Fall 2014

F14RS No. 39 (Plus-Minus Grading)

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A RESOLUTION

TO reaffirm LSU Student Government’s position of opposition toward the proposed Suffix Grading System and to urge and request President and Chancellor Dr. F. King Alexander to not approve the Faculty Senate’s proposed Plus/Minus Grading Guidelines.

PARAGRAPH 1: Whereas, LSU Student Government passed Student Government Resolution twenty-seven (27) in the Fall 2011 Regular Session, Student Government Resolution nine (9) in the Fall 2012 Regular Session, and Student Government Resolution eight (8) in the Fall 2013 Regular Session, all three of which opposed the creation of a Plus/Minus or Suffix Grading System for LSU; and

PARAGRAPH 2: Whereas, updated research on this topic has continued to come forth since Fall 2012; and

PARAGRAPH 3: Whereas, currently LSU uses the following quality point scale:

- A 4.0 QP
- B 3.0 QP
- C 2.0 QP
- D 1.0 QP
- F 0.0 QP; and

PARAGRAPH 4: Whereas, with the new Plus/Minus system the quality point scale will be as follows:

- A+ 4.3 QP
- A 4.0 QP
- A- 3.7 QP
- B+ 3.3 QP
- B 3.0 QP
- B- 2.7 QP
- C+ 2.3 QP
- C 2.0 QP
- C- 1.7 QP
- D+ 1.3 QP
- D 1.0 QP
- D- 0.7 QP
- F 0.0 QP; and

PARAGRAPH 5: Whereas, the student body has expressed a strong opposition to this change to Plus/Minus Grading; and
PARAGRAPH 6: WHEREAS, BETWEEN JANUARY 2012 AND OCTOBER 2013, STUDENT GOVERNMENT DIRECTLY RECEIVED OVER 200 EMAILS FROM STUDENTS ON THIS TOPIC, OF WHICH ONLY ABOUT TWO PERCENT (2%) WERE IN SUPPORT OF THE CHANGE TO PLUS/_MINUS GRADING; AND

PARAGRAPH 7: WHEREAS, THE LSU FACULTY SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PLUS/_MINUS “SUFFIX” GRADING CONDUCTED A SURVEY IN SPRING 2013 TO GATHER DATA ON POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF SUFFIX GRADING ON STUDENTS’ GPA; AND

PARAGRAPH 8: WHEREAS, THE SURVEY PRODUCED THE FOLLOWING RESULTS: “IN THE FACULTY SURVEY, 2,056 GRADES REPORTEDLY CHANGED WITH ADDITION OF A SUFFIX (676 INCREASED, 1,380 DROPPED)” AND “OF THE 2,770 GRADE ESTIMATES PROVIDED IN THE STUDENT SURVEY, 228 WERE EXPECTED TO INCREASE WITH ADDITION OF A SUFFIX AND 1,253 WERE EXPECTED TO DECREASE;” AND

PARAGRAPH 9: WHEREAS, 224 STUDENTS THAT PARTICIPATED IN THIS SURVEY PROVIDED THEIR PERSONAL COMMENTS ON SUFFIX GRADING, OF WHICH 82.6% WERE AGAINST IMPLEMENTATION OF SUFFIX GRADING, 9.4% SUPPORTED THE CHANGE AND 8.0% WERE INDIFFERENT; AND

PARAGRAPH 10: WHEREAS, THE RESULTS OF THIS SURVEY SHOW THAT THERE WOULD BE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON STUDENT GPA IF SUFFIX GRADING WERE IMPLEMENTED; AND

PARAGRAPH 11: WHEREAS, CURRENTLY MANY LSU STUDENTS OFFSET THE COST OF TUITION AND FEES WITH TOPS AND OTHER ACADEMIC-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS; AND

PARAGRAPH 12: WHEREAS, TOPS CURRENTLY REQUIRES A MINIMUM 2.3 CUMULATIVE GPA AT THE END OF THE FIRST ACADEMIC YEAR (BETWEEN 24-47 HOURS OF EARNED CREDIT) AND A MINIMUM 2.5 CUMULATIVE GPA AT THE END OF ALL OTHER ACADEMIC YEARS (ONCE 48 HOURS HAS BEEN EARNED); AND

PARAGRAPH 13: WHEREAS, LOSING TOPS AND OTHER ACADEMIC-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS COULD POTENTIALLY HAVE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON MANY LSU STUDENTS, FORCING THEM TO UNDERGO UNNECESSARY HARDSHIPS AND POSSIBLY EVEN RESIGNING FROM THE UNIVERSITY; AND

PARAGRAPH 14: WHEREAS, THE PLUS/MINUS SUFFIX GRADING SCALE COULD POTENTIALLY DETER PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS FROM ATTENDING THE UNIVERSITY AND DECREASE ENROLLMENT; AND

PARAGRAPH 15: WHEREAS, THE LOWERING OF MANY STUDENTS’ GPA WILL DECREASE THE COMPETITIVENESS OF LSU GRADUATES SEEKING ADMISSION TO PROFESSIONAL AND GRADUATE PROGRAMS; AND
PARAGRAPH 16: Whereas, many instructors currently use a subjective grading scale for their courses; and

PARAGRAPH 17: Whereas, if this new grading system were optional it would cause confusion for both students and faculty across the university; and

PARAGRAPH 18: Whereas, this confusion would stem from the lack of uniformity in regard to the quality point distribution among instructors, particularly those instructors teaching equivalent courses; and

PARAGRAPH 19: Whereas, confusion would also arise when comparing LSU transcripts with each other due to this lack of uniformity; and

PARAGRAPH 20: Whereas, the opinion of the LSU student body in regard to this change in the grading system must be considered due to this having a profound effect on the academic life of more than thirty thousand (30,000) students and their future; and

PARAGRAPH 21: Whereas, students should always be represented in discussions that would have such a large effect on their lives.

PARAGRAPH 22: Therefore, be it resolved that the Louisiana State University Student Senate is strongly opposed to implementing a plus/minus suffix grading system and urges President and Chancellor Dr. F. King Alexander to not approve the Faculty Senate’s proposed Plus/Minus Grading Guidelines, and

PARAGRAPH 23: Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Dr. F. King Alexander, President and Chancellor, Dr. Stuart Bell, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, and Dr. K.C. White, Dean of Students.

PARAGRAPH 24: This resolution shall take effect upon passage by a simple majority (one-half plus one) vote of the LSU Student Senate and signature by the President, upon lapse of time for presidential action, or if vetoed by the President and subsequently approved by the Senate, on the date of such approval.
APPROVED:

_________________________  _______________________
TYLER S. LOGA            CLAYTON TUFTS
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE    STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT

DATE:____________________  DATE:____________________