

Undergraduate Grading System—Plus/Minus Adoption

On September 11th, 2013, the Academic Policies Committee received the following charge from the Faculty Senate:

Please review the Undergraduate Grading System described in the Academic Catalog and canvas faculty opinion to consider the advantages and disadvantages of adopting a system that includes pluses and minuses. If the committee believes the system should be changed, please offer a revision to the Senate for consideration. Please plan to report to the Senate by December 3, 2013.

Executive Summary:

The APC finds the will of Salisbury University's faculty to be the implementation of an undergraduate grading system that includes plus/minus grades. After many meetings and much research (within and among SU's faculty and students and secondary sources), the APC proposes the system described below.

Procedures and Investigation

In order to investigate the possibilities, the committee met multiple times to explore elements of the charge:

- 1) Sister institutions, including the University of Maryland College Park, Towson, and the University of Baltimore all employ a plus/minus grading system, while the University of Maryland Baltimore County is initiating the conversation reflected in this document.
- 2) Aspirational peer institutions, with the exception of Truman State, employ a plus/minus grading system (the College of New Jersey, Appalachian State, Rowan University, and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire all do).
- 3) APC faculty representatives emailed their respective school faculty and solicited written comments, which we compiled into a document, edited only to anonymize comments; Leonard Arvi surveyed the Perdue School for us. While there was a range of opinions, the same points were made repeatedly and there were more expressions of support for than against implementing such a system. See Appendix 1.
- 4) The APC Chair conducted a survey via SurveyMonkey, one which was not intended to serve as empirical data but merely to provide further opportunity for faculty to express their input as well as to try and ensure all faculty members could have an opportunity to be heard on this issue. The one question survey received 197 responses (SU has 328 FT faculty, so a response rate of 60.1%), with 141 (71.6%) of those voting in favor of adopting a plus/minus grading system.¹ Full results can be seen in Appendices 2 and 3.

¹ We want to underscore that the survey was NOT intended to serve as empirical data. Two faculty members noted that they could access the survey more than once and thus there was the potential for data to be skewed. In response, Kara Siegert removed the 2nd of the 2 duplicate IP address entries that were included in the online survey, both of which favored the implementation of plus/minus grading, so that final figures given in the report above reflect data more accurately than those of the appendix item.

- 5) We surveyed, again informally, classes of undergraduate students (those being taught by faculty members of Academic Policies Committee members, ranging from specialized major courses to general education classes and including students from many majors across the schools). Of 199 students who responded, 120 (60.3%) responded negatively to the proposal (see Appendix 4).
- 6) Committee members read and presented various case studies examining debates around and implementation of plus/minus grading systems (see sources consulted, below).

Recommendation:

The APC concludes that it is the will of the faculty that the current Undergraduate Grading System be altered to incorporate plus/minus grading in the scale.

Arguments FOR plus/minus grading:

- I. **Accuracy of transcript clarity:** Students graduating from Salisbury University with its new grading system will have transcripts reflecting their true achievement/effort within the courses in which they have been enrolled. The nuances of their achievements will be more clearly delineated for their future employers/graduate school admissions personnel.
- II. **Overall student GPAs change little:** Many other studies verify this claim—see sources consulted below.
- III. **Accuracy of student achievement appraisal:** Professors will be able to recognize the distinctions between (for example) a 71 and a 79 and to award the student performing at the upper end of the range accordingly.
- IV. **Accuracy of grade reporting within the same scale:** With more categories of grade available under a plus/minus grading system, grade reporting will be finessed within the ordinal scale of letter grades we currently employ; we are enlarging and thus increasing the accuracy of our current grading system rather than wholly reinventing it.
- V. **Reduction of grade disputes:** While grade disputes may initially increase as students and faculty adjust to the new system, grade disputes should decline as the earned grades recorded will become more precise with more choices within the range.
- VI. **Grade inflation deflated:** Implementing a plus/minus system allows differential between our very good and our excellent students; we will probably see our numbers of 4.0 GPA students decline slightly (see Appendix 5), but our numbers will thus be more accurate than they are currently—and we will be less ‘inflated’ in our grading.
- VII. **Students will strive for excellence:** Many faculty noted their disappointment in students ‘settling’ for a C or B grade but also acknowledged a lack of incentive for students to do otherwise when there is no differentiation between, say, 81 and 89, as in the current system, where both percentages would earn a B. Implementing plus/minus grades will enable students working hard to the very end of a course in order to maximize their grade potential.
- VIII. **Underperforming Students will be identified:** Plus/minus grading would correct the flaw in our current grading scale, where underperforming students are over-rewarded. The University can thus ensure underperforming students receive the most benefit

from campus systems already in place to ensure all students can maximize their learning potential.

Arguments **AGAINST** plus/minus grading:

- i. **GPA's for our best students will decrease:** In all likelihood, the number of 4.0 students Salisbury University has will probably decline, since the plus/minus system allows for more distinction between our excellent and our very good students; however, several studies reveal GPA's differ only within 0.04 or 0.08 of a point from GPA's without the plus/minus system (see the Wake Forest and NC State studies cited in sources consulted, below).
- ii. **Faculty will have to work harder:** More opportunities for grade distinctions will encourage faculty to review and refine course learning objectives and grade standards and measurements.
- iii. **Grade 'grubbing':** Implementing plus/minus distinctions will almost certainly be accompanied by an initial increase in grade appeals; however, studies show such appeals decline after initial implementation (see bullet 6 on page 4 of the EAB report; cited below), as would be expected with any change to policy.

Additional Concerns:

- 1) **Dean's List and Latinate Honors standards:** The committee discussed whether or not such standards would (or should) be adjusted, but, since the system retains an ordinal scale of letter grades with more precision, adjustments could be easily implemented.
- 2) **Cost to the University:** Our University systems can all be modified to include plus/minus grading; the Registrar's office will (of course) have to undertake programming to alter the grading scale and audits in gullnet. As with any prospective alteration to systems already in place, the Registrar's office may need to hire a consultant to implement such adjustments to the undergraduate grading system.
- 3) **Scholarship recipients:** The University may need to review and adjust scholarship standards in order to reflect the plus/minus grading system. However, since numerous studies reveal that such a grading system change does little to impact an overall GPA, scholarship students should continue to receive their scholarships should their academic performance remain strong.
- 4) **Administrative time:** The committee discussed at length, with the Registrar and Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs, how the system would be implemented. It was agreed that a year would be ample time for implementing an agreed-upon plus/minus undergraduate grading system.
- 5) **Publicity:** Undergraduates and faculty would need to be alerted to and educated about the changes being implemented. The Faculty Handbook, New Faculty Orientation, Student Handbook, etc, would all need updating accordingly.
- 6) **Departments and School Involvement:** Departments will need to review gate and GPA requirements as well as course requirements (and changes would have a ripple effect in the work being undertaken by the Registrar's office); school curriculum committees may thus receive more programmatic reviews.

The APC would therefore like to offer the following grading system to the Faculty Senate for comment and endorsement:

Grading System With +/-

Letter Grade	GPA Value
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1
D-	.7
F	0

Advantages

- Grading scale is more precise so GPA is a more accurate reflection of achievement
- Higher achieving and/or harder working students receive more precise credit for their achievement/work (e.g., 89=B+ rather than B)
- All students have the incentive to reach for extra quality points
- Distinctions within a grade bracket (+/-) help students working to get off probation
- Our grading system would be closer to those of our aspirational peers
- Enables finer distinctions of quality points (with 4 credit courses, fewer courses contribute to cumulative GPA)
- Electronic gradebooks make calculations as easy as they are now

Disadvantages

- Some "A" students will become A- students
- C- would not meet program requirements for C or better requirements
- Faculty need to make finer distinctions at the top and bottom of scales

The APC recommends the proposed Undergraduate Grading System be implemented at Salisbury University in Fall 2015 for all undergraduate students. Transcripts will record the semester of implementation (so that employers and graduate schools know why only half a transcript may have plus/minus grades).

In addition, the APC offers the Faculty Senate an alternate Undergraduate Grading System (below), which is a further variant on the one endorsed above.

System of +/- Without – in Lower Range

Letter Grade	GPA Value
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C ²	2.0
D	1
F	0

Advantages

- Grading scale is more precise so GPA is a more accurate reflection of achievement
- Higher achieving and/or harder working students receive more precise credit for their achievement/work (e.g., 89=B+ rather than B).
- All students still have the incentive to reach for extra quality points
- Distinctions within a grade bracket (+/-) encourage students working to get off probation
- Our grading system would be closer to those of our aspirational peers
- Enables finer distinctions of quality points (with 4 credit courses, fewer courses contribute to cumulative GPA)
- Electronic gradebooks make calculations as easy as they are now
- Fewer permutations for faculty to consider during final grades

Disadvantages

- Generalizes achievement bands for lower achieving students
- Eliminates C- and D+ advantages for students working to get off probation

² Towson University instituted plus/minus grading fifteen years ago; effective minimester 2006, the 'C-' grade was suspended from use. An APC member's phonecall to the Chair of the CUSF determined the suspension was instituted administratively . Towson does use 'D+' but not 'D-.'

Sources Consulted/Referenced

Bressette, A. "Arguments for Plus/Minus Grading: A Case Study." *Educational Research Quarterly* 25.3 (2002): 29-41.

Diamond, Jed and Sarah Moore. "Implementation and Evaluation of Grade Modifier Systems." Custom Research Brief for the Education Advisory Board. 2012.

England, Richard. "Plus and Minus Grading at SU." February 1, 2008. Available: <http://faculty.salisbury.edu/~rkengland/Plus%20Minus%20Grading%20Proposal.pdf> (proposal outlines many of the arguments given above; provides a useful comparative table; summarizes other scholarly articles informing the study)

Konz, Jeff. "Plus-Minus Grading: Impacts on Grading at UNCA: Report of the Academic Policies Committee." March 25, 2005. Available: <http://www3.unca.edu/facultysenate/y0405/Plus-Minus%20Report.htm>

Matthews, Rick. "Evaluation of Effect of the Plus/Minus Grading System: A Computer Model." Feb 3, 1997. Available: http://users.wfu.edu/matthews/plus_minus/plus_minus.html (this study has links to a proposal submitted at Wake Forest and many different graphs demonstrating impact of implementation)

Mohler, Chad. "Information on Plus/Minus Grading." October 26, 2000. Available: http://www.wku.edu/senate/documents/truman_state_report.pdf (this study brings together many other online studies, which, unfortunately, seem to have been taken offline; it adds further perspectives in its own right)

Respectfully Submitted,

Academic Policies Committee, Fall 2013

(Lucy Morrison (Chair) (ENGL), Diana Wagner (EDUC), Batya Hyman (SOWK), Troy Banks (MATH), Cathy Otto (MLS), John Raley (THEA), Melissa Boog (Provost's Office), Valerie Randall-Lee (Dean of Students), Jacqueline Maisel (Registrar), Stephen Kelly (Graduate Student), Samantha Langdon (Undergraduate Student), David Parker (Senator))

APC +/- Undergraduate Grading System: Fall 2013

For Change

- Grades, at root, are meant to be a prod/reward to help encourage students to put in the effort to master sometimes difficult material. A more nuanced grading system would result in my students, at least, studying more and getting more out of my courses. This is particularly the case with final examinations. Typically, my final exams are worth about 25% of their total grade. All too often the following (or some variant thereof) occurs: headed into the final, John, a good student, has an 86.67% - or, 65 out of 75 available points. Doing the math, John quickly realizes that if he gets a 60% on the final exam, he'll get a B in the course. If he gets a 70% on the final exam, he'll get a B in the course. If he gets an 80% on the final exam, he'll get a B in the course. If he gets a 90% on the final exam, he'll get a B in the course. If he gets a 99% on the final exam, he'll get a B in the course. If he gets a 100% on the final exam, he'll get an A. John realizes that a 100% is pretty much impossible, but he can get a 60% with practically no effort (he is, after all, a good student and has been keeping up with the coursework). Thus, John does not study for the final exam, gets a 65%, and gets his B. This is SO frustrating to me! If we had plus minus grades, John would realize that if he got a 60=69%, he'd get a B-. That is certainly to be avoided. If he got a 70-89%, he'd get a B, but if he got a 90% or higher, he'd get a B+. A 90% is certainly reachable, and John would study for that B+ grade. Thus - I would argue strongly that +/- grading would help with the central mission of any university - educating our students.
- I for one hope this goes through.
- I just wanted to pass along my opinion that we should add pluses and minuses to our grading. I think that would give us a lot more flexibility and also be able to help distinguish the student that eked out an 80 from the one that narrowly missed an A with an 89. Another possibility that I experienced way back when as an undergraduate at Rutgers, was a system that had pluses but not minuses. I prefer both pluses and minuses, but it might be worth considering.
- I am in favor of it as long as it is a bilateral system allowing both +'s and -'s. Seems crazy to have to say that, but I understand that there is a unilateral system in the graduate system.
- I lean yes, but would like to point out a couple of things on both sides that I think should be part of the debate, from both a faculty and student perspective. (1) For a good student, a plus/minus grading system is usually negatively weighted. You now must maintain at least a 93% or above in every class to get a 4.0, and there are not A+ grades worth more than a 4.0 to counter-balance any A- grades you might receive. To me, this is the biggest negative with plus/minus grading. (2) As a faculty, +/- grading allows for much better gradation. I agree with some of the points raised that a student with an 89 is much different from one with an 80, and I think this often leads faculty to feel pressured to bump up grades that are on the borderline. (3) I saw someone argued that the additional gradations mean there's more clawing for the next highest grade. That wasn't my experience when teaching at ----- . I think that because the drop off wasn't so great (between say a

2.33 and a 2.67 compared to a 2.0 and a 3.0) and the window for each grade is so narrow (3-4 points), students were less likely to really petition for the small boost.

- I think The University needs to change its scale to include + and -, to better allow professors to discriminate between students. For example, there is a BIG difference between a student who has an 89 (in most schools this would be a B+) and as opposed to an 80 (in most schools this would be a B-). The student who receives an 89 demonstrates the ability to critically think about marketing issues, whereas the student who receives an 80 lacks such ability and is specifically unable to apply key marketing terms. However, the way The University's current system is set up these students are treated as equals which they quite frankly are not.
- I personally prefer the +/- system because it can differentiate student performance better.
- I support changing to a +/- grading system. This would give me more degrees of freedom in assigning grades. For example, it is somewhat troubling to me that in our current system someone with an overall grade of 89% in my course gets the same grade (B) as someone with an overall grade of 80%. I would very much prefer a grading system that allows me to reward that 89 with a B+ and not overly compensate the 80 since that person would receive a B-. Also, someone who has a grade of 80% is not that different from someone with a 79%, but with the current system one gets a B and the other a C. With a +/- system, the difference in letter grade would be much less: B- versus C+. I also believe that only the very best students should receive the highest letter grade. However, in our current system a 90% is the same as a 99%. Again, I feel that a +/- system would give us a way to differentiate between these very good students and our excellent students.
- I support a change to +/- . Off the top of my head: I think it goes to better differentiate the students. (It may also provide motivation to to a little better. E.g. if you're sitting in what would be the B- range, you might work a little harder to pull it up to a B. But if you're equivalently at a low B, you probably have not real hop to pull it up to an A, so you might continue with minimal effort.) And, I do't know this to be the case, but I would guess that having the plusses and minuses is pretty common practice across universities.
- From my perspective, modifying the grading system to include + and - would provide a more accurate numerical assessment of student performance. I would want to understand any trends in academia related to this topic and also the administrative time involved in any grading system change, including cost to the university, before fully supporting this system.
- Has there been a discussion of a "plus" system. I think that is what we use in our MBA program and it works well. I would certainly support such a system. I think the +/- system creates too many different grades and students will want to argue more because a one point difference will make a grade difference is so many cases. I would also like to see an example of how the system would work. Is there an A+, if so there will be 13 grades in the new system. Also, what would be the typical cutoff for grades, would a C- be a 70, 71, and 72.; a C be a 73, 74, 75, 76, and a C+ be a 77, 78, and 79?

- Intellectually, I support the +/- system. Truthfully, I'd much rather not need grades at all...But that's a different conversation.
- I didn't respond but I am in the first camp, preferring more differentiation in the grading system. However, without knowing what the actual consideration is a +/- system, a plus only system like the MBA and whether or not there is an A+ (I really don't think there should be) it is difficult to come to express my opinion.
- I vote yes. Too big a range between the high and low "B."
- I just want to also stress, that I, too, think it's much better to stay the way it is than go to just plusses, like our MBA. Either + AND - (preferred) or no change.
- I would like the +/- in grades because it is more accurate and representative of what the students really earn in their course. The current system is too broad and gives anyone who gets 80 or 89 the same B which is completely unfair to good students. The current one results in grade inflation. Also, in Perdue technically there are only three grades, A, B or C since D is considered F and they need to repeat the course. The argument that it is more work for faculty is bogus since we are here to teach and ensure that the students earn a fair grade. An extra minutes to compute the +/- is not a big challenge or hurdle for faculty. I overwhelming support the move to +/- grade scale for the current scale.
- It always bothers me that someone that gets an 80 and someone that gets an 88 or 89 get the same grade. I actually favor having a "--" system without the + because that makes it almost too difficult (too fine a gradation). So 80-83 could be a B- and 84-89 could be a B.
- I'm a fan of the +/- grading system - since it is much more precise. I've taught at other schools that have used it - and have the sense that both faculty and students prefer it. The range is too broad without the +/-, in my opinion.
- I would support the change. The reason is that the current system is too granular. It's a pity that the B+ students and the B- students get the same grade. However I see no real need for A+. It is common for A+ to be omitted at other universities as well.
- My opinion is +/- . I was surprised +/- wasn't used when I started. Far more equitable to the students and should consistently encourage improvement by students. i.e. 60% of grade is done/in and average is 72 - not likely I could do so bad as to fall to a D maybe and next to impossible to get to a B but a C or C+ is very possible and probable vs. the threat of the C- or D+. I'm going to put forth the additional time and effort. BTW - I have/had children at UVa, JMU and Vanderbilt - all use +/-.
- I am emphatically for a plus and minus system. However, I am emphatically, morally against a plus system only, such as that in our MBA program. If this second type is an option being considered for undergrads, than I would prefer we keep things as they are currently, that is, no plus-minus system.
- I favor including the + and - because in reality there is a huge gap between a 79 and a 70, a 89 and a 80, etc. that is not accounted for by the current system. In addition, a student with a solid letter grade may slack off at the end of the semester because they have little chance of losing that grade or achieving a higher one.

- I am very strongly in favor of adding precision to our letter grading system by adding a plus and minus capability. Advantages: ☐ More precisely report actual student performance: having to report that the student with a 79.8% and an 89.4% are equivalent has always seemed grossly unfair to me. Adding plus/minus gives more grading precision. ☐ More motivation for students: Having the ability to earn a B+, when an A is out of reach is a very positive student achievement motivator. Right now, I have several classes where the final projects/papers are often sub-optimal because the student has figured out that their performance on that assessment instrument won't matter in their final grade. Additionally, a negative becomes incentive to avoid, and thus work harder. Negatives: ☐ More arguing from students about grades: likely this will create some additional grade conflict (I deserved a B+ instead of a B is an easier argument to make, theoretically, than "I deserved an A instead of a B). ☐ Academic policy changes: Many academic decisions are made around the earning of a "C" in courses. We will have to determine if a "C-" is a "C" for the purposes of these decisions, or if it is less than a "C" ☐ GPA calculations: not nearly as clean. However, you could argue that since we convert grades to numbers anyway, that increased grade precision would yield increased GPA precision. ☐ Historical inertia: this is the reason this failed last time we brought it over a decade ago...people are very resistance to change. Indeed, for those faculty in particular, this is a major negative. In my mind, the fairness, precision, and student achievement possibilities far outweigh the negative impacts of such a change.
- The current system is simple, but it tends to over-reward those who underperform. A course average of 81 vs. 88 is significant. At the very least, I would like to reward those students with a + and GPA points of 3.3 vs. 3.0. This approach, adding pluses, might be easier to get past students, who scuttled the last attempt over a decade ago to change the current system.
- I would prefer a change to the +/- grading system. I prefer this method because I like a larger number of grading options that allow me to distinguish between students at a more detailed level. I would argue that an 80 and an 89 student are very different, but this is not reflected in the current grading system.
- As a faculty member on campus, I find it extremely challenging at grading time when I need to give the same grade to the student who worked very hard and received an 89.4 and the one who did not work hard and received a 79.5. The students should be given grades that truly reflect their work, and not something that either lowers or elevates them to a different place on the scale. Furthermore, I also think the process of only giving pluses to the graduate students skews their records, as employers and other graduate schools would see the plus and assume minuses would also be given, which means that the grades do not always actually reflect the students' work.
- As a faculty member holding high expectations for students (future teachers), I do think this is a good conversation and feel that it would be nice to distinguish the A + vs A - and B + vs B - (just made it). Right now the "I got an A!" phrase catches everyone from program superstars (achieving maximum pts) to good students who may have rec'd 89.75 pts out of 100 pts. This change would benefit students.

- It would actually make things easier for me as my MAT students are graded using +’s and –’s.
- I am very much in favor of adding +/- to the grading scale. I found a proposal from 2008 on the SU website for changing the grading scale that I thought was very well written and researched. I’ve attached it here. I agree with everything in it. I want to know what happened to this proposal. Why did it die? I would like to see such a proposal emerge again from the APC and be passed to the senate for debate.
- I love the idea of + and – for undergraduates.
- One thought I had is that minus grades (A-, B-, C-, D-) have a negative connotation (indicating the performance was less than A, B, C, or D), whereas plus grades tend to have positive connotation. That being said for the psychology of the refined grade designations, if SU needs a change (which is arguable), I believe I would favor plus grades and “plain grades” (A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D+, D, F) similar to the grading scale used for graduate courses. But I am not fixed in my thinking. I certainly could embrace (adjust to) a new system if that system is supported greatly by the faculty/administration. (from 2 faculty members)
- I am very in favor of using the +/- system for three reasons: (1) It is more fair. There is a sense of injustice when two students getting an 80 and 89 both get a B while a student with a 90 gets an A. There is obviously a BIG difference in performance between an 80 and an 89 and a small difference between an 89 and 90. (2) It discourages profs from inflating grades. Since a student who gets an 89 is more similar to the student with the 90 than the student with an 80, profs feel pressure to push their students up over the cutoff. A student with an 89 is not an A student. She is a B+ student. Let's not inflate student performance. (3) It is more motivating. I have had students "give up" and stop working hard near the end of the semester when they figure out that they will not make it over a cutoff to the next letter grade. E.g. if they have an 86 and can't make it up to a 90 even with the final exam, they settle for a C on the exam and still get their B in the class overall. This disincentive to work obviously impedes learning.
- I would like to encourage a change to the undergraduate grading system to include pluses and minuses as it will be much fairer form of grading. A student who earns 80 points has not demonstrated as much mastery of the material as a student who earned 89.3 points, yet they both wind up with a grade of B. Thanks for taking my opinion into consideration.
- A system without +/- reinforces an institutional policy of grade inflation. The reality is that many “A” students are really A- students. But the schools don’t want to admit that or document that because that would effect things like medical school admissions, law school admissions, etc, scholarships. If faculty don’t want to carefully assess their students, they shouldn’t be issuing grades to begin with. Given the accessibility of MyClasses, there is no additional burden to faculty.

For Plus Grades Only

I have often lamented that a student who earns 89 gets the same grade as a student who earns 80. I would be happy if the system changed to allow for plusses. My 2 cents

Has there been a discussion of a "plus" system. I think that is what we use in our MBA program and it works well. I would certainly support such a system. I think the +/- system creates too many different grades and students will want to argue more because a one point difference will make a grade difference in so many cases. I would also like to see an example of how the system would work. Is there an A+, if so there will be 13 grades in the new system. Also, what would be the typical cutoff for grades, would a C- be a 70, 71, and 72,; a C be a 73, 74, 75, 76, and a C+ be a 77, 78, and 79?

I strongly feel a "no grade" system or "Pass/Fail" system is more advantageous to higher education and the learning process.

Neutral

- Either works for me - thank you for asking
- Here is a thought that I didn't see in the comments. If we want to go granular, let's go granular! Forget +/- and use the actual percentages!
- I really don't care. I will work as we are or with +/- system. HOWEVER, I would oppose adding ONLY pluses. Also, it would be good to know what other USM schools do. And I would be interested to know if there are any data relating increased or decreased grade inflation to one grading system or another. If one system leads to LESS grade inflation, then I would suddenly care and I would support that system.
- An alternative would be to keep the letter grading as is, but also include the student's numerical grade, for example: B (87%).
- In this day and age I don't see why we can't just give the student's grade as a percentage. For example, if a student in my class ends up with a 77% average, I can just enter "77" as the grade. The whole A, B, C system (with or without +/-) is bad, and the 4.0 system is even worse!
- The Provost said we should be innovative, and I think going to a straight percentage grade report would be innovative (and better than what we do now).
- I have not taught in a system that did not include + / - so I can't speak from experience. My input is just to share what I think it might be like. I predict one benefit and one negative for my own teaching. Benefit: It seems simpler to not use them. No concerns over "bumping" a student's grade half a point this way or that, just to get them into or out of a fairly arbitrary - / full / + situation. Negative: It seems constraining to not use them. I'd expect students to really push for that extra quarter point, particularly if that quarter point gets them from a hard C to a hard B, with no C+ / B- distinction in between. I'm certain those are not revelatory, but I don't know how this system plays out in GPA or broader course assignments.

Against Change

- Maintain current scale. Moving to a +/- scale needlessly complicates establishing grades without providing a corresponding increase in information.
- My preference would be to retain the current system based on my own personal experience. I was exposed to each of the alternatives during my undergraduate and graduate coursework, and greatly preferred the basic letter-grade format. I also believe that this was also the consensus position amongst my fellow students. Moreover, the basic letter-grade system is easier to implement for the instructors. Thanks.
- Many faculty may feel that a + - addition to the grading system has advantages, particularly in enabling a more accurate reflection of the student's performance. There is a difference between an 89% average student and an 80% average student. While this is true I have always hated this system as a student and in fact was instrumental in changing my graduate program from a + - to a straight grade system. I feel that it deflates the overall gpa of the student.
- Why are we boxing ourselves into a corner with needless precision. My grading is fairly quantitative especially in large introductory classes (over 100 students). Much of Henson relies mainly on quantitative scores. Is a 67% so different from 70% that one is a D+ and the other a C? Is 67% (D+) so very different than a 68% (C-)? Is 67.48 (D+) really different than 67.51 (C-)? I find it difficult to believe that there is less variance in test development (question selection, question wording) than there is in grading. Thus the test instrument is less precise than the outcome. So why would increasing grade precision reflect student performance. Will 2.00 still remain the graduation standard? The current system of determining academic probation has a sliding scale based on credits that I assume was carefully calibrated to reflect expectations for student standing. How will that change? I might consider the proposal if there is a significant increase in the standard for making the Dean's list or graduating with honors. Certainly the last two points must be considered before any change is made to the grading system.
- A straight A student would probably not get a 4.0 gpa unless he/she maintained an A+ in all subjects. How would that effect his/her chances for a graduate program or perhaps even a job? While a plus minus system may be attractive to us as faculty, I am opposed to the change for the reason I stated. If it isn't broke don't fix it. I have not heard any students complain about the present system.
- I am not in favor of the change. The way I have seen the +/- system administered most places, it penalizes the top students and creates a downward bias in their GPAs, though it may help the students in the middle. Specifically, students would now have to get an A+ to get a 4.0 QP, and a regular A drops to 3.75 QP, A- = 3.5QP, etc. Typically B+ = 3.25, B = 3.00, B- = 2.75, so B students (and below) are neutral, or have a chance to raise GPA, but A students have no chance to increase GPA, only to lower it.
- I am emphatically for a plus and minus system. However, I am emphatically, morally against a plus system only, such as that in our MBA program. If this second type is an option being considered for undergrads, than I would prefer we keep things as they are currently, that is, no plus-minus system.

- I am opposed to the +/- change in the grading system. Thank you for asking.
- Regarding the +/- grading system about which you requested input, I am writing to discourage its use in undergraduate courses. While it seems at first glance to offer advantages to students and faculty, this system will in fact lead to additional difficulties for both. The +/- grading system tops out at 4.0, even for A+'s. This means that there is a ceiling effect that will be likely to allow students at the higher end of the scale to be more likely to move down than up. Taken along with the perception that is likely to hold sway with faculty that the minus grade is still a flavor of the letter grade (that is B- is a sort of B, when in fact it works more like a C for many purposes), the result is likely to be a disadvantaging of more able students. Students at the middle may be helped (a high C may become a B-), but that is little benefit to offset the disadvantages for others. Further, a more fine-grained system adds weight to faculty grading. A conscientious faculty member will have more borderline cases to consider--it is not just a matter of A or B, but of A-, A, or B+. This also tends to give greater credibility, and a sense of greater reliability, to a system that is fundamentally subjective. The impact of small imperfections in the technologies of grading (e.g., bad test questions, judgements about wording in essays) is intensified when greater precision is called for as a result of smaller gradations. These arguments, along with the experience of having seen the impact on several students with whom I'm well acquainted of the recent move College Park made to a +/- system, my impression is that this would not be a positive move for SU. Thank you for conveying this input to the committee.
- For our clinical courses, I feel it is difficult enough to have to make distinctions between an A and B, having to increase that distinction to whether it is an A-, A or A+ would be terribly difficult, to the point, I would campaign that we change clinical course grades back to pass/fail. So, I am opposed to the + and - grading.
- First, which grades get + and which get -? It makes a difference. Also, how do we divide up the quality points? We were handed different ways to do this at our meeting this morning. (For example is A- 3.7, 3.667, 3.6666667, or something else?) Assuming we do not allow A+ to have a weight greater than 4.0, then we are clearly going to be lowering the GPS's of our top students. (If A+ and A count the same, but B+ and B count differently, A/B students are going to have lower GPA's as a result of such a change. For our school, it will make it more difficult for Henson Scholars to keep their scholarships. Across the campus the same will be true. I do not believe it's worth punishing these students (our best ones) unless there is another perceived benefit that offsets this effect! (And I've never heard of one. Hopefully somebody will come up with one that actually makes sense.) The underlying basis for computing GPA's is based on the completely illogical assumptions that 1) grades in all courses are equivalent, 2) grades are linearly distributed as we go through A-B-C-D-F, and 3) qualitative data (grades) can be coded as numbers and then a meaningful average of the codes can be computer. Yes, we do this almost everywhere, but we should recognize that it has absolutely no underlying theoretical basis in mathematics or statistics. The best that can be said for it is, "Everybody does it." Truly that's far from convincing! If adding

more decision categories improves accuracy, fairness, or whatever, why not simply assign numbers? Here's one approach:

- A+ 4.0, 3.9
- A 3.8, 3.7
- A- 3.6, 3.5
- B+ 3.4, 3.3
- B 3.2, 3.1
- B- 3.0, 2.9
- C+ 2.8, 2.7, 2.6, 2.5
- C 2.4, 2.3, 2.2, 2.1
- C- 2.0, 1.9, 1.8, 1.7
- D+ 1.6, 1.5, 1.4
- D 1.3, 1.2, 1.1
- D- 1.0, 0.9, 0.8
- F+ 0.7, 0.6, 0.5
- F 0.4, 0.3, 0.2
- F- 0.1, 0.0

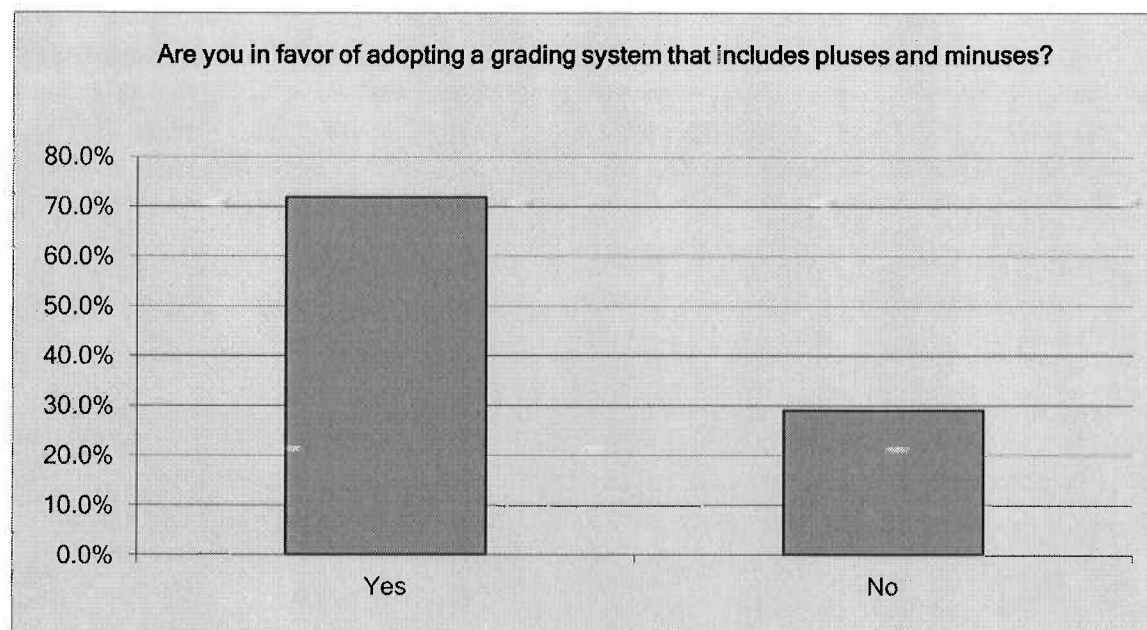
Obviously there are a LOT of different ways to INTERPRET what the 41 quality-point weights mean. But we are trying to adjust the numbers to the meaning of grades, and we should be attempting to do the opposite (as in the above chart, for example). Have faculty assign grades of 0.0 through 4.0 (all 41 different ones) and we should be able to have a fine enough cut to really be fair, right? If 5 cuts isn't enough, but 8, 9, or 10 is better, explain to me why 41 isn't better yet? How about 401 (0.00 to 4.00 by hundredths) being better yet? Why not 4001? 40001? What's fine enough – and why, for example, is one choice better than another? By what criteria? What we'll end up doing on the committee is agreeing to add A-, B+, B-, C+, D+, and D-. Where we (and the faculty) will probably disagree will be on C-, F+, and F-. And, as I began, do we assign weights to the nearest 10th, nearest hundredth, or some other way? In the absence of a concrete proposal, I must say NO to changing to a plus-minus system. Give me a specific plan, and I'll look at it – and consider if it's an improvement (or at least no worse than what we now have). But right now the question is so vague as to make most of the responses nearly meaningless!

- I vote to leave the grading as is.
- I am against changing the grading system. Grading for the course is different from grading a particular exam or an essay. The course evaluation is an overall judgment of the overall performance of academic achievement that a faculty member must make of a student for the course. It shouldn't be simply an accumulation of points. In this reasoning, the A through F grading scale is simply short hand for communicating to a student that judgment: A = excellent performance; B = good performance; C = satisfactory performance; D = barely passing; and F = failure. In each case, a faculty member could explain more fully the meaning of each of these descriptors pertaining to the particular student and indeed that would be preferable. The common sense message that these grades carry to the student gives them a clear judgment of their complete performance

from the professor - If the student gets an A rather than a B, then the student knows that overall the faculty member believed that the student was an excellent student for the course as a whole, taking into consideration all of the scores and adding judgment rather than simply addition. In contrast, if we were to change the system to pluses and minuses, the meaning to the student becomes quite confusing if not incomprehensible. What is the meaning of an A- versus an A? If I get an A, it was "excellent" but an A- means "almost but not quite excellent"? And if I get an A+ it is a "super-excellent" performance as opposed to merely "excellent". A "B" grade was "good" but a B- is "only barely good"? And the difference now between a C- and a D+ is what? C- is "barely satisfactory" and a D+ is "passing but almost barely satisfactory"? And finally, the difference between an F and a D-? An F means "failure" but a D- means "really bad but by the skin of your teeth, you don't fail the course."? Precision in points makes good sense for an exam: True or false or multiple choice questions, each worth one point, necessarily lead to a point based structure of evaluation that naturally leads to a score, say, of 80 for one student and 87 for another student. Similarly, grading an essay can involve minuses and pluses if a rubric is used and it includes points for content and points for grammar and spelling. So, a student could do well in providing content but make several mistakes in grammar and punctuation and therefore end up with an 81 rather than an 85, indicating the particulars of achievement for the assignment. However, once all of the particular assignments have been finished and graded, along with the messages delivered to the student regarding those assignments, it now becomes a decision regarding not only a summary of a student's performance but critically, in my view, a final assessment of the intellectual performance and growth in the course. This really means an integration of the various experiences rather than simply an additive function. If we wish to follow through with pairing grades with math scores, perhaps we should simply drop grades altogether and simply have scores? This system, however, would leave us all dissatisfied because we do wish to impart some conceptual meaning beyond the numbers. Indeed, faculty to faculty conversations reflecting on students often involves faculty saying that so-and-so is an ³A student² or a ³C² student. Rarely do we say a student is an ³A- or B+² student. The latter descriptors carry much less meaning than the former. Finally, a plus and minus system would more likely lead to worse grade grubbing than we presently face. Unlike the present system which allows for more leeway in judgment, a plus and minus system would emphasize the importance of every point on every exam and paper, leaving out faculty judgment beyond the addition process. Students therefore would press for each and every point, knowing that that could be the difference between a minus or plus grade, regardless of the intellectual integrity of the content at issue. Would they truly be working harder in an intellectual sense or merely chasing points, point by point? In sum, I believe that the siren call of mathematical precision for course grades would lead to greater confusion over meaning of performance and leave out the all-important final judgment of a faculty member on a student's performance in his or her course.

Academic Policies - Undergraduate Grading System (Faculty)**Are you in favor of adopting a grading system that includes pluses and minuses?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	71.9%	143
No	29.1%	58
	<i>answered question</i>	199
	<i>skipped question</i>	2



Faculty Survey Monkey Open-Ended Responses:

- This would provide a more accurate, more meaningful form of assessment for students.
- I would be in favor of a +/- system because I believe it is a better reflection of student performance and would help serve as a motivator to students
- SOME concerns: grade breaks will still be agonizing and now there will be more of them to consider; some of us may be more inclined to give + grades than we are to give minus grades which can lead to grade inflation
- The plus/minus system is most accurate for determining actual grades.
- There is a big difference between a B- (almost a C) and a B+ (almost an A) and I believe students deserve to have that distinction on their record.
- I believe it rewards students for higher achievements.
- The current system does not allow for differentiation between those who apply themselves and those who seek by.
- I believe a plus/minus system allows for greater accuracy in grade reporting and may help address issues of grade inflation.
- It is an excellent idea. Perhaps could be optional for those who are against it!
- I believe that a system that includes pluses and minuses will be a more accurate depiction of what the students have actually achieved in their classes.
- That will be better for students. Also, it makes student grades more accurate.
- No good reason not to adopt the new system.
- The +/- system allows the professor to have more options for distinguishing between students.
- Increases the rigor and competitiveness of an institution.
- This proposal would be an advantage to our strongest students at the expense of the less strong at a time when the trend is in the other direction.
- I believe that this approach is more consistent with other universities. Further, when students are applying to graduate school and jobs it is difficult to compare their GPAs with other students because we don't differentiate. Thus, in some cases their GPAs could look lower than they actually are (for example a student who earned a B+ but in our system is given a B) which could make them less competitive than other candidates.
- It is needed!!!
- Either way is fine, but only support +/- if it includes BOTH pluses and minus, not just plus.
- +/- reflects a student's performance more accurately
- I'm just an adjunct lecturer, but I'm not in favor of plus and minus grades. I attended a college that used that system, and a plus or minus grade seemed to be used as a compromise at times: "He didn't do quite as well as this other student, but I'm not sure he dropped to a B level. Maybe an A- would make that distinction." At the undergraduate level, I can't see why a professor can't decide whether a student fits into one of five categories: excellent, good, satisfactory, poor, or failure. We don't need 12 categories (or 14, if you have plus grades for A and F). Except for courses that are easy to calculate based on mathematical correctness, I think whether a student receives a B- or C+ could depend on the mood of the professor on a given day. Twelve categories is too subtle a distinction for many courses. I strongly support the current five-grade system and hope we stay with it at SU.
- It would offer a much more accurate evaluation - - i.e., a superior reflection of each student's work.
- peoplesoft is already a mess. we have enough students whining. what happens when they miss a plus by two points?
- Our system is fine and it is not in need of changing.
- This isn't high school.
- It may lead to further grade inflation.
- PLEASE do this!
- I think that with the 4-credit hour base units for grades that the increments are needed. The students have fewer grades. However, it will probably cause a rise in grade challenges, and more headaches for faculty.
- I recommend adding +'s to the system but not minuses, as is the case in the English graduate program.

- Faculty should be expected to give students relevant, specific, and reasoned feedback. This will also eliminate the charade of A- students appearing as A students. And it will correctly note that B+ students are not B students.
- It seems that we should be consistent across undergraduate and graduate programs. If we are going to discuss this issue at the undergrad level, can we also have the conversation about grading graduate courses. the graduate grading system is odd-students can earn plus grades but not minus...
- This system would account for a greater range of students' final evaluations.
- Adopting this system would help motivate the students to perform.
- This makes things unclear and unprofessional, in my opinion.
- I would have felt better prepared to vote had I reviewed the advantages and disadvantages presented by colleagues. If such a list exists, I regret that I missed it prior to voting.
- I agree that a +/- system would be very appropriate especially in the Arts, where grading is based upon aesthetics and not easily measured by tests and numbers. Whatever the assigned grading numbers would end up being is not as important as making a distinction between B-, B & B+. Over the past twenty years grade inflation has made a "C" seem like a poor grade instead of an average grade. This proposal could help considerably. Jim Hill Professor Art Department
- Does it affect the GPA?
- I am sensitive to the faculty that don't want a new system and perhaps, we should adopt it in certain courses / departments first. My reasons for being in favor of it, however, are 1) students who find themselves going into the final with an 86, for example have no incentive to continue to work/study if they do not believe they can achieve an 'A' or drop to a 'C'. Yet a 'B+', 'B,' and 'B-' would be in play; 2) The current system lacks differentiation between the students. A student with a 79.5% final average should not earn the same grade as that of a student who has an 89%. Wherever a faculty member chooses to divide his or her grades, the problem remains there is a ten point window which represents significant variation in performance.
- Faculty who are not in favor can simply choose not to use plus/minus grading for their own class. IT DOES NOT IMPOSE ANY OBLIGATION ON THEM. This merely gives the rest of us the freedom to do what we want to do - to more accurately evaluate student work. Further, this would increase student learning. Currently, with no plus/minus grading, most students who take final exams with me have no incentive to study for the final. All too typical are the students who have a B, and any grade between a 35% and a 100% will yield a final grade of "B" - thus they don't study.
- The expanded grading system differentiates better than whole grades. I am in favor.
- it provides more options and more overall fairness. The distinction between the performance of students who receive an A and those a B are too broad. The B+ option, for example, would give greater flexibility to faculty and would make the distinctions in performance easier to reflect in a grade.
- I am not in favor of the change. The way I have seen the +/- system administered most places, it penalizes the top students and creates a downward bias in their GPAs, though it may help the students in the middle. Specifically, students would now have to get an A+ to get a 4.0 QP, and a regular A drops to 3.75 QP, A- = 3.5QP, etc. Typically B+ = 3.25, B = 3.00, B- = 2.75, so B students (and below) are neutral, or have a chance to raise GPA, but A students have no chance to increase GPA, only to lower it.
- long overdue
- In my opinion and in the interest of pursuing knowledge instead of grades the grading scale for all institutions should be "pass" or "fail." Another form of grading would be a written progress report assessing a student's performance. I, however, understand these ideas are not embraced by the majority of faculty members at this institution, so I really have no preference with the noted forced choice.
- Use it in graduate classes and it is very useful in making distinctions.
- I teach in one of the healthcare programs with competitive admission. Students take pre-req courses for two years, apply in the spring of their sophomore year and attempt to be admitted for the fall of their Junior year. GPA is an important driver in admission decisions. Currently, we are not allowed to differentiate the source of grades in our decisions. A B in chemistry at the

community college equals a B in chemistry at SU. This already creates problems for us because we know that in many cases SU grades reflect better learning than the community college counterparts with the same grades. If an SU student earns B- in course(s), that student gets ranked lower than a community college B. Since we have so many feeder schools to SU that do not use the +/- system, this could turn into a really issue for us. I appreciate that we are but one program in a larger university and the tail should not wag the dog, but I am concerned. I also work with pre-med, pre-vet, etc. students who will be trying to get into graduate health profession programs. I am also extremely concerned about them as GPA is unquestionably an important driver of these decisions. I feel as though the best case scenario is that the +/- system will hurt as many people as it helps.

- PLEASE CONSIDER USING an "A," (4.0), A/B (3.5), "B" (3.0), B/C (2.5), "C" (2.00) ETC SYSTEM INSTEAD
- This is not an issue I'm too fired up about, but I'm happy to see it go forward, if others want it to do so.
- I cannot see any good rationale for NOT including pluses and minuses. it's a win-win for faculty and students
- I would be fine with a +/- system as long as it possible to get an A+ or a D- but as it stands now a +/- that doesn't include these possibilities merely skews grades to the middle of the scale.
- Should have done so long ago. Absolutely no reason to group grades into such large categories when data processing readily handles more fine-grained evaluations.
- I am only in favor of this if BOTH pluses and minuses are used. Many years ago I was on the Academic Policies Committee and we tried to institute a plus/minus system. The SGA would only agree to pluses, but NOT minuses. This would have made SU look ridiculous so we abandoned the idea.
- Grading is not precise. Plus/Minus gives the imprecision of precision. Straight letters are a less precise but more accurate. Likud scale don't really improve accuracy by adding more scalars. No more than the second runner up at a "beauty pageant" has less worth than the winner.
- A university of the stature that Salisbury has become needs a more specific system of grading. In addition, the reduction in stress for the faculty as they can determine grades based on a student's actual performance in a class instead of often promoting them or demoting them away from what they actually earned would be very beneficial
- Definitely need to adopt a plus system-- may be too complex with pluses & minuses
- A plus and minus system allows us to post grades with more accuracy. Not sure why that idea seems so controversial.
- The plus/minus system is a more accurate and fair summary of student performance; an 80 is a very different grade than an 89. Further, changing the system will remove the pressure on professors to "pad" the grades to address the appearance of unfairness, such as giving the student with an 89 an A since her performance was more similar to the student with the 90 than the student with the 80.
- The +/- system more accurately reflects student performance than does the monolithic whole-grade system, and preserves grading integrity.
- I see many benefits to the proposal: combatting grade inflation, finer measure of performance, improved motivation at the end of the semester, and enhanced reputation for the institution. Pluses and minuses are the norm as far as my personal experience with other institutions--both institutions I attended for graduate and undergraduate, and also the two universities I taught at before coming to Salisbury, use the plus/minus system, as did my high school.
- I see no disadvantages with adopting a system that includes pluses and minuses. It would allow GPAs to more adequately reflect differences in grades among students (i.e., an 80 (B-) is not equivalent to an 89 (B+)).
- Where an adjective provides crucial information about the noun it modifies (an alarm vs. a false alarm; high cholesterol vs. low cholesterol), plus minus designations provide valuable insight into a vague ranking system for both the evaluator and the person being evaluated.
- The more finely we try to define performance, the more room for error occurs. Student complaints would multiply.
- I recently taught at a university with a plus-minus system and noticed several distinct advantages. First, it aided faculty in making determinations between students who performed

extremely well in a class without punishing those who performed well. In other words, it didn't force faculty members to group students who may have received a 95% in a class with those that received a 90%. Or those who had an 89% with those with an 80%. In addition, it aided students with maintaining higher gpa's if they were good students. Students who may have received As in most of their courses and a B+ in two courses were not penalized as much as they might have had they received As and two Bs.

- I believe it de-values the gpa of students.
- Are there a certain amount of grammatical errors that add up to individual points for an essay, or does the instructor typically grade within a range? If within a range, is it justifiable to provide such precise mathematical detail?
- A student who earns 80 points has not mastered the material to the degree of the student who earns 89.3 yet each receives a grade of B, this is inherently unfair and inaccurate. A system of pluses and minuses will allow us to address these discrepancies.
- IF the percentages were accepted by the entire faculty i.e Professor A can't define a B+ as 88% while Professor B says that it's only 89%.....
- I can only see it being a burden on us when it comes to grading. I can be persuaded by strong arguments in favor of it.
- I believe this is an important initiative in terms of accurately recording our students' performances.
- Too vague. I need to see which + and which - grades are included before I can answer yes.
- It must be standardized somehow, so that an A- or a D+ means roughly the same thing across the campus.
- It is long overdue as a means of differentiating among student performance in the classroom-- just as long as there's no A+.
- I think ONLY for C+ and award 2.5 GPA points for this grade....40 yrs ago my school did this and students thought it was fair/good
- I believe adopting a +/- system will more accurately reflect the quality of a student's performance in the course. There is a great deal of difference between a student who scores an 89 and an 81. It is not fair that they are both given the same grade. I believe adopting pluses and minuses will encourage students to work harder.
- This provides very little additional work on our part, and benefits students tremendously. I used this system at my former university and found it very useful. I really don't see a downside.
- It is very simple. An 89% is not the same as an 80%. Students who work hard enough to earn a B+ deserve to be distinguished from those who didn't. Those who barely make it to 80% deserve a B-. The same idea applies to the other grade ranges. This system will also make a 4.0 really mean something. For me 90% is an A-, a true A student should be more than just squeaking by with a 90%. It will also help our majors be more competitive for graduate school, as most other schools use a plus/minus system. A student who is consistently a B+ student will have the same GPA as a B- student, so their GPA would be lower than the GPA of a student who did the same work under a plus/minus system. Unlike some of my colleagues, I don't believe this will affect my ability to grade students fairly as long as the grade cut-offs are well defined in the syllabus.
- I believe increased precision in assessment is needed.
- I would be opposed to ONLY adding pluses. Otherwise, I really don't care.
- I can't really think of not adopting the new system..
- This will help re-balance our grade inflation problem and will allow us to assign grades that more precisely reflect student performance.
- It is a fairer reflection of student performance.
- -only favor if both + and - are possible (unlike Graduate policy)
- I would like the A+ as an option, to distinguish the high A from the regular A.
- I am against it, but I understand the argument in favor. So, actually, I am ambivalent. But I am old school in that I'd personally prefer what we have.
- I like what we have.
- I am strongly in favor of adding additional precision to our letter grade system. Any objections regarding changes to other academic policies ("must earn a C or better", etc) can be overcome and should not be a reason for not moving to increased grade precision.

- The plus-minus system conveys more information, so I support its adoption
- I feel that this change will be an advantage for students who need a certain GPA to enter a major, and it will give a more accurate reflection of the students' work.
- This will give us more flexibility and help distinguish, for example, the 80 student from the 89 point student.
- As long as it goes both ways. + and - (not a singular way)
- as long as there is not an A+ option (begin with A, A-, B+, B-, etc.)

Data from Undergraduate Student Survey Regarding +/- Grading System
Survey completed week of October 14th, 2013

Classes surveyed included general education Fulton and Henson classes, and lower and upper level majors only Henson classes.¹

199 sampled	Yes, In Favor	No, Not In Favor	No Opinion
Totals	75 (37.7%)	120 (60.3%)	4 (2.0%)

In Favor:

- I think that this system represents a student's performance more closely. There is a significant difference between and 80% and an 89.4% and the current system does not acknowledge this.
- I think an A should be left alone, but B+, B, B-, C+, C, C- should go into effect. I'm typically a borderline student, always a high grade I don't think its fair that I kill myself to get an 88 but yet a student who gets an 80% gets a B too. I think for B and C, is should go into effect. If someone gets an A, regardless they deserve a 4.0.
- Only with B+ and below. The A's should just say at 4.0.
- It would improve my GPA in instances where I may have had an 89%, so I'd get a B+ rather than a flat B. I think it's a great idea!
- I think that it is important for some people to see that they earned a higher grade than someone else. But, I really don't have an opinion.
- It really doesn't matter to me, but I can't see it hurting.
- Adopting pluses and minuses ensures that everyone gets the grade they deserve.
- I believe that the people who work for higher grades will get the grades that they deserve.
- Gives the most appropriate effort to grade conversion, not all B's and C's are created equal, some are deserving of more credit than others.
- I believe that if you keep your scores high enough, you should be rewarded"
- "Gives you more of an opportunity if you're not an A student"
- "You can get a higher GPA with B+'s then just B's"
- "What I know about grading is that 90-100 is grade of A. 90 is an A and 100 is also an A. I think they should have different grade from this. It doesn't make sense to get same grade both 90 and 100. 100 is the better grade"
- "Because you'll know if you are in the high range or lower range in a specific grade point. Looks better from a GPA standpoint."
- "Grading will be easier and students won't stress as much. The GPA will be helped and people who had a small difference will be better off receiving a higher grade based on the +/- system"
- "A student w/ a 100 average looks no better than one with a 90 average"
- "It would give your application to graduate school more merit."
- "It is a more accurate grading system."
- "A+ is better than an A and just looks cool."

¹ APC does not currently have a Perdue representative faculty member; Seidel faculty members this semester are teaching only graduate students.

- "I believe the difference between an 80% and an 89% can be huge, for example, and better represents the students mastery of the subject."
- "I often feel like students are too stressed about their GPA and less worried about learning the material, with a +/- system, I believe that students could focus more on learning the subject material and GPA would be rewarded for people receiving an A+ and wouldn't change from the current system if they receive an A."
- I would favor it, because a high B and a low B are very different to a student.
- Yes. Last time I checked an A- > B+
- "You have a better chance at getting a good grade."

Opposed:

- Since it changes the value of the g.p.a., it could really affect your academic standing in comparison to other schools that do not use the same system.
- If I were shooting for an A and got a 90%, I would be disappointed. Normally, I wouldn't shoot for B's so if I did fall back and get an 88% then it could be nice, but not worth it if I could get an A.
- As a student the +/- scheme would affect me more in a negative respect.
- Would lower g.p.a.
- It it's not broken, don't break it.
- Lower g.p.a.. An A should be a 4.0, students work too hard to have gpa lowered for a low A.
- Including A-'s in the grading scheme would lower my gpa. If you get a particular grade you should get full credit for the grade, not partial credit for an "A-".
- If a student earns an A, it should be an A.
- Would there be ambiguity with this system? Such as would C+/B- be the same grade? I don't want a B- to be the same grade as a C+.
- I think that minuses will look bad on my transcript and the grading scale as it is now pushes me to work harder than I had in high school.
- Why fix something that's not broken?"
- "Regardless of whether it's a good grade or not having a (-) next to a grade makes it look bad [negative connotation]"
- "It's stupid"
- "I tend to be in the lower part of the grade and I do not want that affecting my GPA"
- "It would make a difference in GPA and I feel GPA is very important"
- "It can bring down your GPA if you have all A's, alternatively, it can bring your grades up, but I the negatives outweigh the positives for students who do well in their classes."
- "On a +/- grading system an 80 would be a B- not just a standard B and a 70 is not treated as a normal C but a D"
- "Grades would be weighted differently and could potentially harm or hurt your overall GPA depending on the +/- system."
- "It does not change the grade, it simply suggests it is a higher or lower form of the same letter grade."
- "It is nicer to be able to get a 90 and have it be weighted the same as a 95 but if the A- went down to an 88 then I would like that grading system."
- "Only the actual letter is the best indicator for a grade."
- "It is not about having half or almost grades"
- "It is easier to have the letter grade not both letter and +/-"

- "I see the benefits in having a +/- system, however I believe that if someone gets an A, it should have the same weight regardless of if it's a 90 or 100."
- "I would prefer a regular A, B, etc."
- "Too much of a mess with +/-"
- "The current way works just fine."
- "Competition would increase for majors applying for acceptance."
- "It would negatively affect your overall GPA"
- "Course difficulty is well-aligned with the current grading system."
- "In my opinion, even a low A is still an A and a high C is still a C."
- "It would be harder to earn a 4.0"
- "It would make for a more complicated resume and an unnecessary explanations when applying for jobs. College is about learning, not grades."
- "It is an unnecessary complication. If adding +/- why not just give out a number grade."
- I feel that an A is an A no matter how high or low the percentage, because it is the grade letter that counts.
- NO!!!!!! (unless it benefits me ;)
- I don't think it's necessary to define the specific range of a letter grade you fall into, because an A is an A either way.
- It makes things more complicated

GPA	Freshmen (<30 CREDITS)	Non-Frshmn (>29 CREDITS)	Total	% OF FRSH in Each Grade	% of all Students in Each Grade
A (4.000)	9	147	156	5.77%	2.02%
B+ (3.700 TO 3.999)	5	469	474	1.05%	6.14%
B (3.300 TO 3.699)	30	1148	1178	2.55%	15.26%
B- (2.700 TO 3.299)	80	2047	2127	3.76%	27.54%
C+ (2.300 TO 2.699)	59	971	1030	5.73%	13.34%
C (2.000 TO 2.299)	49	400	449	10.91%	5.81%
C- (1.700 TO 1.999)	30	106	136	22.06%	1.76%
D+ (1.300 TO 1.699)	22	48	70	31.43%	0.91%
D (1.00 TO 1.299)	9	17	26	34.62%	0.34%
D- (0.700 TO 0.999)	1	1	2	50.00%	0.03%
F (0.000 TO 0.699) *	1336	738	2074	64.42%	26.86%
	1630	6092	7722	21.11%	100.00%

*COLUMN F CONTAINS Freshmen in First Semester WITH NO EARNED CREDITS/GPA YET

Column B has the number of freshmen in each GPA range.

Column C has all of the Non-Freshmen in each GPA range.

Column D shows the total students in that GPA range.

Column E shows the percentage of freshmen in the number of students in that GPA :

Column F shows the percentage of all students that fall within that GPA range.