

**Action of the Academic Quality Committee on
The Proposal to Institute a New Grading System
December 13, 2012**

The Academic Quality Committee (AQ) met on December 13 to discuss the proposal from the Provost to add two grade levels (B+ and C+) to the current grading system. There was no motion in support of the original proposal following the discussion. There was support for additional grade levels. The committee considered and adopted two amendments to make the proposal more acceptable.

The committee members did not support the exclusion of the D+ grade, if B+ and C+ are included in the grading scale. The original proposal justification that a D+ was “*splitting hairs*” at grade levels associated with mediocre performance was not convincing. All of the reasons (justifications) for including B+ and C+ in the grading scale apply equally to D+. One committee member suggested that a grade of D+ invites students to pressure faculty members for the higher grade (a C). A counter argument was that some students near any grade break point would pressure faculty member for the higher grade, regardless the grade label.

The committee members also were concerned about the quality points assigned to the B+ and C+. A traditional plus/minus system would assign quality points in the following manner.

Grade	Quality Points
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
D-	0.7
F	0.0

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The AQ committee proposal would assign quality points by merely deleting the minus grade levels (A-, B-, C-, and D-) from the traditional plus/minus grading scale and quality points. The revised grading scale with the revised quality points is as follows:

Grade	Quality Points
A	4.0
B+	3.3
B	3.0
C+	2.3
C	2.0
D+	1.3
D	1.0
F	0.0

The AQ committee proposal would provide students in the top one-third of the B, C, and D grading levels with a plus grade and an extra 0.3 quality points, rather than 0.5. The AQ committee proposal has no minus grades and does not permit an A+ similar to the Provost's proposal.

The revised proposal retains all the benefits identified in the Provost's proposal. *It is beneficial to students who narrowly miss any grade level. Such students would earn a "+" grade, which results in a reduced number of quality points compared to next higher grade level, but the effect is not as drastic as losing a whole quality point.* The Table below presents some sample GPA calculations using the current GPA calculation method, the Provost's proposed quality point system, and the AQ committee proposed quality point system.

Sample GPA Calculations

Grades for Five Three Hour Classes	Current System		Provost's Proposal		AQ Committee Proposal	
	Quality Points	GPA	Quality Points	GPA	Quality Points	GPA
4 A & 1 B+	57	3.80	58.5	3.90	57.9	3.86
1 A, 1 B+, 2 Bs, & 1 C+	45	3.00	48.0	3.20	46.8	3.12
1 B, 2 C+, 1 C, & 1 D+	30	2.00	33	2.2	32.7	2.18

The AQ committee intentionally did not illustrate percentages or point values to the various grade levels. The Provost was clear that the scores of 87-89 for a B+ (and 77-79 for a C+) were for illustration purposes only. The AQ committee wants to make sure that the percentage grading scale in the proposal is not misinterpreted by faculty, students, or administrators as a campus policy.

The AQ committee voted to support the amended proposal four in favor and one opposed.