



Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting: November 9th, 2020 (12:30 PM – 1:45 PM)
Faculty Senate Meeting: November 16th, 2020 (12:30 PM – 1:45 PM)

Agenda

Opening Remarks

1. Welcome – Humayun Zafar
 - a. **Online Faculty Senate Meeting Expectations**
 - i. Please complete the attendance survey (link in the chat window) if you are a senator or a guest.
 - ii. Voting will be carried out electronically (link will be available in the chat window) and will be tracked. **Please only vote if you are a senator.** A non-senator voting will result in an immediate permanent ban from the faculty senate.
 - iii. Use the “Raise your hand” feature in order to be recognized.
 - iv. As we move forward with our senate meetings, the FSEC has heard from its members and agrees on the need to hold to correct parliamentary procedure. Motions will be preferred over discussion items so that we typically have action items on the floor. We would like to point out that there will be less time in our meetings used to announce our business items, so it will be more important than even to be familiar with all documents pertaining to our meeting.

To further promote discussion, the president of the faculty senate will begin by calling for dissenting opinions. If there are no dissenting voices, we will be able to call for a vote directly and increase efficiency in our meetings.

New Business

2. Approval of minutes (October 19th, 2020 meeting)
3. Plus/Minus Grading System Policy Proposal
 - a. Survey Results – Humayun Zafar
 - b. Policy Discussion and Vote - Cristen Dutcher
4. COVID-19 Resolution – Darina Lepadatu
5. First Week of Class Resolution – William Griffiths
6. Zero Credit Hour Policy – Michael Franklin
7. Graduate Faculty Status – Sheb True
 - a. Current Faculty Handbook Graduate Faculty process
 - b. Proposed Graduate Faculty Status process
 - c. Comparison spreadsheet

Provost and President Updates

8. Message from Dr. Schwaig
9. Message from Dr. Whitten

Informational Items

10. Faculty Senate bylaws update –
 - a. Volunteers: Darina Lepadatu, Jennifer Purcell, Chris Sharpe, and Randy Stuart
11. [Committee on Academic Freedom \(CAF\)](#) – Need five tenured faculty members
 - a. Volunteers: Tim Hedeem, Rebecca Hill, Rebecca Petersen, Andy Pieper, and Hans Skott-Myre
12. Library Resources Update – Dean Evans

Plus/Minus Grading System Motion:

The KSU Faculty Senate requests that our President and Provost petition the University System of Georgia for KSU to use the following Plus/Minus Grading System. All faculty will be required to use Plus/Minus Grading, but the assignment of grades will be at each instructor's discretion (i.e. in each course, instructors define what grades are in A range, A- range, B+ range etc.). KSU will not use this system in the calculation of the HOPE Scholarship grade point average (GPA).

KSU Grading System	
Grade	GPA
A	4.00
A-	3.70
B+	3.30
B	3.00
B-	2.70
C+	2.30
C	2.00
C-	1.70
D	1.00
F	0.00

This system is a copy of the system already in place at the University of Georgia and was taken from the Board of Regents Policy Manual and University of Georgia websites.

Default Report

Plus Minus Proposal

November 4, 2020 3:12 PM EST

Q1 - What is your current faculty designation?



■ Full Time ■ Part Time

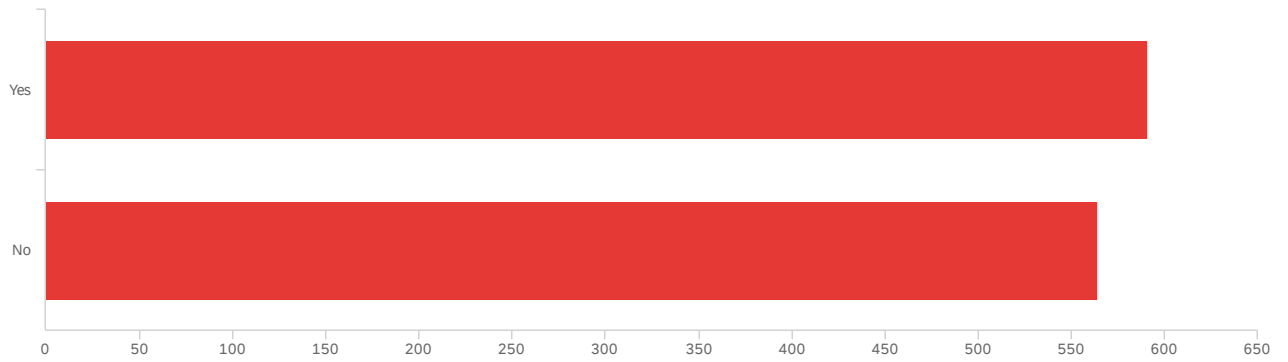
#	Field	Choice Count
1	Full Time	71.39% 826
2	Part Time	28.61% 331

1157

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Response rate: 1157/2413 = 47.95%

Q2 - Do you support the proposed plus/minus grading policy?



#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes	51.17% 591
2	No	48.83% 564

1155

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q3 - Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Senate to consider.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

I think is a student scores a B for example the lowest number of GPA points should be 3. Would like to see a numeric equivalent for each +/- before agreeing with grading change.

Let's not complicate a system that works.

So far I have been affiliated with more than 16 Universities during the past 32 years. Almost all the institutions support plus/minus grading policy.

I support this grading system with the caveat that there be no A+

Students are already too obsessed about grades (and not learning). I oppose adding plus/minus grading because it puts an increased emphasis on something other than learning.

Going to a plus/ minus system will affect the moral of the students. For example, instead of a student thinking they were smart enough to obtain a letter grade of successful completion. knowing that the grade is simply barely or more so what the student needed to pass. Leaving the straight forward grading scheme is more direct and leaves little room for the demoralizing feel a student a student could possibly feel either by receiving plus or minus.

none

I think this policy would allowed for grade fairness. For instance, making an 80 a B- and an 89 a B+ will help to properly make a distinction between the numbers.

To properly enact this grading change, we need clear guidelines about the percentage scores that denote A-, B+, etc.

The plus/minus grading system include a more accurate reflection of differing levels of student achievement in class and more informative feedback to students on the quality of their work.

State the Grade for what it is Plus or minus ended in elementary school It is irrelevant

Many graduate schools prefer plus/minus grading

Thanks for considering Part-time professor, I am new to the American grading system but I think this can work.

Sometimes the grade is very close to Full (for example)A and then B is too low.

At my previous university, we used plus-minus grading. My only concern is that students have a tendency to "grade grub" over one or two points to boost their grade to a plus. And English classes feel the brunt of that because students are more comfortable asking English professors for extra credit, extra points, or another revision in order to boost their GPA when they are not succeeding in other classes.

Actually, I recommend that the University provide all final class grades on a 100-point scale so as to add a much greater degree of differentiation. There would be a notable difference between a student GPA being 90 and 100. A student who achieves a perfect 100 GPA should be recognized for that rare and notable achievement.

None

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

This would allow to further identify the student's performance.

I would support if we made sure the minus was at the low end of a grade. For example C- 2.0, not 1.7. It looks as if we are just pushing students through. I know the public education sector allows for a student to continue to try until they pass, but at our level (yes with some in-class flexibility), they need to put in the effort. In most cases, open communication and effort will earn them a C-.

Why should an 81 and an 88 be worth the same thing. Nobody issues grades like that.

I like the added flexibility it gives for grading.

It will help students to make progress little by little.

While the +/- system will significantly increase the number of "grade grubbing" emails that I will receive, there is a significant difference between an 89 and an 80, and a 79 and a 70. My students compete for entry into the nursing program, and this can help them select stronger students into their program.

I support it as example: A+ A A- Because there is a large difference between 89.5 and 100 It's not fair for a student to get solid A in a course when they made an 89.5

Raising academic Standards!!!!

I recommend that the policy be considered following the pandemic. I think to insert this change now is not the right time to do so. Students will argue over +/- grading at a time when instruction is already operating at a distance, in a hybrid manner, or with social distancing. I personally attended a college with +/- system, so to me it is a normal grading approach so I am not against it fundamentally; however, I actually find as a faculty member that the lack of a plus and minus system makes grading easier and student satisfaction stronger.

I worry that this policy will lead to grade inflation. Students will have to perform better to get an A- there will be pressure on faculty to lower standards. I do not think there is a strong enough rationale to justify this. It will help some students but hurt others. Not a good time to make changes that affect grades.

It would be unfair to change During this time since many students work hard to keep up with grades as professors do keeping records to motivate students to do their best. I would support it if it's relegated at the beginning of semester as policy.

I support +/- for B and C grades but not for A or D. In other words, I think the grading should be: A, B+,B, B-, C+,C-,D, F

Please make the grading with plus/minus as easy as possible if we would have the grading system. Thank you!

We have put so much effort into making our classes the best they can be. Doing a plus/minus will claim we did not.

There is a significant range in effort and quality between, say, an 80 and an 88 or 89. A plus/minus system would allow for more accurate and fair grading/ Honestly, I can't figure out why we haven't had a plus/minus system all along.

Honestly, I'm a bit neutral about this. I have a feeling I would have a lot of students earn A- grades, and having that option is nice.

I believe the proposal provides a better differentiation between students. Currently students who truly exceed my expectations do not receive the recognition they deserve in their grades.

In my opinion, it is not needed. This system will create more stress and anxiety in the students.

I do consider reducing a grade to subsets to determine who gets a better part of a grade. I know from others experience that there will be competition to attain the plus grade. I believe that each grade sufficiently provides excellent example of school work done by a student.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

This would help students transferring to other schools, which is often the case.

In the real world, there is no difference in an A, A-, A+. For undergrads, GPA matters, not the letter grade, For graduate students, it matters even less, It just creates more work for the professor and stress for the students. I've been in higher ed, both as a student and teacher, for a long time,, and this is not where efforts should be spent as I have seen this policy come and go more than once in the past 30 years. Mastery of the content with a deep understanding should be the goal, not is it an A or A-.

It gives the student a more accurate detail of their understanding of the material being assessed.

I strongly support the adoption of the +/- system, for 3 reasons: 1. The +/- system is more fair to students. If a student who works hard ends with an 89 and a student who slacks off ends with an 80, is it really fair to reward unequal work with equal grades? 2. The +/- system may incentivize better student work. If the next grade tier is closer, then students might put in more effort on the margins. If the next grade tier is further, then this is unlikely. The +/- system narrows the tiers and makes the possibility of grade improvement more likely. increase student grade complaints 3. Under the current system, I have had intense student pressure over grades, since there is a large GPA impact of moving up a grade level (particularly when the student doesn't have a high number of courses completed). A +/- system would ease this pressure because the GPA stakes are lower at the margins.

Honestly, I am ambivalent as to whether or not we start using a plus minus system. It would no bearing on how I teach or grade.

I have been a student with both regular A/B grading and the +/- system. The +/- just seemed tedious to me. It doesn't change the GPA, and I really think that you either get an A, or you don't. You don't get an almost A with a B+ or a barely B with a B-. Either you make it or you don't. It just seems tedious.

Consider that this is more work for the faculty member when putting in final grades.

I feel that we are still in a time of transition with online classwork. In talking with students about this proposed change, they've mentioned how expectations, requirements, format, etc. are still ambiguous or undefined in some of their assignments and courses. This proposed change would only make those issues more punishing for students during this period of uncertainty with online teaching.

N/A

I used to teach at a university that used this system and it was extremely problematic for faculty and students.

I believe numerical grades reflect better students evaluations.

It will make grades more precise and accurate.

Try working on something important for the faculty, like the fact that our president makes close to 10 times the salary of a tenured professor in all other departments save for Coles. I find it hilarious that Coles College dominates the service for faculty representation and they make twice the amount of all other faculty on campus. I mean, that's easy enough to understand- you are getting paid for your service hours. In the real world of the rest of KSU, most of us are hurting out here and our faculty senate leaders are not doing enough. The best part? You're going to edit this out of the responses because you're too embarrassed to show the warts.

I don't believe it would be that beneficial to students ultimately.

I have had numerous students ask about this.

My only concern with transitioning to a +/- grading scheme is the consistency as to where the break points are in the scheme. A B+ in one class should net be an A- in another.

I feels harsh and punitive that someone could have made an A in all of his/her classes and have a 3.7 GPA.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

The plus/minus system implies an additional hassle, while not being universally accepted across universities state- and nation-wide. I envision it will cause unnecessary grade disputes between instructors and students. The impracticality of this system is highlighted by the fact that it is not going to be factored in when considering for scholarships (i.e. HOPE).

In certain non quantitative course work - such as evaluating design work, written expression and other kinds of liberal arts focused research, the +/- system enhances faculties ability to make evaluations that are much more fine-grained.

Giving a plus/minus grading policy will encourage students to study well.

No rationale was provided in the attached notes or in the faculty senate agenda/minutes. Frankly, it sounds like more work for faculty. If a compelling rationale is presented, I am willing to reconsider my vote.

A finer delineation of the grading would provide a more accurate assessment of student work. A student who is on the brink of getting an "A" should not end up with the same grade another students receives who is almost getting a "C."

I think that grading students with only A, B,C etc. doesn't really demonstrate the quality of one's earned grade; 89% is much different than 80% and I think our grading system should reflect this.

A "+/-" grading policy will reward students scoring in the high ranges and motivate more students in the lower ranges, therefore, it may be beneficial to most students. Usually, there is a significant gap in knowledge and effort, say between an 80.05% versus an 89.4% achievement, that is not reflected fairly in the actual grading policy. Greater effort and achievement should be rewarded commensurately.

i rather put d as a passing Grade than doing plus and minus

I believe it's a fair grading policy. This will also not put Professors under pressure to round up grades. Rather it will give some validity to the grades at the strong end of the spectrum.

Students and faculty will spend a lot of time trying to justify an A- vs a B+ and in the end it contributes nothing to the learning process.

Strongly in favor of the revised grading system

At a glance I see little benefit to the added complexity, as over several classes the high B student will occasionally get a few A's to balance our his/her GPA. If there is a compelling case, I would love to see actual analysis rather than just "hey let's do this to be like UGA."

How does this align to grading scale in percentages? Reasoning for plus/minus not provided. Nuances missed.

Not Applicable

Maybe it could include A+, in tune with some other nationwide universities.

I previously worked at an institution that had a minus/plus system. Students were more concerned with their grades than learning. It was a horrible experience as the faculty member.

It doesn't distinguish sufficiently among students regrading knowledge or work ethic.

Instead of students now arguing to have their grade changed from one letter grade to another (i.e., 89% to a 90%, B to an A), they will be arguing to have their grade changed from a 92 to a 94 (from a minus to a plus, etc). This is a waste of instructor's time and in my experience at other institutions, creates more a headache than it does to solve any problems.

It will create a focus for students in many facets - scholarship, honors studies and help with graduate studies especially now that we are going to be an R2 University.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

I think that when we use a rubric for students, they know what to do for the grade they want. I also think students typically work for good grades. I don't know when C became a low grade when it really should be the grade must if the students earn.

I would really like to see this happen. I find it really difficult to give a student with an 80 average a B and a student with an 89 average a B. Students become very upset about this.

I do not think that a proposed +/- should be up to the teacher's discretion. It should be consistent across all faculty, such as A- is 90 to 92 and B+ is 87 to 89. Otherwise the grade cannot be trusted as to meaning. There needs to be clear divisions.

Although the senate has provided this proposal, there was no rationale for this moved provided. What is the purpose of this request? There is already too much of an emphasis put on grades instead of learning. This system will only further add to student stress and lack of engagement.

I am strongly against having a grade higher than a 4.0 If we must do this, at least make the A+ symbolic as to not destroy all meaning of what it is to get an A. I don't see a need for extra grades, and all of this seems geared toward further grade inflation.

This should be exactly like the other institutions or we shouldn't do it at all. I am not enamored with the fact that the +/- categories would be up to each faculty member, and I don't like that there will be multiple GPAs to calculate. It is going to lead to massive confusion, and faculty will be in the middle of it.

This grading gives the student a better chance of passing a course

Generally, I support this grading system however I have concerns about this too. Since the instructors have the option to define the grades in each range I think it can make the grading system more subjective and as a result, might decrease consistency in evaluating students' performance in the program. It might also cause more concerns and add stress to high-achieving students. Thank you, Nasrin Dehbozorgi

I suggest the following even splits between letter grades. A = 4.00 A- = 3.67 B+ = 3.33 B = 3.00 B- = 2.67 C+ = 2.33 C = 2.00 C- = 1.67 D = 1.00 F = 0.00

The proposed system is fair for the students as 10 point grade system is a broad range that is unfair for 99 and 91 both receiving A.

The grading change will impact high achievers negatively - a 91 average now is solidly an A, and would be a 4.0 - in the future it would be less. I am against that. Likewise, I do see how the Plus would help as in a C at 2.0 vs C+ at 2.3 and I do understand the logic. It would put more work on faculty and students would be challenging more for the extra points to get into the Plus slots Not a good idea at this time

I feel students benefit more by knowing their grade percentage.

I think along with the policy there should be some clarification about why this is being brought to the Faculty Senate. Is there some benefit for the students? I'm thinking on the surface this helps minimize the impact of the lack of precision in grading (that we can determine a specific grade and that grade accurately reflects student understanding).

Our 10 point grading means that someone who barely made an 80 receives the same grade as someone who made an 89. In other words someone whose work borders on a C receives the same grade as someone who came close to making an A. A + and - system would eliminate this problem. It would also give graduate schools a clearer picture of a student's performance.

Plus minus policy has too many borderlines and A+ is even not well-defined. Students with similar learning abilities and skills will have obtained different grades resulting in inconsistency with the learned skills and creating a havoc than simplifying grade distributions.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

While I respect the effort to push students to their utmost potential, I adamantly believe that the +/- system is an ineffective means of doing so for the following reasons: (1) The +/- system could have a detrimental impact on student GPAs in a manner that could result in tangible financial losses for the students. Currently, a student who earns a "B-" in each of their classes would be assigned a 3.0 for the semester, an average that would sufficiently meet the necessary criteria for the Hope Scholarship. However, under this new system, this same student would now fail to meet the stipulations necessary to receive HOPE funding. As such, financially disadvantaged students may have a lot to lose in the adoption of this policy. (2) Assuming that an "A+" cannot receive above a 4.0, it is very likely that this policy change can lower our university level GPA. A sudden, drastic decline in the university level GPA is unlikely to reflect well on KSU and could be a detriment to recruitment efforts. (3) I am also concerned about how such a policy change might affect student well-being. Though anecdotal, my experiences with teaching at universities with the +/- system is that it places additional pressure on the students who feel that they fall just short of the next incremental grade increase. Our top performing students are already under a great deal of pressure to perform academically, A shift to the +/- system may feel overwhelming to those attempting to earn a perfect GPA as they apply to graduate schools, law schools, medical schools, etc. while simultaneously placing them at a disadvantage as they compete with other students with 4.0 GPAs from universities that have not implemented this system. I am simply not comfortable with the idea that we could be disadvantaging our high-performing students unnecessarily. (4) The stress experienced by the students will likely be dispersed among the faculty as well. As previously mentioned, I have had personal experience teaching at universities that have adopted the +/- system. During my time at these institutions, I experienced an exhausting frequency of end-of-semester emails from students begging for enough extra credit to boost their final grade another 1 or 2 full points. These emails would simply flood my inbox every May and December, at the time of the semester in which I had the least amount of spare time to dedicate to drafting numerous thoughtfully and compassionately worded responses. Though I chose to stay firm for ethical and pedagogical reasons, it became emotionally exhausting, mentally draining, and time intensive to read such a variety of heartfelt pleas for special considerations. I have actually observed a drastic reduction in these emails upon arriving at KSU. (5) Furthermore, even if others perceive this policy as one that is in the best interest of KSU, I am not convinced that this is the best time to enact such a dramatic change. The immense amount of pressure that students are currently experiencing in the midst of a pandemic and civil unrest does not seem especially conducive to change. In short, the absence of a +/- system seems to allow faculty to assess student progress without exposing them to the additional pressures of differently weighted letter grades. As such, I see the transition to a +/- system as one that could: (1) impact gpa averages at the university level in a manner that could result in tangible financial consequences for those who must maintain a specific gpa for funding purposes, (2) reflect poorly on the university if it corresponds to an aggregate GPA decline, (3) disadvantage our top performing students who prioritize a 4.0 average as they apply for opportunities to attain additional educational degrees, (4) become emotionally and mentally draining for faculty who will be increasingly exposed to heartfelt pleas for sensitivity and special considerations and (5) be unnecessarily jarring for students who are already struggling with excessive stress and insecurity during uncertain times. Although I anticipate several consequences for such a transition, I struggle to fully comprehend the perceived benefits for moving forward with this policy change. I sincerely apologize if I am missing any pertinent information that should be considered on this topic. However, I strongly believe that this decision should not be reached without careful consideration of the latent consequences of such a dramatic policy change.

I think that the plus/minus system is fine, but for graduate students, I'd like to see an A+ option.

It would be wiser to choose a grading point schema or the rest of this policy becomes too confusing and meaningless. For example, for one professor an 87 is an A-, for another a 91 is an A-, and that defeats the purpose. Additionally, there should be an A+ for completeness.

It's not a better alternative to what we currently use.

Do not wish to have plus minus it is complicated with no true benefit

I believe that the plus-minus grading policy motivates students better and promotes academic commitment to courses.

This has been under consideration since I came to KSU, over 20 years ago. I believe that plus/minus grading allows more nuance and not as much drama. I am not sure that instituting it during a pandemic is the best idea. Faculty and students are already stressed, and this adds one more demand. Would support bringing it on next academic year, assuming things have returned to what passes as normal.

Would welcome an opportunity to give recognition to those "real A's" as opposed to the A-'s.

If a student is on the border of a grade, they could, for instance receive B- instead of C, but this would still be fair to others who earned a more solid B or B+. Whole grade ranges are very broad and a 70 differs greatly from a 79.

This will open the door to more grade appeals and more work for faculty. The proposal does not help students it just seems be a prestige action for KSU.

No A+ (stay on the 4.0 scale)

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

very good idea

I'd rather see: A+ = 4.00 A = 3.70 Instead of: A = 4.00 A- = 3.70

This policy seems like it will cause many students to do just the amount to get by and does not differentiate the poor student from the excellent one. Definitely do not support.

The new system gives a better understanding of the variation between student's efforts and forces faculty to provide more feedback to students. Grade inflation is a real issue, and not enough students receive formative assessments that can be used toward improving performance.

Please don't do this. It ends up hurting students in the end and frankly seems like something more akin to high school.

I think the inclusion of +/- will add to students' and faculty's anxieties about grading and the grading process. Students are antsy enough about grades, especially grade grubbing students, and adding this kind of distinction is splitting hairs and adding headaches, i.e. "if I get an 'A-' instead of an 'A' it will harm my GPA, mess with my scholarship standing, etc." This change in our grading policy is unnecessary.

The plus minus system works better especially for students who need a 3.33 GPA or so. These students will work hard to attain 87% for a B+ rather than settling for 81% with the proposed system. In addition, for a C-level student, C+ sounds much better than a C. The only downside of the system is that the passing score would go up from 70% to 73% as 70% would now be C-.

The proposed plus/minus grading policy definitely encourages students and instructor to see the effectiveness of teaching and learning while it distinguishes higher and lower performances within each of these letter grades.

It is important to note that incorporating plus minus will overall lower GPAs. I prefer plus minus to our current system but think Plus minus makes much more sense in a 5.0 GPA scheme.

This si not going to be smooth process to transit

If a student in my course successfully understands and applies 90 percent of the course's material through tests, projects and presentations, that student should be rewarded with a 4.0.

Why make this change? I do not see the benefit.

Because an A- does not allow for a 4.0 GPA, it places great pressure on the student and faculty. I do not think now is the time to place more stress on students.

From a grading & GPA perspective, I think there is a big difference in the performance & demonstrated understanding of a student earning an 80 versus an 89. I plus/minus system recognizes the difference. And allows a student's GPA to more accurately reflect her/his learning.

I could be supportive up to A. I do not think there should be A+. Also I think that a B- puts a negative appearance for someone. If they met the threshold for a B that should be what it is. Many faculty give students numerous opportunities to improve their grades throughout the semester already.

It better recognizes the differences in effort and achievement.

I fail to understand what this accomplishes. Or maybe I do and disagree with the objective. The focus should not be creating a more accomodating grading system but on training the students that doing home work, attending class and preparing for test are not options in college.

if a n nursing student grade is 74.4 to be considered 75 and if its 79.4 to be considered as 80.

It hurts students who earn a B- , they end up with a "C" average, or any minus drops them to the lower letter average. Students who work hard to earn a "B" should be given a "B" nothing less. It will penalize students.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

An a is an a, a b is a b, a c is a c, a d is a d

No consistent plan for implementation. How will this benefit students?

The addition of the plus/minus grading system will allow more distinction between those who simply push for the A and those who strive to do their best. My classes are arranged in a way that EVERY student is capable of making an A+ if they put in the time and do the work. Some do, some only push themselves to cross the minimum barrier. The students who push excel or to add honors components to their learning should be recognized for that effort.

I'm sure it's nothing new, but it is a more accurate grading system if there are "plus" and "minus" increments, so that students know how they are actually doing, rather than just "whole" numbers. An "A+" is not the same as an "A-," but it looks the same if we have no increments.

I'm not sufficiently convinced that this change needs to occur. This is a system that can create unintentional inequity.

When entering the grades, we do enter the last day of class for the last day attended. Please make this "default" so we only change the ones that we want and not to enter all the dates one by one.

I think this will result in more student satisfaction.

It is not clear at all why such change is necessary at this time.

It doesn't make sense to adopt rules that only apply to KSU and don't apply across the board (such as for HOPE scholarship). Also, in my experience, plus/minus grading schemes only hurt the students by lowering GPAs.

The highest grade should be an A (no A+). There should be no +/- for an F. All other letter grades and +/- combinations should be available. A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F

If enacted, I'm wondering how it will be presented/explained in a student's transcript and whether it is proper for it to be introduced for an already-enrolled student vs. left to be implemented for totally-new students. In other words, how will the transition be handled?

Please review several options for grade point averages regarding the +/- scale. While some schools award above a 4.0 for A+ and several ranges for the A- etc. there should be ample research conducted to determine what would work best for KSU students. I am a firm believer in selecting what is best for students, especially preparing our undergraduates for future graduate studies. Thank you for allowing comments from all faculty.

I suggest using a numeric grade of 0.0 to 4.0 instead of the letter grades; it takes out the ambiguity of + / - letter grades; it's the best representation of the actual grade; it takes out the guesswork.

Plus/Minus grading leads to more students bargaining for grades, ie "is the 86 (B) really an 87 (B+)?" Plus/Minus grading also leads to more grade challenges.

Grade points are already nuanced enough with students arguing at the boundaries -- adding in additional points of contention will just make things more rife with grumbling.

I see no value to implementing a plus/minor grading policy to supplement the current grading system. The current grading system covers a broad enough spectrum to facilitate a sound grading system.

What is the objective? I don't think delineating grades with plus/minus adds any value to the student, the institution or any future employers. As we all know, grades are subjective between a few points already. We seem to be adding further stress and anxiety on students and further subjectivity into the grading system for no real value.

I like more differentiation.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

I think the plus/minus just complicates the issue of grades. If KSU will not use this system in the calculation of the HOPE Scholarship grade point average (GPA), why are we complicating the situation. My vote is to reject the plus/minus system.

It is not uncommon, and is a reasonable evolution of the grading policies.

It is very important that this +/- grading system is implemented given that current grading system does not acknowledge students that make an extra effort and are not rewarded with a B+ but instead received the same grade as a B- student. If we are an institution that is focused on students success then we should award success accordingly.

Seriously, how many grade discussions do you want to have. One of the only things that saves me now is the fact that they are too far away for whatever tiny reason to make a difference. I could support some form of this, but I DON'T need 2 As, 3 Bs, and 3 Cs. This is WAY too much.

For what it's worth, I abhor the +/- system. I taught at a school w/ the system for ~7 years (College of W&M) and all it did was lead to more conflict about grades. With the current grading system, only a few students are close to a certain grade so only a few students are willing to argue for those last remaining points. But with the +/- system almost everyone is close to the next grade category. This would lead to more issues, per assignment, about why points were taken off and a focus on the details of grading system and rubrics. The system also puts the focus on GPA which most company's care little about. (How often is it in the job requirements?) I'm having a hard time see the benefits, at all.

I would prefer to interpret A+ as 4.0.

I strongly support plus/minus grading. It would be a more accurate reflection of each student's body of work.

I believe that adding the plus/minus grading system will allow students to receive their actual grade. For instance, if a student has an 88% in the course, he/she/they would receive a "B" instead of the extra points of a "B+" grade.

It helps bolster the grade of a student that shows exemplary work.

Hard to create a common rubric about the +/- grades for all faculty teaching the same course (in different term, using different textbook,...)

If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

plus / minus grading would allow for grades that more accurately and specifically reflect what a student earns in class

This is a great idea because an 89 is not the same as an 80, and the students deserve to know and benefit from that difference. Thank you!

I have three boys who have degrees in Management Information Systems with minors in Accounting from the University of Alabama and they have the +/- system there and it works great. I wholly support this for KSU students.

I philosophically support the +/- grading system as a way to acknowledge and reward exceptional student performance and to close the gap between a student who earns a final score of 89 vs 90. However, the current proposal eliminates the + category for A students - the most exceptional achievers of all! And, while it is proposed to be mandatory for use, the current proposal allows for widely inconsistent application between instructors within a course. Consistency is key for the designation to have meaning.

I support +/- but not A+

The GPA weighting should stay the same, and if it changes, it would be quite complicated for those who graduated previously, who might have had a better GPA for entry into grad school etc.

This complicates the grading process and gives students additional bones to pick about their grades.

Students can see from their percentage whether or not they have a + or - grade so I'm not sure what adding this to the current grading system can offer to our students.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

My concern is that students will find this confusing and that it will be harder for some to adjust their grading scheme to accommodate this change. Some students already have difficulty in calculating their grades with the current system. There is another thing to consider - Most universities do not follow this grading scheme. For those who intend to go to graduate school, this could have negative implications, as their GPA could be negatively affected by this policy, which could potentially negatively impact their chances of getting in (especially if the other applicants did not also have this grading scheme).

It will cause more work for the instructor and we do not need any more work. It will cause either more complaints from students who do not like their minus, and we do not need more complaints, or it will result in the same number of complaints, so no gain there. No employer cares. Our focus should be on student learning, not tedious nuances of grading, too many of which are already inflated and therefore not realistic reflections of understanding. +/- provide no more information. Students think this will make them happier and it will not so we should not make a change based on a misunderstanding of reality.

It provides a finer assessment on students' performance and takes in account borderline cases.

This is a university, there is a level of expectation of focus, work and personal ethics building that is encouraged by grade outcomes. Not every learner is an internal motivated learner, having external motivation, reinforcement for a strong work and study and ethic while learning follow through is vital in supporting university learners preparing to step out in the world.

I have often regretted awarding the same grade to a student who worked very hard, and almost earned an "A" (but barely missed it, so the grade was a "B"), and a student who slacked off for much of the semester but managed to pull off a very low "B."

I'm not in favor of plus/minus grading systems--particularly one that is required for all faculty to use. Instead of four cutoffs to estimate, we are faced with 10. It will be harder to identify clear separations in scores when cutting a curve. In addition, we can expect more than twice as many requests from students to appeal for just a few more points to move up above the next cutoff. The one advantage I see is a potentially finer separation of students, but I'm not sure our grading instruments are discriminating enough to make that finer separation meaningful. If the system is determined to add plus/minus grades, I suggest making it voluntary. I had optional plus/minus at (I think) UK, and I did use them on some rare occasions when one student was way ahead of the rest of the class and deserved the distinction of an A+. I hear that the proposal has now been modified to eliminate A+. I think this is even worse than the original one. If you are going to have +/- grades, don't penalize the best students by eliminating the A+.

I think that this encourages students to be more concerned with grades than with learning.

Plus/minus grading systems add stress to students who are perfectionist. I would be in favor of more credit/no credit course options so students can develop a higher degree of intrinsically motivated self-efficacy.

I think +/- grading is essential, not least for graduate courses. The current grading standards do a profound disservice to students who sit on the cusp of a higher grade (and introduces a perverse incentive to faculty to "bump up" such students). Further, the current standard introduces perverse incentives to students - encouraging them "to just make it" to the desired grade rather than maximizing their performance. I am dumbfounded how this is even a controversy.

If you think students complain when they are arbitrarily close to the next letter grade just imagine when the +/- system gets here. We need a list of usg schools that currently use the plus minus system along with changing things to reflect C- as passing instead of C. Also it would be great to have a range of grades for the proposed +/- system to allow for an accurate vote. Thanks for listening.

Do not include A+

I do not see any benefit to students or to faculty.

The proposed plus/minus system increases the appearance of a discrete, quantitative metric that is fundamentally incompatible with what is most often an inherently subjective and qualitative phenomena.

Too much is at stake with these borderline cases (e.g. A vs B). I'd rather it be B plus vs. A minus.

Faculty have been keeping numerical grades. Students should not be allowed to have a pass/fail grading system. The standard of numerical averages for a letter grade should stay as is.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

Overall, the arguments I've read/heard for moving to the proposed system are just not sufficiently compelling. The cutoffs that currently exist already result in grade appeals and invite conflict between faculty and administration on their implementation (especially in the absence of university-prescribed %s associated with each). I can only imagine that the volume of grade appeals will increase exponentially if we switch to a +/- system.

Why?

It might be appropriate to provide specific guidelines to the faculty based on a range of percentage grades, e.g., 90% to 93%, that an A- grade should be awarded. Allowing the instructors to fashion their own guidelines may create confusion and concern on the part of students (they might see inconsistency between one instructor and another).

I think the current system is fine. The +/- system encourages students to focus more on points rather than learning the content. I prefer the current system. I do NOT want the plus/minus grading policy

Change is not necessary.

The proposed system is not supported in any of the GA high schools to date. Although the proposed system may indeed increase the GPA's of those in the "B" or below category, it will penalize those in the "A" category. In addition, few schools throughout the U.S. recognize this proposed structure. Undergraduate students desiring to attend other universities for graduate school may find they will not be accepted into a program because of the differences in the GPA/grading system.

Honestly, I am impartial to what is decided. I am good either way. But that is not an option above. ;-) Some students seem to respond better to the plus and minus on grades. I know in the past students who had a high A wanted the grade on report card to reflect such, however, in reality it didn't matter what the actual percentage was, as an A is an A. In saying that, I do like being able to explain it to students that way. On that same note, a D is a D, which ultimately is the same as an F in some cases. A plus or minus would not make a difference in either of those situations. Would plus and minus be weighted differently for GPA purposes?

This seems like a lot of unnecessary work and there is not a justification for why the motion is believed to be necessary. More description of why it is needed and valuable would be beneficial in the motion.

I much prefer +/- because it helps differentiate student achievement better. It seems weird to implement this, however, and not use it for HOPE. Is that a state regulation issue?

The caveat this system will not adversely affect HOPE scholarship requirements is important. Otherwise, I support moving towards a more responsive grading system.

The potential added benefit of the new system is not clear.

I believe students are already stressed enough in college. Now, to have to deal with another stressor creates anxiety and more mental stress, which can cause lower grades.

I do not see our class metrics and criteria being that exacting to differentiate three sub-levels of performance at each grade level. Even more grade inflation will result. I also see the potential for far more grade appeals. What purpose does the plus/minus system serve if it is not used for calculating HOPE scholarship eligibility. Does not say we have a lot of faith in the reliability and validity of our grading system.

There is a big difference between someone who just fell shy of an A and someone who just managed to get a B.

I think it will be confusing to have a grading system that is used for some but not all purposes, in particular that it would not be used for HOPE gpa calculations. Additionally, I would be more supportive of a plus system, but I do not like the concept of giving someone who earned a B something less than a 3.0.

Wish we had an A+ in there as an option as well Would be open to a no-minuses system as well [only grades and plusses (A+, A, B+, B, ...)]

The range for letter grades is so broad it does not give an accurate representation of the students abilities

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

The plus/minus system allows for a greater correlation between the actual grade received and what gets reported on a student's transcript.

It can increase the instances of grade appeal, while the positive "drive up" for students' engagement is merely a hope. Finally, would the C- satisfy prerequisites?

The nuances of the differences are significant between an 80/89, 70/79, etc. and with no provision for an A+ one of the major objections seems to be taken out.

10 points is too much of a spread and makes the grade less meaningful. There's a serious consideration gap between a \$9,000 and \$10,000 expenditure. Grades should have the same weight of separation.

There would be little to no gain to the changes _ It would introduce many arguments and debates over assignments.

This is very student friendly.

Just do it without any hesitation!

With the existing grading scheme, students figure out what the minimum is to get an A or B, depending on what they are striving for, and then stop working hard.

Grading at KSU is complicated enough.

In the current grading system a student with 80% will receive a B, just like a student with 89% This does not represent correctly the level of knowledge of the latter. I am actually in support of exact percentage as grade, like in all other countries (or converted on a scale from 1 to 10).

This would help separate the excellent from the good, the good from the fair, and the fair from the poor, and the poor from the bad in a consistent way, so that students who are outstanding are clearly differentiated.

Let's keep things simple. It's always best.

I believe is less grade category, like just "Pass" and "Not Pass - Fail" for all courses.

I think that is an added complication with minimal associated benefit to students. I've also found at other universities, most faculty did not use it when available

We have been asking for this for twenty years. In the old days it was said that some at the BOR did not want to allow this because it made KSU look too much like a real university.

Not for graduate studies

There is not enough variation in the current grading system. This would enhance the ability of the faculty to provide a better indicator of a students overall grade.

This system will produce grade inflation. By eliminating the "A+" grade, it forces the whole integer grade-point designations into the middle of each bracket. Do we really want students to think they need only do 93% of the work to receive 100% of the grade? It would be better (and more intellectually honest) to peg the 4.0 to A+, and simply make the students work harder to earn that grade.

The +/- system would allow faculty to give grades that more accurately represent students' work and overall outcome in courses. It would also allow faculty to differentiate between borderline students and students who excel. For example, with the current system a student who skates by with an 80 receives the same B that a student who works hard yet still earns only an 89 points. The +/- system would reward harder working students.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

Personally, I feel that a student who has earned a 89% deserves to be recognized for that vs. the student who earned an 80% and gets the same overall grade. That has never seemed fair to me.

I support plus/minus for graduate level courses, but not UG.

The inclusion of minus grades would effectively penalize students who would have normally received the standard grade (e.g., a low B or 3.0 would become a B- or 2.7). If I am required to use this system, I will simply define the minus grades in such a way that no student will ever receive such a penalty.

I think the plus/minus grading policy leads to much more complaints from students and less flexibility for the faculty member. The grading system as it stands is straightforward and easy to understand. There are frustrations because the range for a B, for example, is very wide. However, because of the transparency in grading required at KSU and the extent to which faculty are required to have progressive assignments or assignments that are not worth more than 30% of the final grade, there are ample opportunities for students to improve over the course of the semester. At the university that I attended, it was very common for a humanities class grade to be determined as 40% participation and 60% final paper; in this case, a student had no concrete evidence of what their final grade would be going into the finals week. If we were lucky, the faculty member gave a provisional grade on a draft of the paper. But very often, the drafts were returned with a numerical or letter grade. In upper division math/science courses, grades were 40% homework and 60% exams with one midterm and a final. In those cases, I think that the plus/minus system is important because it gives the student a sense of where they landed at the end of the semester, particularly because there's no transparency on the grade breakdown and very little opportunity to challenge the grades as faculty only posted the final letter grade after students had already left campus for the semester.

Using this option would give us a legitimate tool to separate the truly excellent (A) students from the nearly excellent (A-) and decrease grade inflation.

I do not believe the timing is right for such a major change given the potential disruptions to overall GPAs across campus.

Way too complicated for KSU. Students won't understand it, and there will be constant complaining about their grade. We are adding complexity where none is warranted.

The current straight A/B/C/D grading system results in a difference in GPA that is too big between two adjacent grades (1.0 difference). This results in faculty having to deal with many requests to move up grades at the end of every semester. The plus/minus system will reduce students' potential gain in such requests by narrowing down GPA gaps, and reduce faculty's burden on replying email requests.

I'm really indifferent.

A change to a plus/minus grading policy would only lead students to fixate on grades more than they already do, which would be (and already is) detrimental to teaching and genuine learning.

Rhanks

I do not support plus/minus grading as a general principle. In experience (3 of 4 colleges/universities where I have been an instructor of record used +/- grading) all of the ills it attempts to solve are not, in fact, solved. Furthermore, it exacerbates the complaints and "grade-grubbing" from a wider group of students. Secondly, if KSU DOES go to +/- grading, it is a HORRIBLE ERROR to not have a uniform, KSU-wide standard on what constitutes each grade for all programs. The possible discrepancies will cause problems for students, faculty, and--eventually--administrators trying to adjudicate student's complaints and/or awards. In conclusion, KSU SHOULD NOT use plus/minus grading. However, if we do, we should certainly have a uniform standard on what numerical scores constitute each grade.

The new grading system/scale will allow faculty to be flexible and students will be benefited with regards to GPA.

This is a difference between a student with an 80 average and an 89 average. Grades should reflect that.

A plus/minus grading system gives more flexibility to the instructor and it is more fair to the students. However, I do not think that an A+ grade is needed since it is non-standard and complicates things.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

I can see how this grading system may be useful to some programs, particularly in the sciences. But in others the trend is to move away from outdated systems that all they create is anxiety and more conflict. It should be up to the college or perhaps the department to choose the best way to grade students, and not a top-down imposition on all.

It gives faculty greater flexibility in grading and students a clearer evaluation of what they've achieved.

I have used plus/minus at other colleges and it's been a great experience. I think it gives a more accurate understanding of the scale of the grade. For example, a B- and a B+ can be 9 points apart.

I would like to hear why this is being considered, and who asked the senate to consider it before voting to approve it. I would also like to see information gathered by the senate to show the benefits of this grading system.

In my opinion, it's too complicated, so only plus grading policy would be enough like many other universities.

I do not think PTI should be voting on curriculum policy. Ever

I think it's fair for all students be assessed using the same standard metrics everywhere.

It's about time.

Having + and - grades would reduce stress for students and instructors.

Not the right time to introduce changes.

I do believe this would be helpful for us to implement. However, I am concerned about implementing this new grading policy during COVID19. With the other changes students have had to deal with, I believe NOT having the +/- system has been one of the few areas for margin that students have been able to benefit from -- when all else is being taxed. Therefore, although I am in support of this idea, I want to make sure that if it is implemented it is done so at a time when students and faculty will be able to comply with it in a manner allows them to be responsive to its benefits rather than the current costs.

I think a plus minus system allows the professor a more accurate reflection of a student's grade: it can often feel difficult for a professor to deduct an entire letter grade to a student whose work is on the cusp and results in softer grading allowances because the impact on the student can be large from one letter grade to the next.

I believe the plus/minus grading policy lowers the academic bar simply for the sole purpose to increase graduation numbers. First, the implementation of the policy will be a win for the administration and a loss for the students. Second, the policy promotes and instills a minimalist mind set in the students. The message it sends to students is keep doing less and less, and you'll keep being reward for doing nothing. Lastly, this would be another step in the direction of bolstering quantity over quality as it relates to students obtaining a degree.

I worked at another university where plus/minus was in effect. It caused nothing but trouble for faculty as students were constantly lobbying for the next closest grade up (Ex: B- to B+). It opens up a can of worms that causes triple the amount of administration for the grading process.

There is no need for extra criteria and splitting of hairs between Bs and Cs.

I do not think it is fair to students who fall in the minus category. From a faculty perspective, I think it will cause more emails to deal with from students trying to finagle their way to a higher grade since there are more categories.

it will perhaps increase students complaints over the grades and I never heard a student complain about the grading system not being +/- . why do we want to complicate things? We do not deal with small size classes. Instead of spending time to change grading system minus and plus, we should focus on how to increase graduation, retention rate and student success rates.

The current system works just fine.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

This will have a negative effect on some students. If an undergraduate student takes a C- on a course and C on all courses, that student will be on probation. The same case applies for graduate students who get B- on a course and B on all their courses. This will eventually affect retention rate. For undergraduate courses, this implies that C- is not a passing grade any more.

A 10-point range is huge for a letter grade, not communicating the disparities in quality of work and learning that can occur within that range. For example, a student who earned a 90 (A) in a course, did not accomplish as much as a student who earned a 99 or 100 (also an A). A more nuanced system is better in line with many other universities and creates less disparity.

I feel as though it would create a great disparity between different groups of students. Students who are more vocal would petition to have an increase grade average more. First generation students and students from historically underrepresented groups would have less of a voice. I feel it creates more opportunities for bias, implicit or otherwise, to occur in the grading process. The benefits students may receive from gaining a + don't outweigh the deficits from receiving a -. The amount of lobbying students make at the end of every semester to increase their grade would multiply because there would be so many more points of contention within each letter grade.

My students would prefer not to have +/- grading.

If it doesn't change the student's GPA, then it doesn't make any sense to add a plus minus system. That information isn't provided here, so I'm assuming not.

I think this is an outrageously bad idea - mean spirited on the part of the faculty.

My daughter used this grading structure and it was wonderful. It took a lot of pressure off student who were borderline A/B when they knew they would at least get a B+ if things did not work out in the final exam. I would, however, discourage the use of A+. It will erode the value of a GPA for comparison purposes as we have seen in the current Georgia high schools where GPAs of 4.2 and above are possible. My daughter went to Florida State and they did not implement the A+. She never once suggested this was an issue for her or her fellow students.

This is a great idea! The majority of universities including those in the state system (Georgia) have a plus/minus system.

I am a very strong proponent of having plus minus grading here at KSU, but this specific proposal is idiotic in three ways. First, I think it is very wrong to insist that "All faculty will be required to use Plus/Minus Grading" (which I interpret to mean that all faculty would be required to have a measurable range of semester averages that would correspond to plus and minus letter grades). Why should this be mandated? Second, the assigned GPA for the plus and minus letter grades is strange. Why have a 0.3 difference between a letter grade and its corresponding plus and minus, which then gives rise to a 0.4 difference between a grades plus and the next higher grade's minus. It would be much more natural (and in-line with what I've seen at all other institutions that I know of that use plus/minus grading) to simply have one third of a grade difference between each possible grade. That is, make a B+ count as 3.33... and an A- count as 3.66... Third, why no D+?

It is unfair for a student who gets an 81 to be equated with one that gets 88. The plus minus should allow for recognition of the real work and hopefully also provide a more accurate GPA. Without the =- a student seeks to only get just a passing C B or A and is not motivated to reach their personal best.

This policy will cause unnecessary hardships for professors and undue stress for students. I am not convinced that changing our grading policy will assist with student progression towards graduation or completion rates. It also will not help students in any way.

plus and minus system does help to place a student in a hierarchy that has better clarity of effort.

ABSOLUTELY AGAINST THIS IDEA!!!!

I don't see any benefit to students.

unnecessary and creates additional work

I don't see the benefit for anyone. I think it will just create a lot of haggling from students trying to get to the next level.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

I like the idea of offering +/- for students between two grades, but I am not convinced that adding an A+ is a good idea. It could stress students to always shoot for an A+ instead of an A, and I know this can be difficult for a lot of pre-med students I teach anyway!

My support is conditional. I would like more information as to how this would impact students especially as they apply for graduate programs. There are other areas of concern relative to the discretionary aspects of the grades. That is my "A-" could be arrived at differently than another professor/instructor, and this would also have an impact. Essentially, I am asking for the input and experience of those systems that have used this approach.

Additional room for subjectivity from instructor, additional stress on the students

I support the idea of B+ and C+, but throwing in the minus grades is too complicated.

Most universities use this grade scale. It is a mean to differentiate the top students with a A vs a student who barely made an A.

It's not fair for students who work extremely hard for an A and get an 89 to be counted as the student who barely works for a B/C and gets an 80. I support the +/- system.

This is a service to students who get a high B or C but are unable to make it to the next grade level.

KSU is the first institution I've been at that does not have plus/minus grades. I have found that a +/- system hurts students rather than helping them and GREATLY increases the number of grade appeals.

I think the simplicity of the current system is better.

Adds more complexity

Using this grading scheme will more accurately capture the performance of students.

1) There is still too much subjectivity in what earns the + or - 2) Students already have a hard time dealing with pressure and have major anxiety issues. This will just add more. Those who are already over-achievers will still get the A-pluses, and those who have some sense of balance in their lives and strive to do well in school, but also in other areas, will just feel more pressure. Let a student who did his/her best to earn an A enjoy the A without it being tainted with a minus that still conveys they did not do well-enough. 3) It is just a way to keep sucking more performance life out of already maxed out students who feel like their value and identity are tied to their grades, and therefore feel like failures if they cannot live up to an A as it is (hence massive anxiety issues). This will just set the bar higher for students who are already doing their best. And the ones who are not performing as they should are not likely to care whether they get the + or -, so long as their C's get degrees.

While I understand the arguments for a +/- grading system, I think that the implementation should require a universal use of the +/- system UNIFORMLY across courses, programs, and levels. All classes/programs should use the program or none should. I think there should also be a uniform grading scale to ensure consistency in implementation and use across courses/programs/departments. It would not be okay for an A- to be a 95 in one course and an 89 in another course. Based on the arguments I've seen, I fail to see that this is planned and I fail to see the benefit in using a +/- system. The benefit to the university, degree programs, and students is extremely unclear and poorly communicated.

Students should be able to get points for the work they have done. A B at 80% is not the same as a B at 89%! I am strongly in favor of +/- system.

Most of my students get A's and B's, and I fear sometimes that it looks like grade inflation drives their grades up. In fact, many of the A's should be A-'s, and the B's run the gamut as well. The last thing I would want is for students to start getting the idea that it's easy to get an A or B here. I think the nuance of adding a +/- system will help discourage that perception.

No additional comments. Thank you for posing this question.

Plus/minus grading allows for greater separation of student achievement. Consider a standard 90-80-70 grade scale. A student earning an 89 is outperforming a student earning an 80 by almost a letter grade. Under the current system - both students earn a B. Under +/-, one student earns a B+ and the other a B-, which more equitably represents their relative performance.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

If we were to assume that Senate had both infinite time and infinite political capital, it would only be a somewhat bad idea to give students and faculty twice the number of grades to debate over. Do you know how much easier it is when you can tell a student he is over 5% away from the next higher grade? Well an 85 is almost an 88 (trust me students will never think it is almost an 82). Of course you don't have infinite time and political capital, and so are wasting effort when there is compression, Coronavirus response, P&T, etc.

I like the plus minus system because it gives student incentive to raise their grade and is a better reflection of student performance. No plus/minus system makes it so someone with a 70 gets the same grade as someone with a 79.

This will make the whining and point grubbing even worse than it already is!

That would create more complaints from students over their grades. I have never heard a student having issues with the grading system not being +/-, why change something that's been working fine.

Sure why not.

It makes the grading easier by having a closer relationship between the student's point score and their final grade.

None! Thanks for the opportunity.

I worked previously at an institution that used a +/- system and found it to be more harmful than helpful to students. It does reward students who make higher score within a range, but the minus is harmful to a student's gpa. I found that students became increasingly concerned with the +/- for their grade, adding to their stress. In some cases, students scrambled at the end of the semester, worried about what not only a B, but a B- could do to their gpa. And as a faculty member, I found the +/- system tedious as I graded. If this does proceed, I think it is also a mistake to not have a university-wide standard. It confuses the student, who could receive a A+ with a certain numerical grade in one class and an A in another, even within one department. It definitely needs to be standardized, at least throughout departments, and not up to an instructor.

Plus/minus grading serves no clear purpose other than to create more opportunities for students to complain about their grades or urge faculty to bump up the grades, thus harming the dynamic between students and faculty. Perhaps this concern is not so much an issue in disciplines like math or science, but in the humanities, plus/minus grades would be a disaster.

I have no sense of why the current system is thought to be so flawed that we need to burn energy on changing it. And this is a major change, with both anticipated and unanticipated consequences. That is my main question. Saying that UGA does it this way (given our experience with administrators from that university) is almost a reason dismiss the idea out of hand. It's certainly a reason to be very cautious. I anticipate many, many more grade disputes. The more bands of grades there are, and the narrower they are, means a great increase in students close to a boundary who believe they've been treated unfairly.

I would be willing to provide numerical grades if that is what is decided.

I am not in favor of adding an A+.

This would require many other policies to change if implemented. Do not see the benefit.

With email embedded into the LMS, it's become too easy for students to shoot off an email begging for a grade bump. My colleagues joke that the posting of final course grades in D2L has become the opening bell for the grade negotiation process to begin (in the minds of our students). Adding more levels of grades (plus/minus system) just increases the numbers of cut points to be negotiated, and there's no amount of stating you won't change grades that will stop students from emailing - just in case you might change your mind this one time. This proposal is a big no for me.

This will increase the potential for conflict regarding final grades and also the potential for errors in final grade submission. I do not see the benefits in regards to current student performance.

Just adds more complexity and emotion to a situation that doesn't need it.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

The plus-minus grading system is utilized at multiple institutions within the USG. Georgia State University has been on this grading system since 2006, when I served as a visiting instructor from 2006 till 2008. The Connecticut State University system is also on the plus - minus system, where I also teach as an adjunct professor. I believe this grading system helps differentiate student scholarship, since grade inflation occurs in most classes with a large percentage of students receiving B's and A's.

I think this is a critical matter for advancing academic achievement and fostering a culture of excellence at KSU. By integrating a plus/minus grading policy, it will encourage students to challenge and apply themselves throughout the entire semester. Further, it provides greater opportunity for instructors to differentiate between good and excellent students - this is sorely lacking in our current grading scheme.

Yes. Yes. Yes. An 89 is very different than an 80. With the current structure, we don't incentivize the student to push for a higher grade. With the above example, both get a B. The person with an 80 has no incentive to go from a B- to a B or B+. Also, the person that got an 89 worked so much more than the person that gets an 80.

I have used this system before at a different university and would not recommend it. The students complained quite a bit.

every year or so, we make changes that result in new tasks for faculty (and staff) that take time away from program activities and quality enhancement. we should be doing the opposite, i.e., streamlining complexity and administrative duties to allow more time for program activities, quality-targeted modifications, and other improvements, but such streamlining seems to occur rarely.

It's unnecessary.

In my experience at other universities with the plus/minus grading system, the additional grade designations tend to lead to more numerous grade complaint headaches. More importantly, as research shows that intrinsic motivators (i.e., interest in the material) lead to better learning outcomes than extrinsic motivators (i.e., grades), having additional grade designations would seem to exacerbate students' tendency toward the latter.

Salary compression needs to be rectified.

I would say do not use A+ or C-

Adding the +- system will add more stress on faculty

There is a clear measurement issue. Do faculty think there is discrimination between an A and A-, B and B+ etc. Further, the student getting an A- or B+ etc. are receiving a negative message, "With more work you could have done better. Seems like a waste of time for no student benefit.

Adopt campus wide initiatives, policies, and standards to address grade inflation.

Our students are already under a great deal of pressure, especially during these unprecedented times. Many of our students juggle competing responsibilities such as school, work, parenting, and care-taking. If a +/- system is implemented, we will see an uptick in anxiety from our students for whom a grade of A or B will suddenly not be "good enough." The +/- system has GPA consequences that our students do not want or need.

This should be an easy yes. Students slack a lot once they hit 79.9 or 89.9. It is not fair for a student who has a 97 average to get the same grade as someone with an 89.9 average. This happens frequently . . .

I am for a plus (+) system rather than a plus/minus (+/-) system. While the former rewards excellence, the latter penalizes students (not to mention creating more headaches for the professors, especially with qualitative work). Unless A+ grades are given, I don't believe this is a positive for any individuals involved.

Your proposal idea basically means that those who had a GPA of 4 could get less. In other schools, A+, A, and A- all consider as 4 and that seems to be more standard. The proposed idea will create too many problems and produce so many unhappy students whom we need to deal with. The idea will create too much work on the teacher side as well with no significant benefits.

I used a similar system while teaching as a GTA at Virginia Tech quite a few years ago, and I liked the ability to distinguish a bit more among students' achievements in class.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

This will increase the workload and the potential for grade complaints, especially on part-time faculty.

The system allows more detailed feedback and response. In my graduate program, we used such a system and I appreciated it both as a teacher and as a student.

There is a significant difference between an 81 and a 89. The students need to be honored for this difference.

At a previous institution, they allowed "+" but not "-" Evidently that holds down grade inflation

We already worry about students being overly focused on grades, versus learning. Adding in these additional grading partitions serves to further emphasize attention to grades. It's taking us away from our primary goal to educate students versus serving as grade gatekeepers.

I wholeheartedly support this. It more accurately reflects student performance in their GPA.

I do not support an A+ being awarded at a 4.30 GPA.

I think this will cause a greater number of unwarranted final grade disputations from students.

This system seem standard in most universities (except perhaps the A+ part). I have always felt here is a huge difference between an 81 and an 87, and this system allows that to be accommodated.

it creates more stress for both faculty and student.

Grades are so subjective based on the course and the instructor. Making such distinctions between small numerical grades could be considered "splitting hairs". Faculty have enough to agonize over with how to grade assignments or weight assignments and deciding final grades in the A, B, C, etc categories. This will only add to the stress of faculty and students.

Research shows (and as I have experienced), the plus/minus grading leads to grade inflation. It is not a positive direction for KSU to move and I do understand the history of the USG, KSU, and the plus/minus issue.

While this does create a "more accurate" grading structure by subdividing grades along the plus or minus category, it introduces several other issues. This is based on experience at two prior institutions. 1. It tends to lower average GPAs. Students who are traditionally A students but score in the low 90's range will have their GPA fall from a 4.0 to 3.7 GPA. 2. It makes the ability to achieve a 4.0 much more challenging. Students must score in the mid to high 90's in every class to maintain this achievement. 3. Most organizations do not take into consideration a plus or minus system for GPA. Therefore, a student with all A's at one university having a 4.0 will be evaluated higher than a student with all A's at a competing university having a GPA of 3.7. (Note: GPA may not be the deciding factor for a job but for students without experience it can be one criteria that can help). 4. Having an A- without an A+ creates an imbalance in the grading system. I've been through these conversations before and the argument for not having an A+ is because most companies don't understand how a student can have higher than a 4.0 GPA. Removing the A+ eliminates this possibility, which supports point 3 above. This hurts the students more than helps them. 5. One of my biggest reasons is that this creates a lot of turmoil and tension between students and faculty. It also creates a lot more work on the faculty as we have to micromanage grades to be more precise. There is sometimes tension between students who score an 88 or 89 but want to have their grade boosted from a B to an A. We now introduce these arguments across many levels. Students with a B will argue for a B+, students with a B+ will argue for an A-, students with an A- will argue for an A. I understand that I must follow whatever grading scale the university proposes and will do so. But for my vote, I strongly recommend against this change. I don't see any benefits to the change or how this provides anything positive from my experience. I've only seen the negative side of this and based on experiences at two completely distinct universities, my experiences have been pretty consistent.

Now is not the time to put this additional burden on faculty. Also, the faculty considered this just a few years ago and voted it down.

Helps students with GPA to have "plus grades" with furthering their education

There is a noticeable difference in work between students who make an 80% and those who make an 89%. I believe the plus/minus system will have a positive impact on our students.

you will be sorry

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

I chaired a committee at the University of Alabama who proposed this and it was accepted. We did an extensive study of places that used this and other systems. It did not have an A+ built in. It succeeded except for some high level students complaints. One advantage was that it allowed faculty to discriminate between people at any grade level. In other words, it allows for differences among B+, B, and B-. I do not know if it changed after I left in 2004.

Creates confusion with regard to GPA cutoffs and grading thresholds. The lack of an A+ and the presence of a C- can lead to GPA inflation and confusion.

I have taught at a college that used +/- and it just caused more headaches than it cured.

While I see the point that it may increase student motivation at the end of the semester, what I think is more likely and problematic is that it will increase student anxiety and begging for rounding at the end of the semester. I already have too many emails from students who want to round an 88.5 to a 90 or a 78.5 to an 80 - I worry that we will see more and more students demanding that we round a 82 to a 83 for a B rather than a B- or whatever the case may be. Navigating all those denial emails at the end of the semester is more work than the faculty need and more work for potential grade disputes. I'm glad the language says that KSU will not use this system in the calculation of the HOPE Scholarship GPA. But I think this will only benefit the students who apply to graduate school and it will only help them so they can say they have a 4.1 rather than a 4.0 or something similar. Problematically, it may end up harming some of our under-performing students. A solid B student who is actually a B- student suddenly has a 2.7 rather than a 3.0, which feels dramatic since you are under the 3.0 mark. That may be MUCH more impactful for those students when they go up for graduate school. All and all I think there are too many negatives for this policy to be supported.

I support it for every grade except A+

The pressure on students to earn "good" grades is real, and that is amplified during a pandemic. I see the +/- system putting unnecessary stress on students, as well as causing an extra work burden on faculty. I'm not sure what the reasoning for this is, other than to just do what other USG institutions do. I don't think it is needed at KSU.

Bad idea

I think it's fine if you want to include it in the grade, but calculating the grade differently depending on the +/- is an added headache that faculty don't need at this time. I have taught at Georgia State and hated it.

I think a transition towards a plus/minus grading system will only lead to more student emails asking about extra credit. I already get enough of those emails within the regular grading scheme. It is also easier to justify statistically significant thresholds between an A, B, and a C than between an A+, A, and A- etc. Lastly, I believe that instead of having a more differentiated grading scheme, I would suggest to increase differentiation in the course offerings. In many courses, this could be done by offering advanced placement courses in which students can self-select them in. Taking advanced placement courses will not change the GPA, but two students with a GPA of 4.0 but one earning that GPA with only advanced placement courses will look much better than one earning it with regular courses. Many students who would like to pursue an academic career are often held back by students who simply want to get a degree.

Students panic more than they should about grades since there is a wide gulf between grade points assigned for a difference of 1 or 2 percentage points in a course grade. Having a tiered system will allow students to show where they stand along a continuum, and distinguish high B-level students more from high C-level students, and from low B-level students.

I prefer this +/- grading system since it gives more control over assessing the students' learning outcomes.

I support the proposed plus/minus grading policy for two reasons. First, with KSU's recent designation as an R2 research university, the plus/minus grading policy is consistent with most other R1 and R2 universities. Second, in my personal experience, the current grading policy does not incentive students to push harder to improve their work and subsequent grade. The students at KSU are smart and surely they realize that achieving a 70% is functionally the same as achieving a 79%.

Didn't we already address this a few years ago???

I believe this is punishing on students' GPA.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

I'm wondering how the change in grading policy will be reflected in student transcripts and GPAs so that internally and externally, the change in policy can be factors in evaluating students grades and GPAs.

There's a big difference between a final grade of 80% and 89%. Students who score higher should be rewarded for it. This should have been in place years ago.

I don't have a strong feeling about going to +/- grading, just a slight preference not to. However, I feel VERY strongly that we should not be awarding more than a 4.0 for each class. Grades on a 4.0 are widely understood and accepted, and moving the scale to being out of 4.3 just confused things.

It is not consistent with the University System of Georgia or the Hope Scholarship system. Leave it alone and allow faculty to set what their grade ranges are as it currently stands.

This may increase the "whining for grades" of students looking to increase their grades by complaining and arguing for points at the end of each term.

Plus/minus grading is much more fair!!!

The +/- system only serves to make students feel better about their non A grade. And I dont think employers and graduate schools care much beyond that distinction.

I strongly support this and have been waiting for a while for this to be implemented. It can only make things more fair and promote truthfulness.

This is a great grading system that would encourage students to work harder.

Faculty shouldn't be forced into a grading system.

Having taught at universities that used both systems - and having been a student at universities that used both systems - I can say that the greater granularity a plus/minus system affords is not an equivalent benefit to offset the additional administrative work and additional student issues such a system would create. Additionally, unless revised, final-course-grade-based requirements may adversely impact students (e.g., to satisfy a prerequisite, a final grade of "B" may be required for the prerequisite course, but with the implementation of a plus/minus system, the final numerical average that would have once equated to a "B" in that course may now equate to a "B-" and the prerequisite requirement would then be unfulfilled).

There is a lot of difference between a 100 and a 90 and I think a +/- system will more accurately reflect student achievement.

Below are my questions: 1. What would be the difference, for example, between B+, B, and B- or C+, C, and C- etc.? 2. In addition, from students' perspective, even if such a policy is adopted, would it make a difference in terms of credit-points earned? 3. If, for example, B+, B, and B- will all earn 3 credit hours, then what would be the point of adopting such a policy?

Normally I would support plus minus grading, however given our student body's tendency to constantly push for a better grade (worse than anything I have experienced at other universities) I would prefer to not have the option/hassle.

Not having plus/minus makes it very difficult to differentiate among student performance and can lead to grade inflation/bump ups for those who are near the top end of any given grade band to show how they differ from those at the lower end of the band. I think for graduate students, where a C is essentially a failing grade, having more range of differentiation is particularly helpful and important.

A plus/minus system would allow for considerably more nuance than our current grading system. At the moment, a student who earns an 80 gets the same grade as a student who earns an 89, which seems unfair to our students. The current system unnecessarily flattens out the possibilities for grading and for student achievement, and revising it to include pluses and minuses would offer a bit more clarity to what a given grade means.

This issue keeps coming up--and continues to receive a "no" response from faculty each time. It is complicated, inefficient, has no real value, and splits hairs unnecessarily. Never is there any substantive reason provided to merit re-consideration. Has something of real value developed? If not, shall we move on from this?

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

I support plus and minus grades except that the highest grade should stop at A instead of A plus. The plus and minus grading system is a finer grade classification than the current system.

It would be helpful if you define what this is for people who may be unfamiliar.

I believe it will cause more anxiety for students. For example, what if they are content to receive an A now and feel confident with their efforts and abilities. What kind of stress with they feel if their A isn't good enough and now must strive for A+?

Our D2L grade books follow precise percentage data (86%, 97%...), and students should benefit from these higher percentage nuances.

Making distinctions between two adjacent grades (e.g., B+ and A-) becomes much more difficult. The proposed system will also result in grade inflations - even without A+ being 4.3. There will be a question whether or not C- satisfies a prerequisite as well. I think it just is a bad idea.

Because the plus/minus impacts grade point averages, I am not certain that it is fair or equitable for all students. The differences between a 91 and 99 are negligible. An A grade should be an A grade, as long as it is within 10 point range.v ccccccccccccccc

PLEASE PASS THIS!!!! A PLUS/MINUS GRAING SYSTEM IS FAR SUPERIOR TO WHAT WE DO NOW, AS OUR CURRENT GRADING SYSTEM IS UNFAIR TO STUDENTS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION!!!!

This has the potential to cause an already contentious process even more problems.

The use of "plus/minus" suggests a degree of precision and objectivity in the grading process that simply does not exist. Broad categories of assessment are preferable because they reduce the effect of biases, errors, and pedagogical lapses.

I think this would give additional incentive to work toward the next highest possible grade. It would also be more meaningful for students achieved above the midpoint of a grade level.

Why will these grades not be considered for calculating Hope? This will cause confusion among students and parents. Unless Hope forbids it, I would encourage us to use it for Hope also.

I have been talking about this to my classes every semester since 2010. I completely agree that students who earn an 89% in my courses should receive a different letter grade (B+) than an 80% in my course (B-), thus differences in GPAs result and are more indicative of their actual performance in a given course.

I have been at another institution that implemented plus minus grading while I was on faculty. It's much more accurate.

It seriously adds more room to help students see their effort relative to their peers...especially in architecture...

I believe it will help encourage students to work harder to attain the + status

why change?

It would be an unnecessary change.

I believe this will only contribute to confusion and an avalanche of grade adjustment requests.

This is good for the student to carry a good GPA. I support this as long as we will not change the university policy on C and above for all classes with pre-requisites and graduate requirements. If we were to go back to C- it would be a nightmare in curriculum changes.

I really do not care either way and yield to those who have a strong opinion.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

A plus/minus system is a bad way to grade. It doesn't give the student the true honesty they deserve about their status in the class. Professors can also get lazy and pass students who don't need it and thus hurt the student if they go on to the next course and haven't truly developed the basics in the pre requisite course.

Plus/minus grading amounts to a lot of additional work for the faculty, with no discernible benefit to our students. My experience with +/- grading at another institution was that in amplified grade-specific angst, questions, pleadings, and antagonisms totally out of proportion to the learning process. I'd vote strongly against the adoption of +/- grading here without a compelling argument regarding any benefit to our students and support that faculty could expect to receive during (and after) rollout.

This will differentiate the students who work extremely hard to get an A and those who do the bare minimum to get an A. An 89.5 should not be the same as a 99.5.

I think it is a good idea and can help the students to maintain a higher GPA. For example, 88/100 will be B, but using the new grading system, the student will get B+. The overall GPA will be higher and can motivate the students.

I do not support it if it is required.

Would be more grading-related work for faculty at a time when we are over-loaded/ stressed due to pandemic. Students also experiencing stress due to pandemic and this could add to that, since more "-" grades means they could lose Hope and/ or other scholarships (note: my understanding is that Hope requires a 3.0 and all B- grades means the overall GPA would be below a 3.0).

Absolutely yes. Currently, my classes work on a 10% basis for each of the top letter grades (90%+ for an A, 80%+ for a B, 70%+ for a C, 60%+ for a D, and 59 and below an F), which is pretty common. However, the quality different between a 80% and an 88% is pretty significantly different. I would very much like to be able to reward the students that achieve in the high ends of each grade.

It is problematic when "the assignment of grades will be at each instructor's discretion (i.e. in each course, instructors define what grades are in A range, A- range, B+ range etc."

I actually support the use of plus/minus grading but do not support the policy as-written. I recommend that KSU define plus/minus and also that there be a plus/minus at all grade levels (the sample does not include an A+).

Using plus/minus grading allows faculty to more accurately assess student performance, allows students to more specifically indicate how their GPA compares with others (through enhanced accuracy of grade), and puts our grading in-line with most other major university systems. I very strongly support this proposed policy change!

I don't think students will like the fact that an A- puts them below a 4.0 or that a C- puts them below a 2.0

I think that adding this will add a level of grade grubbing that we are lucky to not have here. The students start to care more about fractional grades than how well they actually learn the material. That's not a shift I think does either faculty or students well.

The + and - designations allow for a more accurate reflection of our students' performance, and a more accurate calculation of their GPA. Certainly many students would be impacted negatively with the addition of the minus, but just as many would be positively impacted by the addition of the plus. I've used it at another university and found it be effective.

It's extra trouble, for no possible benefit that I can see to anyone.

KSU has a culture of students attempting to squeeze additional points out of professors as it is. This could only make matters worse. The culture as it is should end.

I believe students already put a lot of pressure on themselves to get an "A", and the plus/minus system will just increase the demand for more detailed feedback.

Too complicated. But if this policy is adopted PLEASE do not allow faculty to individually discern what cutoffs constitute B+, B-, etc.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Faculty Sena...

Have those grades at or above a 95 be an A+.

It has the potential to cause more student pushback on grades. A clear grade of A, B, etc. is clear and doesn't get into the weeds. A plus/minus policy is a bad idea.

N/A

End of Report

Statement on COVID-19 Safety

While we have joined our colleagues at KSU in working diligently to follow the protocols and guidelines for a safe reopening of campus this Fall semester, as scholars (of sociology and criminal justice) we want to clearly state that we concur with available epidemiological and related scientific evidence that continues to indicate the safest option is a complete move to distance learning. We continue to advocate for the safest option, which is the closing of campus and shifting to distance learning and work arrangements for all but essential campus operations.

First Week of Class

The faculty senate of Kennesaw State University believes that, for the safety and security of students, faculty, and staff, all classes during the first week should be held virtually. While we understand that the Board of Regents has passed a resolution disallowing this, we recommend that this policy be reversed, and ask for our administration to advocate for this at the system level. Specifically, there are clear areas of concern over the first week of class.

1. During this week of class, students will be returning to campus from many different places, and this represents the intersections of many different ‘bubbles’ of exposure. For the same reasons that our campus went virtual after Thanksgiving, we should be virtual that week.
2. Students who register late will be difficult to handle. If we provide the Initial Student Communication letter even hours before the student registers, they do not receive the information. Indeed, many course rosters are in a state of flux at this time.
3. Some students in Fall 2020 did not see, or pay attention to, the first day of class letter. This will lead to instructors turning away students from the door of the classroom, which is hardly an ideal way for a student to first interact with their instructor.
4. Holding the first week of class virtually allows for easy recording of the session and explanations of which days students can attend class face-to-face. This is another desirable outcome in that students can revisit the presentation and Q&A session on when they can be in their face-to-face classes.

1. Zero-credit Hour Policy Taskforce

New; Not currently in catalog

Successfully routed to CDA, FS, DC

Zero-credit Hour Policy

Zero-credit courses allow students the opportunity to engage in innovative experiences beyond designated credit hours of a program. Programs may develop zero-credit courses for internships, participation in research, experiential learning, career preparation, international education, teaching assistantships, or other enhanced learning experiences for a major. Zero-credit courses may serve as pre-requisites for other courses.

Courses offered for zero-credits must be approved through the regular KSU curriculum approval process. Zero-credit courses are offered for no credit and do not incur tuition or university fee charges; however, course fees may apply. Zero-credit courses have satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading and will be reflected on a student's transcript but will not be included in a student's GPA. These courses must have an instructor of record and a syllabus with all required elements. Courses developed for zero-credit must not exceed 45 experiential hours or 15 contact hours and must recognize faculty workload through teaching or service. Programs must limit the number of zero-credit courses required to prevent overburdening of the students and the faculty/staff. These courses are not required to adhere to the curricular calendar and may be offered at any point during the year.

Zero-credit courses already in the catalog are exempt from this policy. *As with all courses, if a course change is pursued, it is reconsidered under current policies.* Exceptions to this policy will be considered if a justification is included in the proposal for curriculum committee review.

4.1.2 - Graduate Faculty Status and Permissions to Teach Graduate Courses

 [Print this Page](#)

The College of Graduate and Professional Education (CGPE) is responsible for providing leadership and oversight for graduate education at Kennesaw State University. The Graduate Dean is responsible for ensuring institutional standards for graduate programs, including establishing and reviewing institutional faculty qualifications for engaging in post-baccalaureate instruction. Through this role, the CGPE authorizes faculty to engage in post-baccalaureate instruction and, in cooperation with the Graduate Faculty and graduate program directors/coordinators, determines membership in the University's Graduate Faculty.

Consistent with University policy and accreditation standards, instructors may not serve in a primary instructional role in any post-baccalaureate activity for which graduate hour credit is sought or awarded without prior or concurrent review and approval by CGPE. Appointment to the Graduate Faculty of Kennesaw State University or permission to engage in post-baccalaureate instruction is based upon a faculty member's qualifications. However, membership in the Graduate Faculty or permission to teach a particular graduate course does not create a right to a graduate instructional assignment. Under University policy, such assignments are made at the college and departmental level.

Appointment to the Graduate Faculty carries approval to teach or otherwise academically supervise students at the post-baccalaureate level, eligibility to participate on graduate committees, and eligibility to elect representation for graduate committees. Graduate Faculty members are expected to demonstrate a high level of scholarly activity and active professional involvement in their discipline and are required to demonstrate teaching expertise at advanced and specialized levels appropriate for graduate programs. The level of activity devoted to graduate teaching, scholarly and creative activity, and service in order to maintain graduate program involvement should factor in assigning faculty load.

All applications to the Graduate Faculty or requests for permission to engage in graduate instruction must be submitted in writing through the process identified by CGPE. Permission to engage in graduate instruction will be given in writing and recorded in the University's Faculty Information System (FIS) or other equivalent system. An instructor's permission to engage in graduate instruction is limited to those activities for which permission is specifically sought and authorized by CGPE. Requests to engage in additional graduate instruction must be submitted separately.

Criteria for Granting Permission for Graduate Instruction

For purposes of this policy, "graduate instruction" is broadly defined and, at a minimum, incorporates the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) definition of any "post-baccalaureate" instruction. In determining whether an instructor possesses the minimum academic qualifications to instruct at the post-baccalaureate level, CGPE is guided by SACSCOC Academic Credentials standards, which are a minimum threshold requirement for a faculty member engaging in graduate education at KSU.

SACSCOC utilizes a graduate course or other credit-bearing activity - not a program - as the unit of measuring qualification, requiring instructors to hold an earned doctorate/terminal degree in a teaching discipline relevant to the faculty member's instructional assignment (see SACSCOC Principle 6.2.a). SACSCOC also recognizes that, in unusual circumstances, individuals may demonstrate the competence, effectiveness, and capacity to engage in graduate instruction through means other than a terminal degree, including relevant professional licensures, examination, certification, awards, or continuous documented excellence in teaching that are expected to be the functional equivalent of a terminal degree in the appropriate discipline. In such cases, the individual must provide acceptable evidence of these proficiencies prior to being assigned to teach a graduate course.

Graduate Faculty members in each discipline are responsible for identifying terminal degrees and degree majors their discipline generally considers to be the appropriate teaching credential for teaching a specific course in the discipline. The Graduate Faculty members in the discipline shall review this list for each course annually, in an appropriately-

convened faculty meeting, make any modifications necessary, and formally approve identified degrees, recording this vote in the minutes of the meeting. This list and accompanying minutes will be submitted to The Graduate College for review and approval. In making its determination, The Graduate College may request additional evidence from the department, consult the Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and the KSU SACSCOC Liaison (or the equivalent position), and/or review other evidence as necessary. If The Graduate College disallows a particular degree or major, the Graduate Dean shall send an explanation to the dean of the college and chair of the department in which the program is housed, the graduate program director/coordinator, and the Graduate Faculty members in that department.

The list of approved degrees and majors for each course will be available to KSU faculty (instructional, research, and administrative).

Appointment to Graduate Faculty or Graduate-Affiliated Instructors

Graduate instruction at Kennesaw State University consists of the Graduate Faculty (holding Full or Provisional Appointments to the Graduate Faculty) and graduate-affiliated instructors.

Graduate Faculty Membership

The University's Graduate Faculty is comprised of faculty members holding Full or Provisional Appointments to the Graduate Faculty. It is the University's corps of faculty members demonstrating a primary professional focus on and commitment to graduate education. Members of the Graduate Faculty are expected to take an active role in governance, oversight, and advancement of the University's graduate enterprise. This may include recruitment and evaluation of graduate students within the faculty member's graduate program, graduate student advisement and mentoring, service on the Graduate Policy and Curriculum Committee or other committees/task forces created by The Graduate College, service on graduate committees within a college or department, service on graduate thesis/dissertation/capstone committees, and serving as a graduate program director/coordinator. Graduate Faculty appointments should be a consideration in all performance reviews.

Classification of Graduate Faculty

Full Appointment in the Graduate Faculty

To hold a Full Appointment to the Graduate Faculty, a faculty member must:

- Hold a full-time tenure-track position at KSU at the rank of Assistant Professor or above;
- Have successfully taught (a minimum of five (5) classes - approximately fifteen (15) semester hours at the graduate level at: (1) Kennesaw State University; or (2) at a college/university of comparable or higher Carnegie classification within five (5) years of the time of application for or renewal of Graduate Faculty membership. In either event, a minimum of three (3) of these graduate classes should have been taught at Kennesaw State University;
- Have a track record and active program of scholarship consistent with The Graduate College's expectations for Full Appointments to the Graduate Faculty; and
- Hold an appropriate terminal degree for the faculty member's discipline or, in unusual cases, have demonstrated exceptional scholarly activity or professional experience.

Full Appointments are made for a period of up to five (5) years.

Provisional (or Initial) Appointment in the Graduate Faculty

To hold a Provisional (or Initial) Appointment to the Graduate Faculty, a faculty member must:

- Hold a full-time tenure-track position at KSU at the rank of Assistant Professor or above;
- Have experience teaching graduate classes or demonstrate high potential for effective teaching at the graduate level, as evidenced by undergraduate teaching record, scholarly activity, or professional experience;
- Have an active program of scholarship consistent with The Graduate College's expectations for Provisional Appointment to the Graduate Faculty; and,
- Hold an appropriate terminal degree for the faculty member's discipline or, in unusual cases, have demonstrated exceptional scholarly activity or professional experience.

A Provisional Appointment is typically awarded to faculty initially entering graduate education, who may not yet meet The Graduate College's expectations for Full Appointment to the Graduate Faculty. Provisional Appointments may be for a period up to three (3) years.

Classification of Graduate-Affiliated Instructors

Graduate-affiliated instructors include clinical professionals of practice and professors and other instructors holding appropriate academic qualifications to engage in specific graduate instruction but whose primary professional focus is not on graduate education (e.g., a full professor whose teaching has been exclusively in undergraduate courses but wishes to serve on a dissertation committee or teach a single graduate course).

Clinical Professional of Practice

For appointment as a Clinical Professional of Practice, an applicant must:

- Hold any form of non-tenure track position at Kennesaw State University (such as part-time, temporary, adjunct, visiting, or clinical);
- Have some teaching experience or demonstrate high potential for effective teaching consistent with The Graduate College's expectations for professionally qualified graduate instruction;
- Have an active program of scholarship or creative activity consistent with The Graduate College's expectations for professionally qualified graduate instruction; and,
- Hold the relevant terminal disciplinary degree or, in unusual cases, have demonstrated exceptional scholarly activity or professional experience (such as professional qualification).

A Clinical Professional of Practice appointment is typically awarded to a non-tenure track faculty member who will teach a graduate course or serve on a graduate student committee. Clinical graduate appointments are typically made for a one (1) to three (3) year period reflecting the assignment in the graduate domain (such as thesis or dissertation committee member, temporary instructor, outside reviewer of graduate performance, or visiting scholar). Such appointments may be renewed. Appointment as a Clinical Professional of Practice does not carry the rights and privileges of Full or Provisional Membership in the Graduate Faculty (such as serving on committees limited to Members of the Graduate Faculty or voting on Graduate Faculty matters). However, when assigned to a graduate student's committee (such as a thesis, dissertation, or other capstone committee) and solely in that context, they may vote with their Graduate Faculty colleagues.

Permission for Graduate Instruction (Permission to Teach)

All other individuals seeking to engage in graduate instruction (such as tenured or tenure-track faculty whose graduate instruction is sporadic and occasional, non-tenure-track faculty or administrators, part-time faculty, and adjunct faculty) may be reviewed for permission for graduate instruction concurrent with or subsequent to official verification of their underlying relationship to the University. This includes teaching graduate classes, serving on thesis or dissertation committees, or supervising graduate assistants. In order to receive permission to instruct at the graduate level, such individuals must:

- Have some experience in graduate instruction or demonstrate high potential for effective instruction at the graduate level as evidenced by an undergraduate teaching record, scholarly activity, or outstanding professional experience in an area related to a course or other assignment; and,
- Hold the terminal degree or, in unusual cases, have demonstrated exceptional scholarly activity or professional experience.

Permission to instruct at the graduate level is most often granted annually but may be granted for a period of up to three (3) years. Approval to teach graduate courses is contingent upon reappointment to a specified position each year during that period.

Process for Appointment

The Graduate Dean is responsible for approving membership in the Graduate Faculty. This process is initiated by graduate program directors/coordinators and department chairs requesting/verifying a faculty member engage in a specific graduate assignment(s) within a twenty-four (24) month period following the application for Graduate Faculty status or permission to teach graduate courses. The Graduate Dean may appoint a panel of Graduate Faculty to review Graduate Faculty applications and recommend membership. Instructions for requests for appointment to Graduate Faculty are available on the CGPE website (<https://graduate.kennesaw.edu/graduate-faculty-appointments/>).

Review and Appointment Schedule

All individuals assigned to engage in post-baccalaureate instruction must be reviewed for Graduate Faculty status prior to engaging in graduate instruction. The status is effective as of the day of the award and expires after the period of time granted. The Graduate Dean may review and modify the award of Graduate Faculty status or graduate instructional permissions at any time.

Ex-Officio Members of the Graduate Faculty

The President, Provost, the academic vice presidents and associate vice presidents, academic deans, associate/assistant deans, and assistant deans, and department chairs serve as ex-officio non-voting members of the University's Graduate Faculty. Permission to engage in graduate instruction is independent of this membership; however, faculty serving in administrative roles may concurrently hold ex-officio and Full or Provisional Appointments to the Graduate Faculty or be granted permission to engage in graduate instruction.

 [Print this Page](#)

Proposed

4.1.2 – The Graduate Faculty

Appointment to the Graduate Faculty carries approval to teach or otherwise academically supervise students at the post-baccalaureate level, eligibility to participate on graduate committees, and eligibility to elect representation for graduate committees. Members of the Graduate Faculty are expected to demonstrate a high level of scholarly activity and active professional involvement in their discipline and are required to demonstrate teaching expertise at advanced and specialized levels appropriate for graduate programs.

The College of Graduate and Professional Education (CGPE) is responsible for providing leadership and oversight for graduate education at Kennesaw State University. The CGPE Dean is responsible for ensuring institutional standards for graduate programs, including establishing and reviewing institutional faculty qualifications for engaging in post-baccalaureate instruction. Through this role, the CGPE has the responsibility of qualifying faculty to engage in post-baccalaureate instruction.

Consistent with University policy and accreditation standards, instructors may not serve in a primary instructional role in any post-baccalaureate activity for which graduate hour credit is sought or awarded without prior or concurrent review and approval by CGPE. Appointment to the Graduate Faculty of Kennesaw State University or permission to engage in post-baccalaureate instruction is based upon a faculty member's qualifications. However, membership in the Graduate Faculty does not create a right to a graduate instructional assignment. Under University policy, such assignments are made at the college and departmental level.

All applications for graduate faculty status must be submitted through the process identified by CGPE. Permission to engage in graduate instruction will be given in writing and recorded in the University's Faculty Information System (FIS) or other equivalent system. An instructor's permission to engage in graduate instruction is limited to those activities for which permission is specifically sought and authorized by CGPE.

Criteria for Granting Permission for Graduate Instruction

In determining whether an instructor possesses the minimum academic qualifications to instruct at the post-baccalaureate level, CGPE is guided by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Academic Credentials standards.

SACSCOC utilizes a graduate course or other credit-bearing activity - not a program - as the unit of measuring qualification. It requires instructors to qualify for graduate instruction in one of two ways. Primarily, instructors qualify for graduate teaching by earning a terminal degree in a discipline relevant to the faculty member's instructional assignment (see SACSCOC Principle 6.2.a). Alternatively, SACSCOC also recognizes that individuals may demonstrate the capacity to engage in graduate instruction through means other than a terminal degree, including relevant professional experiences, licensures or certifications that are relevant to the teaching assignment. In such cases, the individual must provide acceptable evidence of these proficiencies prior to being assigned to teach a graduate course.

Classifications of Graduate Faculty

Kennesaw State University supports three types of Graduate Faculty status. The standard appointment is Full Graduate Faculty status. Associate Graduate Faculty status supports KSU employees who focus on graduate teaching rather than research. External Graduate Faculty status allows KSU to draw on members of local and academic communities to serve special purposes, such as teaching particular graduate courses or serving on thesis/dissertation committees.

Full Graduate Faculty Status

Full appointments to the Graduate Faculty are made for five-year terms and make faculty members qualified to:

- Teach graduate courses.
- Supervise graduate research assistants (GRAs) and graduate teaching assistants (GTAs).
- Serve as voting members and chairs of university graduate committees.
- Serve as chair, member, or reader for thesis and dissertation committees.

To be eligible for Full Graduate Faculty status, a faculty member must have the following qualifications:

- Teaching: KSU must offer graduate courses for which the faculty member has a CIP match or approved justification by department chair and Graduate dean.
- Research: The faculty member must have 1) an active record of research in the discipline over the past five years; 2) earned a terminal degree in the discipline in the last two years; or 3) a special exemption based on professional qualifications.
- Employment Status: The faculty member must hold a tenure-track position or be a full-time instructor at KSU.

Associate Graduate Faculty Status

Associate appointments to the Graduate Faculty are made for up to five-year terms and make faculty members qualified to:

- Teach graduate courses.
- Supervise graduate teaching assistants (GTAs).
- Serve as voting members of university graduate committees.
- Serve as member or reader for thesis and dissertation committees.

To be eligible for Associate Graduate Faculty status, a faculty member must have the following qualifications:

- Teaching: KSU must offer graduate courses for which the faculty member has a CIP match or approved justification by department chair and Graduate dean.
- Employment Status: The faculty member must either hold a tenure-track position or be an instructor at KSU.

External Graduate Faculty Status

External appointments to the Graduate Faculty are made for three-year terms and make faculty members qualified to:

- Teach graduate courses.
- Serve as a member or a reader for thesis and dissertation committees.

To be eligible for External Graduate Faculty status, a faculty member must have the following qualifications:

- Employment Status: The appointee must not hold a full-time position at KSU.

AND

- Teaching: KSU must offer graduate courses for which the faculty member has a CIP match or approved justification by department chair and Graduate dean.

OR

- Research: The faculty member must have 1) an active record of research in the discipline over the past five years; 2) earned a terminal degree in the discipline in the last five years; or 3) a special exemption based on professional qualifications.

Process for Appointment

The CGPE Dean is responsible for approving membership in the Graduate Faculty. This process is initiated by the faculty member and routes to their department chair. The department chair will verify the faculty member's qualifications for Graduate Faculty status and provide justification when a faculty member's credentials do not align with what the faculty has approved as credentials to teach a specific course.

The CGPE Dean may appoint a panel of graduate faculty to review applications. Instructions for requests for appointment to Graduate Faculty are available on the CGPE website (<https://graduate.kennesaw.edu>).

Review and Appointment Schedule

All individuals assigned to engage in post-baccalaureate instruction must be reviewed for Graduate Faculty status prior to engaging in graduate instruction. The status is effective as of the day of the award and expires after the period of time granted. The CGPE Dean may review and modify the award of Graduate Faculty status or graduate instructional permissions at any time.

Status of KSU Administrators

KSU faculty members who have already established Graduate Faculty status and who serve as President, vice presidents and associate vice presidents, vice provosts and associate vice provosts, academic deans and associate/assistant deans, and department chairs sustain their Graduate Faculty status for the duration of the time they are in administrative appointments. When they return to faculty appointments, they retain the Graduate Faculty appointment for at least two years, after which they must reapply.

Individuals hired into KSU simultaneously as faculty members and administrators must apply for graduate faculty status to be eligible to teach graduate courses, supervise GRAs/GTAs, or serve on thesis/dissertation committees.

Revocation of Membership in the Graduate Faculty

Revocation may occur for egregious acts or when a faculty member fails to fulfill the responsibilities of a member of the Graduate Faculty to teach graduate student(s) effectively, in a civil, professionally appropriate manner, to do scholarly research and creative work of high quality or remain active in the practice of the profession, and to direct the research/professional development of graduate student(s) so that they progress toward graduation in a timely manner appropriate to the field. Failure to teach graduate students effectively and/or to direct the research and professional development of graduate student(s) also includes, but is not limited to, abuse of power, intimidation and harassment, and violation of workplace violence policies.

Revocation can be initiated by the Dean of the college for which the faculty member is assigned or by the CGPE Dean.

Graduate Faculty Status: Presented to Faculty Senate Executive Committee (11/9/2020)

CURRENT

	Teach Graduate Course	Supervise GRAs/GTAs	Vote on Grad Committees	Chair Dissertation /Thesis	Committee Member Dissertation /Thesis
Eligible to:					
Full	X	X	X	X	X
Provisional	X	X	X	X	X
Clinical	X				X
Permission to Teach	X	X			X

PROPOSED

	Teach Graduate Course	Supervise GRAs/GTAs	Vote on Grad Committees	Chair Dissertation /Thesis	Committee Member Dissertation /Thesis
Eligible to:					
Full	X	X	X	X	X
Associate	X	GTAs only	X		X
External	X				X

Transitions:

Full and Provisional become Full

Permission to Teach becomes Associate

Clinical becomes External

Duration
5 years
3 years
Variable: 1 to 3 years
Variable: 1 to 3 years
Duration
5 years
Up to 5 years
Up to 3 years

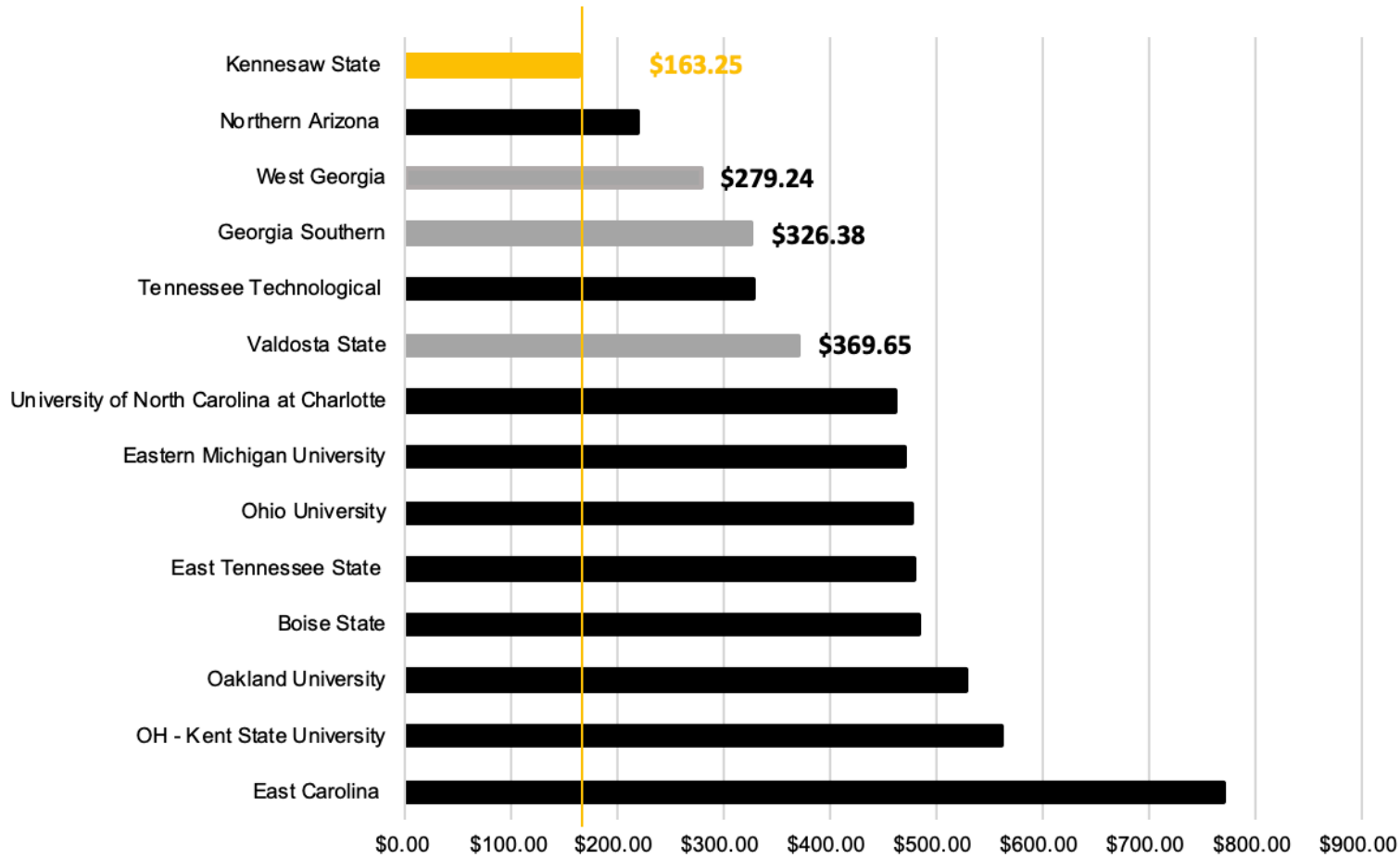
Assessment of Journal usage:

From data supplied by Elsevier and Ebsco for the year 2018:

2,473 titles out of a total of 2,518 Elsevier Titles had 1 or zero usage per day during 2018 (98.2% non-usage rate). Only 40 Titles had more than 1 usage per day.

A cross-check of title usage with our other large supplier Ebsco indicates of the 14,066 titles available in 2018, 13,919 titles were used 1 or less times per day. That is a 98.9% non-usage rate. Only 147 titles had more than 1 usage per day.

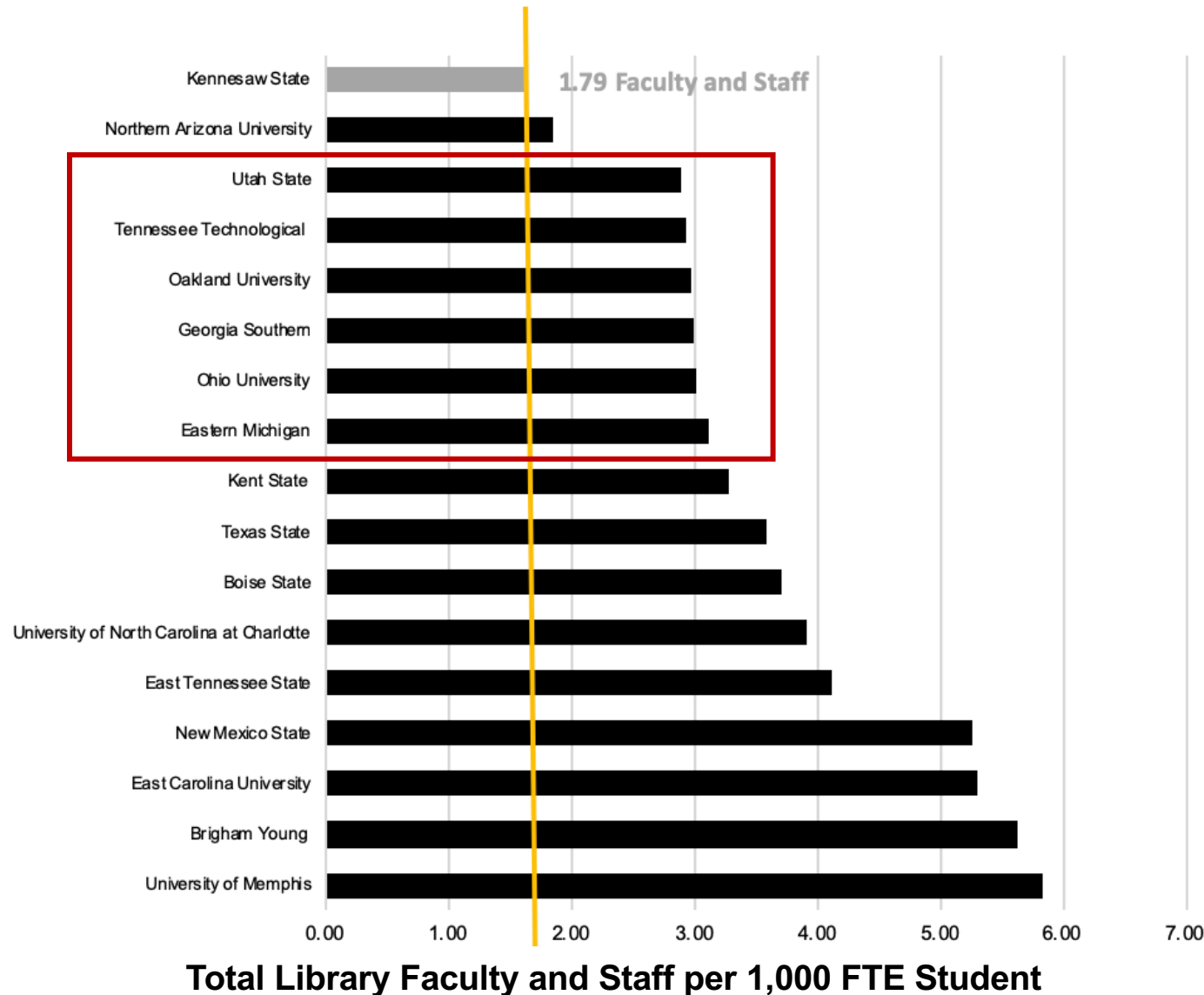
Total expenditure per FTE student 2017



Overall Budget

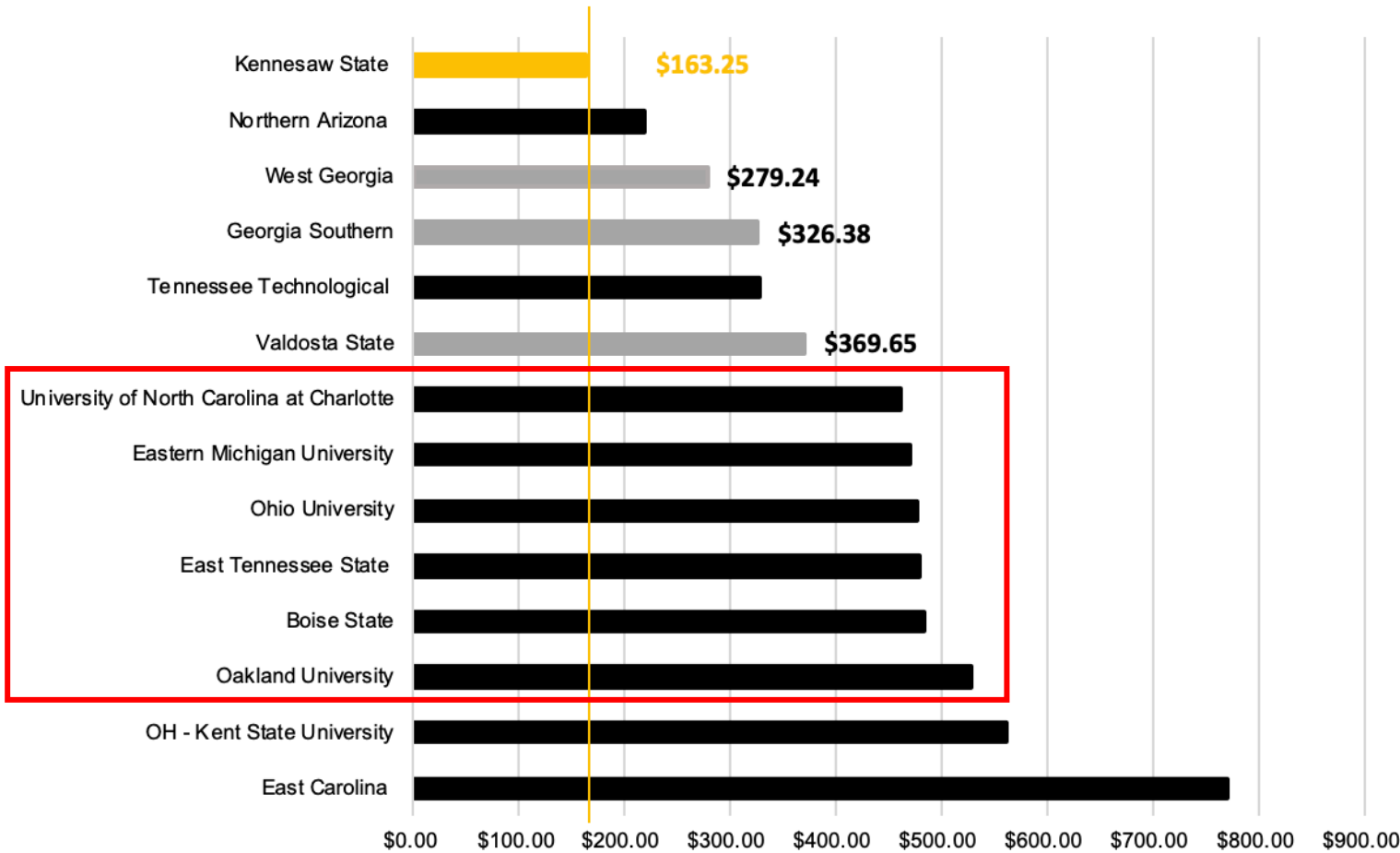
The KSU Library System has the lowest budget of our comparators.

Staffing for Direct Services



Our peer Georgia Comprehensives and R2 comparators have an average of 3 library faculty and staff per 1,000 FTE.

Total expenditure per FTE student 2017



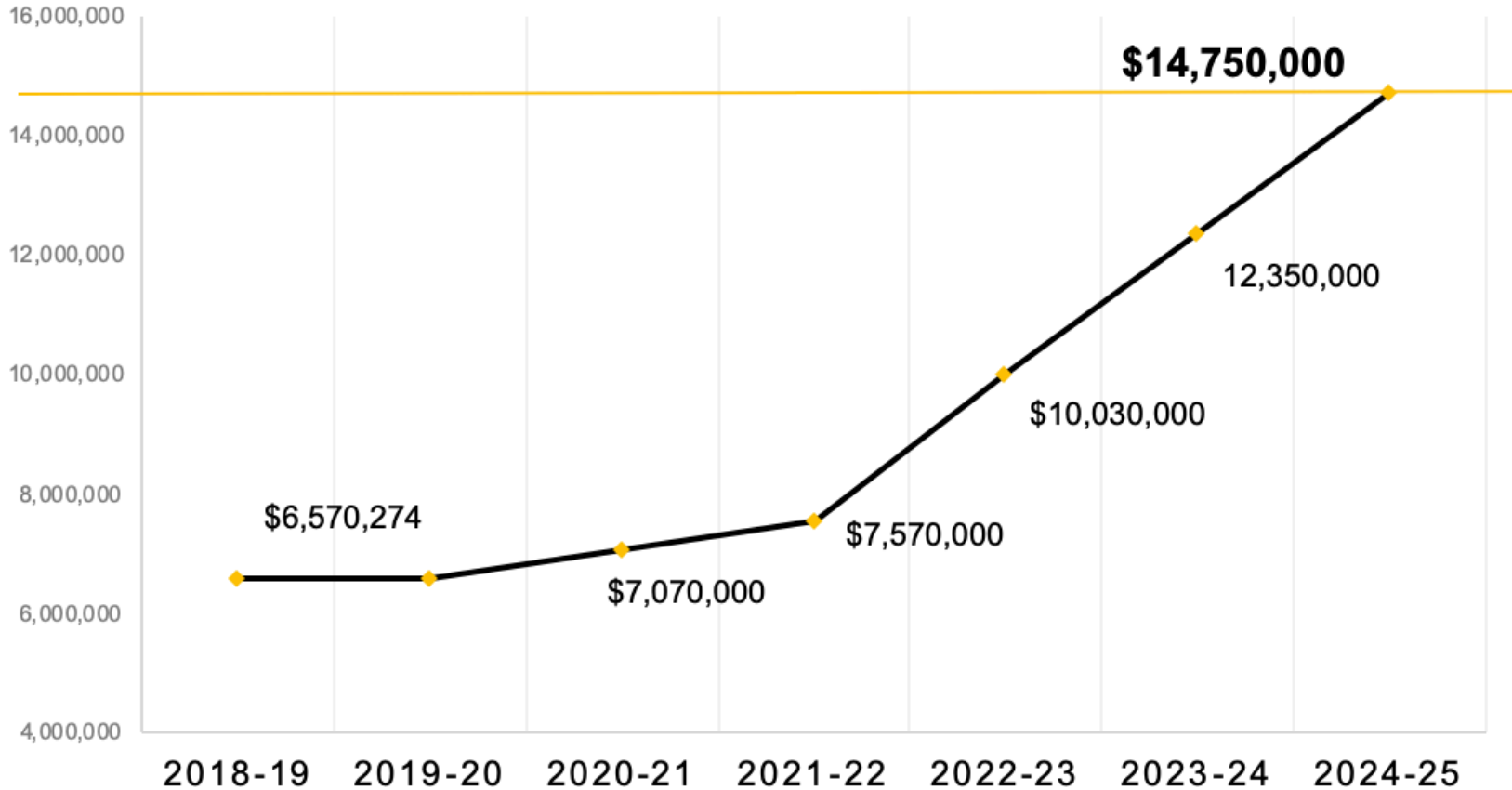
Overall Budget

The average comparators spend \$470 per FTE student.

In order to align with our peer institutions, we would need a budget of **\$14,750,000**.

Total expenditure per FTE student

 Overall Budget



This is an additional **\$7,850,000** added to our overall budget.

Fiscal Year	Budget	increase/decrease	CPI	Inflation Rate	Fall Enrollment
2018	\$6,446,326	13%	1.9%	2.44%	35,420
2019	\$6,772,729	5%	1.7%	1.81%	37,807
2020	\$6,689,717	-1.3%	1.0%	2,3%	41,181
2021	\$6,398,751	-4.4%			
2022	\$6,398,751	0%			

- 83% of Library Operating Budget is spent on databases and subscription
- Total dollar spend on e-resources and support services is about \$ 1.8 million
- Total Library System Budget is 1/3 to 1/2 of other R2 peers (about \$6.7 Million)
- Library budget flat for over 25 years with inflation and cost increases of 6% on average have taken a toll

Account	Budgeted	Reduction	To operate on
E-books	\$80,000	\$40,000	-50%
P-book	\$20,000	\$10,000	-50%
Student Labor	\$153,268	\$74,000	-50%
Travel	\$15,231	\$10,000	-66%
Operations	\$132,542	\$61,000	-50%
Cap Outlay	\$10,020	\$5,000	-50%