

October 21, 1998

TO: Nancy Barrett, Provost
FROM: Rob Ingram, Faculty Senate Vice President
RE: Plus/minus grading system

By a vote of 25 for, 5 against, and 1 abstention, the Faculty Senate passed the following proposal at its meeting of October 20, 1998:

The Senate recommends that the Provost call for a faculty referendum to consider the possibility of changing the current undergraduate grading system. The Senate also recommends that an interval of at least three months precede the vote. During that time the Senate will provide the academic community with relevant data pertaining to our grading system and the grading systems of peer institutions. In addition, an effort should be made to encourage faculty, students, and administrators to study the data carefully, so that the level and quality of debate will be high and the vote itself will be divested of emotionalism and will reflect sober judgement.

The Senate believes that consideration of this matter should be based on factual evidence (some of which has been collected by the Academic Affairs subcommittee of the Faculty Senate) and should involve discussion of the merits of the current and alternative grading systems. The lag between the call for the referendum and the vote is intended to provide sufficient time for this discussion. At this time, the Senate does not believe that a strong consensus exists among faculty concerning this matter. Accordingly, we believe that the issue be approached cautiously and with due consideration.

I will be happy to discuss this matter with you in more detail.

cc: Margaret Garner, President, Faculty Senate