, and modes falling in the "negative effect" response category are interpreted as drawbacks of plus/minus grading.¹

Sample

The faculty sample was 72% tenured and 28% non-tenured faculty; 30% Professors, 35% Associate Professors, 29% Assistant Professors, 3% Instructors, 3% Visiting Instructors, and 0.3% Lecturers. The sample was 51% male and 49% female. The average number of years in academe was 17.5. College affiliations were as follows:

44%	Arts and Sciences
15%	Business and Technology
12%	Education
24%	Health Sciences

¹ As a result of one concerned faculty member questioning the validity of the grade inflation item (#7), the Committee decided to conduct some follow-up validation analyses. When constructing the item, the Committee intended that if the respondent selected "positive effect," that implied that the respondent thought that the plus/minus grading system would have a beneficial or desirable effect and reduce grade inflation. Conversely, if the respondent selected "negative effect," the Committee felt that this implied that the plus/minus grading system would have a negative or undesirable effect and increase grade inflation. In retrospect, the item most likely could have been better worded to avoid any chance of confusion. Nonetheless, the Committee chose to examine this issue further.

To adequately address this issue in a scientific manner, two members of the Committee, working independently, examined the results of open-ended items #16 (benefits of plus/minus grading) and #17 (drawbacks of plus/minus grading) and compared these responses to the "positive effect" and "negative effect" responses in item #7 regarding grade inflation. The two researchers used a very conservative approach in locating open-ended responses that agreed with the Committee's intended response (positive effect implies grade inflation will be reduced, negative effect implies grade inflation will be increased or worsened), and a very liberal approach in locating open-ended responses that disagreed with the Committee's intended response (positive implies grade inflation will be increased, negative implies grade inflation will be decreased). With perhaps one or two exceptions, virtually all of the open-ended responses were consistent with the Committee's intended interpretation of the question. Although it is impossible for the Committee to ascertain whether every faculty member answered the item in the manner intended (because not every faculty member provided responses to these two open-ended items), the Committee felt that the results of this cross-validation check suggest that it was interpreted in the intended manner and thus the item is valid.

6% Justice and Safety

The student sample was 67% female and 33% male; 11% freshmen, 12% sophomores, 17% juniors, 38% seniors, and 22% graduate students. In addition, 48% were full-time students; 14% were Honors students; 15% were on a scholarship; and 74% were EKU students in 2001-2002 when plus/minus grading was used.

Results

1. Do EKU benchmarks and other Kentucky public universities use plus/minus grading? If yes, how so? If no, why not?

Phone interviews with EKU benchmarks and other Kentucky public universities indicated that 8 of our 16 Benchmarks (50%) and one of the 7 other Kentucky public universities (14%) use plus/minus grading. Of those that do use plus/minus grading, 73% use a scale similar to the one that EKU used in 2001-2002 with no credit for A+.

Of those universities that did not use plus/minus grading, one reported having used it in the past. The reasons given for not using plus/minus grading included faculty/student resistance, administrative and software changes necessary to make the switch to plus/minus grading, difficulty distinguishing grades, complexity, financial cost, and anticipated increase in grade change requests from students.

2. What are the benefits of plus/minus grading?

Participants from the benchmark and other Kentucky public universities, EKU faculty, and EKU students were asked whether they thought plus/minus grading had a positive effect, no effect, or a negative effect on a number of academic issues (e.g., recruitment, retention, scholarships, grading accuracy, student motivation, etc.). As noted above, modes falling in the “positive effect” response category were interpreted as benefits, and modes falling in the “negative effect” response category were interpreted as drawbacks.

Participants from the benchmark and Kentucky public universities reported that they thought plus/minus grading had a positive effect on student motivation and grading accuracy. Participants were split on grade inflation: five said that plus/minus grading helped guard against grade inflation, but an equal number said that plus/minus grading had no effect on grade inflation. Furthermore, the nine benchmark and Kentucky public universities using plus/minus grading were asked what benefits their university perceived their plus/minus grading system to have. Reported benefits included more accurately reflects students’ work, more precision in grading, and increased student initiative.

EKU faculty reported that the positive effect of plus/minus grading was grading accuracy.

EKU students reported no positive effects of plus/minus grading.

3. What are the drawbacks to plus/minus grading?

Participants from all the benchmark and Kentucky public universities reported that they thought plus/minus grading had a negative effect on scholarships. They reported that plus/minus grading had no effect on student recruitment, retention, admittance into graduate programs, student employment opportunities, faculty morale, faculty attitudes toward grading, and grade inflation (as explained above). Furthermore, the nine benchmark and Kentucky public universities using plus/minus grading were asked what drawbacks their universities perceived plus/minus grading to have. Drawbacks reported included more grade appeals, faculty questioning the distinctions between grades, and an increase in grade inflation.

EKU faculty perceived plus/minus grading to have a negative effect on scholarships, student motivation, student retention, faculty morale, and faculty attitudes toward grading. Faculty perceived plus/minus grading to have no effect on grade inflation, student recruitment, student retention, student admittance into graduate programs, and student employment opportunities.

EKU students perceived plus/minus grading to have a negative effect on grading accuracy, scholarships, student motivation, student recruitment, student retention, and admittance into graduate programs. Students perceived plus/minus grading to have no effect on grade inflation or employment opportunities.

4. Does plus/minus grading significantly minimize grade inflation?

Studies on the effect of plus/minus grading on GPA distributions consistently show little effect on grade inflation. Studies conducted by Matthews (1997) used a computer simulation to predict the changes in average individual GPA by looking at actual GPAs under the plus/minus system and then comparing them to GPAs when the plus/minus suffixes were stripped. His conclusions were that 1) the average of all individual GPAs will not change because the pluses will cancel the minuses, and 2) a small deflationary effect would be felt in the A grade bracket, but it would not exceed a decrease in individual GPA of more than 0.08.

Similar studies were conducted at North Carolina State University with similar results (Gosselin, 1997). A Grade Task Force created by the Academic Council at Loyola University to study the effect of plus/minus grading refused even to study the issue of grade inflation, stating that it “is a separate issue from the grading system,” and should be addressed separately (Loyola, 1998). Matthews (1998) came to the same conclusion, stating that no grading scale, regardless of its complexity, could override professor subjectivity in grading. Another recent study at Ball State University on the actual GPAs of graduate students under the plus/minus grading system

found no evidence that the plus/minus grading system has any effect on overall GPA (Malone, Nelson, Van Nelson, 2000). Furthermore, a report by Bressette (2002) reexamined studies by Matthews (1997, 1998) and Gosselin (1997) and reaffirmed that there was little chance of an absolute reduction in GPA with plus/minus.

An ex-officio member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading and Mathematics Honors student, David Campbell, examined the effect of plus/minus grading on grades here at EKU using the same methodology used by Matthews (1997, 1998) and Gosselin (1997). He collaborated with the Registrar's Office to obtain grade data from the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 academic years.

First, comparisons were made between the average undergraduate GPA in 2000-2001 when plus/minus grading was not in use and the average undergraduate GPA in 2001-2002 when plus/minus grading was in use (N=232,000 grades).

<u>Academic Year</u>	<u>Average Undergraduate GPA</u>
2000-2001 (no plus/minus)	2.74
2001-2002 (plus/minus)	2.75

Results suggest that actual undergraduate GPA increased by 0.01 grade points when plus/minus was used. Using a significance level of 0.05, this difference was not statistically significant. GPAs did not decrease, as would have been expected if plus/minus reduced grade inflation.

Secondly, actual GPAs were calculated for individuals enrolled in undergraduate courses during the 2001-2002 academic year. The pluses and minuses were then removed and GPA was recalculated under the standard 5-point scale (A, B, C, D, F). Differences in the actual GPA and stripped estimates were calculated. Although some students (35%) had a minimal negative change of up to 0.25 grade points when plus/minus was used, most students (59%) had either no change or a higher GPA when plus/minus was used.

In sum, Campbell's (2003) research suggests that the plus/minus grading system had little effect on GPAs and grade inflation on the EKU campus in 2001-2002.

5. What is the EKU experience of plus/minus grading (e.g., usage rates, satisfaction)?

EKU faculty were asked if they used the plus/minus grading system during the 2001-2002 academic year. Results indicate that 79% used plus/minus every semester, 9% used it some semesters, and 12% did not use it at all. Likewise, according to Campbell (2003), data from the Registrar's Office verifies a 13% non-compliance rate. These findings suggest that the majority of faculty did use the plus/minus grading system. However, of those who did use it, 19% did not use it as presented by the administration but rather modified the scale.

EKU faculty and students who were at EKU during the 2001-2002 academic year were asked on their surveys to indicate their level of satisfaction with plus/minus grading that year.

The faculty response was:

29%	very satisfied
11%	slightly satisfied
12%	neutral
11%	slightly dissatisfied
37%	very dissatisfied

Collapsing categories, the data suggest that 40% of the faculty were satisfied, 12% were neutral, and 48% were dissatisfied with plus/minus grading.

The student response was:

7%	very satisfied
10%	slightly satisfied
23%	neutral
21%	slightly dissatisfied
40%	very dissatisfied

Collapsing categories, the data suggest that 17% of the students were satisfied, 23% were neutral, and 61% were dissatisfied with plus/minus grading.

6.Do EKU faculty and students prefer to use plus/minus grading or not?

EKU faculty and students were asked their overall opinion of EKU re-establishing a plus/minus grading system. The faculty response was:

27%	strongly in favor
14%	slightly in favor
8%	neutral
10%	slightly opposed
41%	strongly opposed

Collapsing categories, the data suggest that 41% of the faculty are in favor of re-establishing plus/minus grading, 8% are neutral, and 51% oppose re-establishing plus/minus grading at EKU.

The student response was:

9%	strongly in favor
12%	slightly in favor
11%	neutral
23%	slightly opposed
45%	strongly opposed

Collapsing categories, the data suggest that 21% of the students are in favor of re-establishing plus/minus grading, 11% are neutral, and 68% oppose re-establishing plus/minus grading.

Demographic comparisons of the students suggest that students at ECU during the 2001-2002 academic year were most opposed to re-establishing plus/minus grading. There were no significant differences between males and females, full- and part-time students, Honors and non-Honors students, or scholarship and non-scholarship students.

Discussion

The results of the Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading suggest that less than half of ECU benchmarks and other Kentucky public universities use plus/minus grading. Those not using it cited reasons such as faculty/student resistance and financial and administrative costs. Most believed that plus/minus grading may enhance grading accuracy and student motivation, and a few believed it helped reduce grade inflation. However, those using it reported many drawbacks to plus/minus grading including more grade appeals, faculty questioning the distinctions between grades, and an increase in grade inflation.

ECU faculty dissatisfied with plus/minus grading had a slight majority (48%) over those satisfied with it (40%). Most faculty used it every semester that they were instructed to, but many did not use the scale mandated by the administration. Most faculty felt that the only benefit of plus/minus grading was enhanced grading accuracy, and most faculty perceived plus/minus grading to have a negative effect on scholarships, student motivation, student retention, faculty morale, and faculty attitudes toward grading. Furthermore, most faculty (51% vs. 41%) were against re-establishing plus/minus grading on the ECU campus.

ECU students were strongly opposed to the plus/minus grading system. Of students on campus in 2001-2002, 61% were dissatisfied with plus/minus grading vs. 17% who were satisfied. The students perceived plus/minus grading to have no benefits but a negative effect on grading accuracy, scholarships, student motivation, student recruitment, student retention, and admittance into graduate programs. An important note is that the faculty do not perceive plus/minus grading to have a negative effect on recruitment and retention, but the students do. Finally, most of the students (68% vs. 21%) were opposed to re-establishing plus/minus grading on the ECU campus.

Plus/minus grading was instituted on this campus in 2001-2002 in an effort to reduce grade inflation. However review of the Executive Summary of the Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Inflation finds "As faculty begin to +/- grades in border line cases, a (mild) drop in campus wide GPA will result. Once faculty use of +/- grades stabilizes, no additional reduction in GPA will

occur as presumably +/- grades will be a zero sum game (minus grades equaling the number of plus grades).” (p. 10)

Furthermore, the Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Inflation indicated in their report that 42% of the faculty would like the option of plus/minus grading, and that 50% were content with the standard grading system. Thus, the Committee recommended that faculty be given the option of using plus/minus grading. However, in 2001-2002, the final action as passed by the Faculty Senate was that all faculty were required to use plus/minus grading.

Committee Recommendations

In light of the findings of this research, the Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading cannot recommend continued use of plus/minus grading. One reason that plus/minus grading was instituted on the EKU campus was to reduce grade inflation. Research from this campus, other campuses, and the scientific literature suggests that it does not accomplish that goal. In addition, members of the campus community perceive far more drawbacks than benefits of plus/minus grading. Furthermore, the majority of the faculty and students are opposed to re-establishing plus/minus grading on this campus. Therefore, the Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading recommends that plus/minus grading not be reinstated at EKU at this time.

It should be noted that several members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading began their committee work in favor of plus/minus grading. However, the data that emerged from this study and from the literature convinced the entire Committee that plus/minus grading is not better than standard grading.

Acknowledgments

The Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading thanks committee members James Wells and Meredith Wells, Kim Cobb, and the staff of the Center for Criminal Justice Education and Research for production of the survey, scanning, typing comments from respondents, and computer analyses.

The Committee also thanks David Campbell who conducted his Honors thesis on the EKU experience of the plus/minus grading system on grade inflation. As part of his thesis, David obtained grade data from the Registrar’s Office, analyzed it, and presented it to the Committee.

Finally, the Committee would like to thank the 7 Kentucky public universities, the 16 benchmark universities, the 331 EKU faculty, and the 326 EKU students who participated in our research.

References

Bressette, A. (2001). Arguments for plus/minus grading: A case study. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 25.

Campbell, D. (2003). *Honors Thesis: Plus and Minus Grading at Eastern Kentucky University: A Statistical Study*. Richmond, KY: Eastern Kentucky University.

Chapman, A., Chen, R., Jones, K., Kopacz, P., McSpirit, S. (1999). *Executive Summary: Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Inflation*. Richmond, KY: Eastern Kentucky University.

Gosselin, L. (1997). *Plus Minus Grading Study, Fall 1994 Through Spring 1997*. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina State University.

Loyola University (1997). *Report of the CAS Task Force on Grades*. Loyola University.

Malone, B.G., Nelson, J.S., & Van Nelson, C. (2000, October). *A study of the effect of the implementation of the plus/minus grading system on graduate student grades*. Presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Matthews, R. (1997). Evaluation of the plus/minus grading system: A computer model. [Online]. Available: http://www.wfu.edu/~matthews/plus_minus/plus_minus.html.

Matthews, R. (1998). *Simulation of Plus/Minus Grades*. Wake Forest, NC: Wake Forest University.

McSpirit, S., Jones, K., Chapman, A., & Kopacz, P. (2000). Identifying grade inflation at an open admissions institution. *College Student Journal*, 34, 228-235.

McSpirit, S., Kopacz, P., Jones, K., Chapman, A. (2000). Faculty opinions on grade inflation: Contradictions about its cause. *College and University Journal*, 75, 19-25.

EKU Ad-Hoc Plus/Minus Committee 2002-2003

Faculty Survey on the Plus/Minus Grading System

In April 2002, the Faculty Senate passed a motion to establish the Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading. The Committee's charge is to study the impact of plus/minus grading using data from our benchmarks, other Commonwealth Universities, and Eastern's previous experience. As part of that effort, the Committee would like to get faculty input about their experiences and opinions about plus/minus grading.

Instructions:

Please answer each item by darkening with a pen or pencil the bubble that MOST agrees with your response. Fill in the entire bubble and make sure erasures are complete because multiple responses are not allowed. When finished with this survey, PLEASE DO NOT FOLD OR STAPLE.

Please return this survey in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

1. Did you use the plus/minus grading system during the 2001-2002 academic year?

- Yes, all semesters
 Yes, some but not all
 No, not at all

2. If yes, did you..

- use scale as presented
 modify the scale

3. If you modified the scale, in what way did you modify (e.g. use only pluses without minuses, adjust points, etc.)?

4. If you did not use plus/minus, why not?

5. What is your level of satisfaction with plus/minus grading as it was implemented in 2001-2002?

- Very Satisfied
- Slightly Satisfied
- Neutral
- Slightly Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

In your opinion, what effect do you think the plus/minus grading system has on the following:

	Negative Effect	No effect	Positive Effect
6. Grading accuracy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Grade inflation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Scholarships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Student motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Student recruitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Student retention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Student admittance into graduate programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Student employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Faculty morale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Faculty attitudes towards grading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. What (other) benefits do you perceive the plus/minus grading system to have?			

17. What (other) drawbacks do you perceive the plus/minus grading system to have?

For the next question, please review "Attachment A" on page five of this survey.

18. If EKU re-established the plus/minus grading system, which one would you prefer?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option A | <input type="checkbox"/> Option D |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option B | <input type="checkbox"/> Option E |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option C | <input type="checkbox"/> Option F |

19. If there is another scale you would recommend, please describe it.

20. What is your overall opinion of EKU re-establishing a plus/minus grading system?

- Strongly in favor
- Slightly in favor
- Neutral
- Slightly opposed
- Strongly opposed

The following questions address your demographic characteristics. These questions will allow the Committee to ensure that they are obtaining a representative sample of faculty. This data is used for statistical purposes only.

21. What is your College Affiliation?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Sciences | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business & Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Justice & Safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | |

22. What is your tenure status?

- Tenured
- Non-tenured

23. What is your current rank?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professor | <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Professor | <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting Instructor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Professor | |

24. What is your gender?

Female

Male

25. Number of years in academe?

**Thank you very much for your participation. Your input
is appreciated!**

EKU Ad-Hoc Plus/Minus Committee 2002-2003

Phone Interview of ECU's Benchmark Institutions and Kentucky Commonwealth Universities

My name is (your name), a member of Eastern Kentucky University's Ad-Hoc Plus/Minus Committee. Did you receive a letter about a week ago indicating that someone from our Committee would be contacting you?

Do you have a few moments to speak with me about the issue of Plus/Minus grading at your Institution? Great!

I have just a few questions regarding your Institutions experience with Plus/Minus grading. It should only take about 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

1. What is your official title at (mention name of University here)?

Provost (preferred)

Registrar

Other:

2. If other, list title here.

3. Does your University currently use the +/- grading system?

Yes

No

If no, ask questions 4-6

If yes, ask questions 7-10

If No, go to #4

4. Have you ever used +/-? If so, why did you discontinue using +/-?

5. Were there some drawbacks to +/- that kept you from using it? If yes, what were they?

6. Did you perceive any benefit of implementing +/-?

If Yes to #2:

7. What scale did you use?

8. What benefits does your University perceive +/- to have?

9. What drawbacks does your University perceive +/- to have?

10. What is your University's overall level of satisfaction with +/-?

- Very Satisfied
- Slightly Satisfied
- Neutral
- Slightly Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

ASK EVERYONE

How do you think the +/- grading system affects the following:

	Negatively	Not at all	Positively
11. Recruitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Retention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Scholarships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Student Motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Admittance to graduate programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Student employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Grading accuracy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Grade inflation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Faculty Morale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Faculty attitudes toward grading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If you have materials or resources you could share with us regarding the plus/minus grading system, please send them to Dr. Thomas Fisher by e-mail at Thom.Fisher@eku.edu or by mail to:
Occupational Therapy
Eastern Kentucky University
Dizney 103
Richmond, KY 40475.**

This concludes our telephone survey. Thank you for your participation and we appreciate your input.

EKU Ad-Hoc Plus/Minus Committee 2002-2003

Student Survey on the Plus/Minus Grading System

In April 2002, the Faculty Senate passed a motion to establish the Ad Hoc Committee on Plus/Minus Grading. The Committee's charge is to study the impact of plus/minus grading using data from our benchmarks, other Commonwealth universities, and Eastern's experience. As part of that effort, the Committee would like to get student input about their experiences and opinions about plus/minus grading.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please answer each item below by darkening with a pen or pencil the bubble that MOST agrees with your response. Fill in the entire bubble and, make sure erasures are complete because multiple responses are not allowed. When finished with this survey, PLEASE DO NOT FOLD OR STAPLE.

Please return this survey in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

1. If you were a student at EKU during the 2001-2002 academic year, what was your level of satisfaction with the plus/minus grading system?
 - Very Satisfied
 - Slightly Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Slightly Dissatisfied
 - Very Dissatisfied

**Please proceed to question #2
whether or not you were an EKU student during 2001-2002.**

In your opinion, what effect do you think the plus/minus grading system has on:

	Negative Effect	No effect	Positive Effect
2. Grading accuracy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Grade inflation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Scholarships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Student motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Student recruitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Student retention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Student admittance into graduate programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Student employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. What (other) benefits do you perceive the plus/minus grading system to have?			

11. What (other) drawbacks to you perceive the plus/minus grading system to have?

For the next question, please review Attachment "A", page five of this survey.

12. If ECU re-established the plus/minus grading system, which one would you prefer?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option A | <input type="checkbox"/> Option D |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option B | <input type="checkbox"/> Option E |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option C | <input type="checkbox"/> Option F |

13. What is your overall opinion of ECU re-establishing a plus/minus grading system?

- Strongly in favor
- Slightly in favor
- Neutral
- Slightly opposed
- Strongly opposed

The following questions address your demographic characteristics. These questions will allow the Committee to ensure that they are obtaining a representative sample of students. This data is used for statistical purposes only.

14. What is your year in school?

- Freshman
- Junior
- Graduate student
- Sophomore
- Senior

15. In which College is your major?

- Arts & Sciences
- Education
- Justice & Safety
- Business & Technology
- Health Sciences

16. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

17. Were you an ECU student in 2001-2002?

- Yes
- No

18. Are you a full-time student or a part-time student?

- Full-time
- Part-time

19. Are you a student in the Honors Program?

- Yes
- No

20. Are you here at ECU on a scholarship that requires a minimum GPA?

Yes

No

21. Are you working toward an ECU degree or a degree from another University?

ECU Degree

Other University Degree

Thank you for your participation!

**Please put the survey in the enclosed envelope and send
to:**

**Dr. Thom Fisher
Chair, Ad Hoc Plus/Minus Committee
Stratton 105**