

SM 29/8/66

Grading

3-A.

TO: SENATE

FROM: REGISTRAR

RE: GRADING

DATE: JULY 18, 1966

The enclosed is being sent out prior to the regular agenda of Senate so that you may have an opportunity to consider the issues raised and discuss them with your colleagues before the Senate meeting on August 1st. Please bring these papers with you to the meeting.

If there is any further information you think I may be able to supply, please call me.

D. P. Robertson

Encls.

SM 29 18/66

3-A-1

A HISTORY OF GRADING SYSTEMS AT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
by D. P. Robertson

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1. On February 18, 1965, the Board of Governors acting on behalf of Senate approved a grading system proposed by the Registrar (Norman Barton). This grading system was published in the first volume of the University Calendar and in the revision to that first volume. (see History 1, attached)
2. On December 2, 1965, the Faculty of Science approved a motion, unopposed, recommending to Senate the adoption of a four point scale for the calculation of averages.
3. The Registrar, (D.P. Robertson) presented a grading system to the joint meeting of Faculty on January 19, 1966. (see History 2)  
The joint meeting accepted recommendation #2 and turned the other recommendations down by a vote of 24 to 27.
4. On January 24, 1966, the Senate approved the modifications to the original grading system as recommended by the joint meeting of faculty for publication in the 1966-67 Calendar. (see History 3)
5. The President appointed a President's committee to consider and make recommendations regarding grading and scholastic standings. The Registrar was named chairman and there were two representatives recommended by each Dean. The committee met on a number of occasions and considered numerous grading systems. On the approval of the President the committee's report was submitted to the three faculties. (see History 4)  
The faculties of Education and Science approved the recommendations of the Committee.  
The faculty of Arts decided by a vote of 9 to 8 to submit alternative recommendations to the Senate. (see History 5)
6. The Senate approved the recommendations of the President's committee at its meeting of May 2, 1966.
7. The Registrar distributed the supplement to the Calendar (see History 6) to all students, Secondary schools, other Canadian Universities, and the B.C. Department of Education.
8. On June 3, 1966, the faculty of Arts passed a motion 24 to 1 requesting the Senate to reinstate the Grades A- and C+.
9. On July 4, 1966, the Dean of Arts presented a paper to Senate (see History 7) and the Senate voted in favour of rescinding its motion of May 2nd to approve the President's Committee report.

July 18, 1966.

SM 29/8/66

Standing

HISTORY I

Standing and Credit

1. The mark for each course will be entered on the student's record by a letter grade:

First Class Standing, A+, A, A-;  
Second Class Standing, B+, B, B-;  
Pass Standing, C+, C;  
Standing Granted, T;  
Failure, F;  
Special Conditions, X;

2. The letter grade T, Standing Granted, will be entered on the record when a student obtains a mark just short of the C grade and when, in the opinion of the examiner, the student should not continue studies in the subject. The student will not be allowed to take further courses in the subject.
3. The letter grade X, Special Conditions, will be entered on the record when conditions exist which prevent the examiner from making a standard evaluation of the student's work, e.g. when a student, for medical or compassionate reasons, cannot write the examination, or for medical reasons misses a large portion of the semester. When such a student can provide proof of medical or compassionate reasons for his action he may be granted a deferred examination, and may be granted permission to write the examination in the subject when it is next regularly scheduled, without repeating the course.

SM 29/8/66

*Elimination  
of the X grade*

TO: Joint Meeting of Faculty

FROM: Registrar

SUBJECT: Procedure to Determine Scholarship Standings

The following is recommended for adoption as a procedure to determine scholarship standings.

Recommendation 1

Elimination of the fine structure (A+, A-, etc.). This will allow a 4-point scale which is the scale most commonly used on the North American continent. The Faculty of Science has recommended the elimination of the fine structure to Senate.

Recommendation 2

Elimination of the X grade; substitution of D for the present T; substitution of Def. for the present D.

X - Students will be required to file with the Registrar, medical certificates, etc., to substantiate requests for deferred exams in cases where they failed to write for these reasons. Such requests and supporting documents must be filed within 4 days of the date of the examination. The Registrar will consult with the department concerned and a Def. grade may be granted. Where the department does not wish to grant a deferred exam, an N grade will be given.

T - The ambiguity associated with this grade this past semester suggests it is not a useful grade to retain.

D - This grade is commonly used to signify the bottom of the scale before an outright failure is recorded. It is suggested departments may wish to stipulate that a "D" in a pre-requisite is an insufficient standing to allow the student to carry on in the subject. A "D" grade is usually not transferrable as a credit from one institution to another.

Recommendation 3

Adoption of a 4-point scale, grade points, and grade point average as follows:

a) Numerical values are assigned to letter grades.

- A - 4 )
- B - 3 )
- C - 2 ) - Passing Grades
- D - 1 )
- F,N, Def - 0 )

History 2 (cont'd)

- b) Grade points are assigned to each course by multiplying the numerical value by the semester hour value for the course.
- c) A grade point average is computed by dividing the total number of grade points by the total number of semester hours.

<u>Example</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>	<u>Grade Point</u>
Course 1	A	4	3	12
Course 2	A	4	3	12
Course 3	B	3	3	9
Course 4	C	2	3	6
Course 5	C	2	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>
			15	45

$$\text{Grade Point Average } \frac{45}{15} = 3.0$$

This allows us to assign a meaningful, commonly used, over-all standing for a semester without requiring specific percentage points from the faculty.

Recommendation 4

Establish the following scale for over-all scholarship standings.

<u>SFU Grade Point Average</u>	
First Class	3.2 - 4.0
Second Class	2.6 - 3.1
Pass	1.0 - 2.5

Recommendation 5

Credit for the Semester

Full-Time Students

1. A student taking 12 semester hours or more must achieve a grade point average of 1.0 to secure any credit for any course in the semester. A student achieving less than 1.0 will be counted as failing the semester; the semester hours attempted will be added to the divisor in the cumulative grade point average, but there will be 0 semester hours credit added to the dividend.

Part-Time Students

2. A student taking 11 semester hours or less must achieve a grade point average of 1.3 to secure any credit for any course in the semester. A student achieving less than 1.3 will be counted as failing the semester; the semester hours attempted will be added to the divisor in the cumulative grade point average, but there will be 0 semester hours credit added to the dividend.

*Examination*

Recommendation 6

Standings Required for Continuance at the University

1. Students will be allowed to continue with a cumulative\* grade point average less than 1.0 for two semesters only. If the cumulative grade point average is less than 1.0 for the third time the student may be required to withdraw, although the committee may exercise discretion in those cases where the current semester grade point average is 2.0 or more.

total number of grade points earned since attending the University.

\* Cumulative Grade Point Average =  $\frac{\text{total number of grade points earned since attending the University.}}{\text{total number of semester hours attempted since attending the University.}}$

2. Notwithstanding the above, students will be allowed only two occasions where the semester grade point average is less than 1.0. On the third occasion the student may be required to withdraw.
3. In addition to 1 and 2 above the individual departments may require certain standings in their subject for major and honor students. Failure to meet these departmental requirements may result in a request to withdraw from the major or honor program at the discretion of the department.
4. To be eligible for graduation the total grade points must be equal to twice the total semester hours ever undertaken at the University. For students who were admitted with no advance or transfer credit, this means the total grade points for a General Program degree must total at least 240; for an Honors program degree, at least 272. In both cases the cumulative grade point average on graduation must be at least 2.0.

Attachment to Recommendation for Procedure to Determine Scholarship Standings

ExamplesRecommendation 5, Item 1

Example 1	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>	<u>Grade Point</u>
Course 1	D	1	3	3
2	D	1	3	3
3	D	1	3	3
4	D	1	3	3
5	D	1	3	3
			<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>

$$\text{Grade Point Average } \frac{15}{15} = 1.0$$

Student retains credit for all courses - earns total of 15 semester hours credit.

Example 2	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>	<u>Grade Point</u>
Course 1	D	1	3	3
2	D	1	3	3
3	D	1	3	3
4	D	1	3	3
5	F	0	3	3
			<u>15</u>	<u>12</u>

$$\text{Grade Point Average } \frac{12}{15} = .8$$

Student receives no credit for any courses - earns total of 0 semester hours credit.

100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200

SM 29/18/66 Exam 1 Grading

History 2 (cont'd.)

Recommendation 5, Item 2

Example 1	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>	<u>Grade Point</u>
Course 1	C	2	3	6
2	C	2	3	6
3	F	0	3	0
			<u>9</u>	<u>12</u>

Grade Point Average  $\frac{12}{9} = 1.3$

Student retains credit for courses passed - earns total of 6 semester hours credit.

Example 2	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>	<u>Grade Point</u>
Course 1	C	2	3	6
2	D	1	3	3
3	F	0	3	0
			<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>

Grade Point Average  $\frac{9}{9} = 1.0$

Student receives no credit for any courses - earns total of 0 semester hours credit.

SM 29/11/66  
 E. M. [unclear]

History 2 (cont'd.) - 6 -

Recommendation 6, Item 1

	<u>Semester 1</u>	<u>Semester 2</u>	<u>Semester 3</u>
	C	C	C
	D	C	C
	D	F	C
	F	F	C
	F	F	F
Grade Point Average	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1.6</u>

Cumulative Grade Point Average	0	0 (on probation)	.5 May be required to withdraw for reason of 3 consecutive occasions where cumulative G.P.A. less than 1
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If semester 3 had been

	C
	C
	C
	C
	C
	<u>C</u>
G.P.A.	2.0
Cum G.P.A.	.7

the cumulative G.P.A. would still be less than 1.0 but the semester G.P.A. of 2.0 would indicate to the committee that the student is picking up and could be allowed to continue.

July 18, 1966.

SM 29/8/66

*Exam Standing*

HISTORY 3

**Standing and Credit**

1. The mark for each course will be entered on the student's record by a letter grade:

First Class Standing, A+, A, A-  
Second Class Standing, B+, B, B-  
Pass Standing, C+, C, D  
Failure, F  
Deferred, Def.  
Did Not Write, N

- a) The letter grade, Def., will be given when a physician's certificate or other document substantiating a request for a deferment on medical or compassionate grounds is received by the Registrar within four days of the date on which the examination was to have been written and when such deferment is agreed to by the instructor involved.
- b) The letter grade N is given when a student registered for a course and did not write the examination and did not withdraw before the set date. An N is considered an F for purposes of scholastic standing.

1966-67  
Calendar Vol II

July 18, 1966.

President's Committee on Examination Grading and Scholastic StandingsPROPOSED GRADING SYSTEM AT SFUA. Grading Scale -

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Pts. for Internal Use</u>	<u>Pts. for External Use</u>
A+	4.5	4.0
A	4.0	4.0
B+	3.5	3.0
B	3.0	3.0
B-	2.5	3.0
C	2.0	2.0
C-	1.5	2.0
D	1.0	1.0
F	0	0
Def. *	0	0
N **	0	0

Instructors would submit letter grades from Column 1. The Registrar would convert to Columns 2 and 3. Columns 1 and 3 would appear on the student's statement of marks. Column 2 would be a "private" calculation to provide to the SFU Scholarship and Awards Committee each semester a list which makes finer distinctions than the four categories used in Column 3.

Questions:

- (a) Why not just use Column 2? The Committee was of the opinion that the use of Column 2 "inside and Column 3 "outside" satisfied both sides on the controversy over the degree of exactitude possible in marking. And it does no damage to the student if all faculty strive to use the full range of grades available knowing that the fine structure of grade points is only for internal purposes.

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\* The letter grade, Def., will be given when a physician's certificate or other document substantiating a request for a deferment on medical or compassionate grounds is received by the Registrar within four days of the date on which the examination was to have been written and when such deferment is agreed to by the instructor involved. The Def. grade may be removed when a new grade is established; the method of establishing the new grade is a matter between the instructor and the Registrar.

\*\* The letter grade N is given when a student registered for a course and did not write the examination and did not withdraw before the set date. An N is considered an F for purposes of scholastic standing.

SM 2918/66 *Sam S. ...*

While some fine structure is essential for the purposes of the Scholarship and Awards Committee the four point scale is certainly the most commonly used in North America and there appears to be some virtue in helping our students to appear reasonably "normal" on their transcripts.

(b) Will it not be puzzling, to students as well as others, if a man with 5(A+) comes out with the same grade points as a man with 5(A)?

To some degree, it may be puzzling, but no more so than that the very same thing occurs under every conceivable system of grading except percentage points or some similar ultra-fine structure. All this proposal does is draw attention to this possibility and give a lift to the student with 5(A+) which would not be possible with mere A's. In addition, the man with 5(A+) does appear ahead of the man with 5(A) on the Scholarship list.

B. A grade point average is computed by the Registrar by dividing the total number of grade points by the total number of semester hours.

Example:

	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>	<u>Grade Point</u>
Course 1	A	4	3	12
Course 2	A+	4	3	12
Course 3	B-	3	3	9
Course 4	C	2	3	6
Course 5	F	0	$\frac{4}{16}$	$\frac{0}{39}$
			Grade Point Average	$\frac{39}{16} = 2.44$

C. Standings for the Semester

The Committee recommends that no rigid determination be made of the grade point average required for First Class, Second Class and Pass Standing at this time. The Committee recommends that for the time being the Scholarship and Awards Committee determine for its own purposes and for the purposes of government awards what the cut-off points are for each semester.

D. Credit for the Semester

The Committee recommends that any semester hours credit gained by granted to the student regardless of the standing in the course, or number of courses passed, or the grade point average.

E. Standings required for continuance at the University

The Committee recommends that students receiving a grade point average less than 2.0 be placed on "probation" and that further action to be taken in such cases be determined by the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standings.

History 4 (Cont'd.)

F. Standings Required for Graduation

The Committee recommends that the minimum requirement for graduation be a grade point average of 2.0 computed on the courses used for credit towards the degree, and in addition there may be further requirements established by departments for their major and honors program.

- G. The Committee was asked by the Committee of Heads to make a recommendation regarding the re-writing of papers. The Committee recommends that, except in the case of a Def. grade, a student not be allowed to re-write (or write, in the case of receiving an N grade) a paper unless he re-registers for the course and participates in the course as required by the instructor.

Respectfully submitted,

G. L. Bursill-Hall (Sub.B.E. Newton  
- Arts)

P. Copes - Arts

R.J.C. Harper - Education

K. E. Rieckhoff - Science

D. P. Robertson - Chairman (Registrar)

S. Stratton - Education

D. G. Tuck - Science

July 18, 1966.

SM 29/11/66

*Edmund H. ...*

HISTORY 5

TO: Senate

FROM: Faculty of Arts

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE GRADING SYSTEM PROPOSED BY THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EXAMINATION GRADING AND SCHOLASTIC STANDING.

Amendment 1: It is proposed that Columns 1 and 2 of the Committee's proposal be changed to read as follows:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Pts. for Internal Use</u>
A+	4.33 (or 4.3)
A	4.0
A-	3.66 (or 3.7)
B+	3.33 (or 3.3)
B	3.0
B-	2.66 (or 2.7)
C+	2.33 (or 2.3)
C	2.0
C-	1.66 (or 1.7)
D+	1.33 (or 1.3)
D	1.0
D-	0.66 (or 0.7)
F	0
Def *	0
N **	0

\* The letter grade, Def., will be given when a physician's certificate or other document substantiating a request for a deferment on medical or compassionate grounds is received by the Instructor within four days of the date on which the examination was to have been written. The Def. grade may be removed when a new grade is established; the method of establishing the new grade is a matter between the instructor and the Registrar.

\*\* The letter grade N is given when a student registered for a course and did not write the examination and did not withdraw before the set date. An N is considered an F for purposes of scholastic standing.

Amendment 2: Add the letter grade I (Incomplete) to Column 1, making it a grade to be given at the discretion of the teacher and to be converted automatically into an F (by the Registrar) after an allotted period of time.

(Passed by the Faculty of Arts at its meeting of April 21, 1966).

July 18, 1966.

II. Credit for the Semester

All credit earned will be granted, regardless of the grade point average for the semester.

III. Standing Required for Continuance

Students receiving a Grade point average less than 2.0 on the semester's results will be placed on probation. Further action to be taken in each individual case will be decided by the Senate Committee on Admissions & Standings.

GRADUATION

I. The minimum requirement for graduation is a Grade point average of 2.0, computed on the courses used for credit towards the degree. In addition, there are further requirements specified by each department for its major or honours program.

II. Each candidate for a degree must make formal application for graduation at least seven weeks before the end of the semester in which he will complete the requirements for the degree. Special forms for this purpose are provided by the Registrar's Office.

III. The list of successful candidates will be released upon approval by the Senate.

HISTORY 6

STIION FRASER UNIVERSITY

SUPPLEMENT TO THE 1966-67 CALENDAR

The Senate approved on May 2, 1966, a new grading scale and various modifications to the General Regulations to be effective immediately.

The changes are incorporated in the enclosed re-write of the 1966-67 Calendar, pages 37 and 38.

D.P. Robertson  
Registrar

May 11, 1966

SM 2918/66

GENERAL REGULATIONS  
Examinations

1. Final examinations for courses that require them normally will be held during the last two weeks of each semester.

2. Each student is expected to participate in work assigned during the semester. The marks obtained for work during the semester may be used in determining the final standing for the course. A passing grade in any examination does not ensure a passing grade for the course.

3. Students who miss examinations because of illness or for compassionate reasons should obtain a physician's certificate or other supporting documents in order to obtain consideration in the course. Such documents should be filed with the Registrar within four days of the date on which the examination was to have been written.

4. Except in the case of receiving a DEF grade a student may not re-write (or write, in the case of receiving an N grade) a paper unless he registers for the course and participates in the course as required by the instructor.

5. Re-Reading of Answer Papers

a. Any request for the re-reading of an answer paper must be made in writing to the Registrar within ten days following the announcement of the examination results and must be accompanied by a fee of \$5.00 for each paper.

b. Students who are prospective applicants should remember that papers are checked carefully, and those for which the mark is a failure will have been re-read. Applicants should state clearly their reasons for believing that the mark does not represent a true evaluation of their efforts.

c. Except under special circumstances, not more than two papers from any one set of semester examinations may be re-read.

d. If, on re-reading a paper, it is found that the mark is increased by such an amount as to raise a failing

grade to a passing grade, or from one grade to the next higher classification, the fee will be refunded.

STANDING AND CREDIT

1. Grading Scale

a. The mark for each course will be entered on the student's record by a letter grade and a numerical equivalent called a grade point, as follows:

A+) 4	B+) 3	C-) 2	D) 1	F) 0
A) 3	B) 2	C) 1	D-) 0	* DEF) 0
	B-) 1			** N) 0

\* The letter grade DEF will be given when a physician's certificate or other document substantiating a request for deferment on medical or compassionate grounds is received by the Registrar within four days of the date from which the examination was to have been written or when the instructor in the course wishes to defer submitting a final mark pending completion of further work from the student. The awarding of the letter grade DEF will be subject to agreement between the Registrar and the instructor, as will be the method of establishing the new grade.

\*\* The letter grade N is given when a student registered for a course and did not write the examination and did not withdraw before the set date. An N is considered an F for purposes of scholastic standing.

b. A grade point average for the semester is computed by dividing the total number of grade points by the total number of semester hours.

Example: Letter Grade

	Letter Grade	Numerical Value	Semester Hours	Grade Point
Course 1	A	4	3	12
Course 2	A+	4	3	12
Course 3	B-	3	3	9
Course 4	C	2	3	6
Course 5	F	0	4	0
			<u>16</u>	<u>39</u>

Grade Point Average  $\frac{39}{16}$

= 2.44

SM 29/18/66

*Em. J. ...*

HISTORY 7

TO: SENATE

FROM: DEAN OF ARTS

June 22, 1966

RE: ARTS FACULTY REQUEST FOR MODIFICATION OF THE GRADING SYSTEM

1. At a recent meeting, the Faculty was notified by me of the Senate's acceptance of the Grading System proposed by the President's Committee which was specially set up to make recommendations on this subject.
2. The Faculty had already expressed, by a marginal vote (9 to 8), its preference for a more detailed Grading System, and a correspondingly more detailed system of numerical equivalents. This preference was considered, but over-ruled, in the Senate meeting referred to in (1) above, which adopted the recommendations of the President's Committee.
3. When it was notified by me of the Senate's decision, the Faculty entered into a further discussion of the Grading System, and by a vote of 25 to 1 urged Senate to reintroduce the alphabetical grades of A- and C+. The Arts Faculty was otherwise ready to accept the details of the Grading System adopted by Senate.
4. If we consider the recent comparative study of student grades made by Charles Hamilton, the difficulty of interpreting broad grades (A, B, C, D etc.) becomes immediately apparent. It exaggerates the gulf between B and C performances by omitting the simple fact that many of the B's probably verged towards B-, while many C's verged towards C+. In short, most students in a course may really have fallen in an unseen, because unrecognized, category which came between B and C.
5. The Faculty of Arts felt that the omission of A- and C+ was particularly unfortunate because these are perhaps the most critically useful grades: C+ might even be the most used grade.
6. The awarding of scholarships, bursaries, etc. frequently requires some fine distinction to be made between candidates who are in many other respects of almost identical achievement.
7. In conclusion, the Arts Faculty feels that the top grade of A and the much-used grade of C badly require sub-divisions. An unqualified A (A+ was thought to be a contradiction rather than a qualification) will inhibit its use in the many instances when a student's work attains some A quality without being squarely A throughout: an unqualified C will produce similar difficulties for the marker, thus lumping together students who almost made a B grade with students who did really poorly.

History 7 (Cont'd.)

- 2 -

Scale Adopted

A+  
A  
  
B+  
B  
B-  
  
C  
C-  
  
D  
  
F  
Def.  
N

Scale Recommended

A+  
A  
A-  
  
B+  
B  
B-  
  
C+  
C  
C-  
  
D  
  
F  
Def.  
N

A.B. Cunningham  
Chairman

July 18, 1966.

SM 29 18 166

Exam. Meeting  
3-A-2

TO: SENATE

FROM: REGISTRAR

RE: GRADING

DATE: JULY 18, 1966

The attached memoranda were among those received by me following a request to all faculty for an expression of opinion on the Grading question.

D. P. Robertson

Attached - 5 memoranda

MEMORANDUM

10 1966

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

To: D.P. Robertson,  
Registrar.  
Subject: Grading Systems.

From: P. Copes,  
Economics and Commerce Department.  
Date: July 11th, 1966.

Page 1 of 2

In response to your memorandum of July 11th, I am attaching a copy of a memorandum I prepared some months ago. I feel it is still relevant.

A few additional comments are, perhaps, in order. An important consideration is, I believe, that a grading system should provide for the maximum degree of realistic discrimination amongst the results of students. The fact that the system I propose allows for a discrimination by intervals of five percentage points (with an open class interval at the top where there are few students) is significant here. A simple percentage point grading system is unrealistic in that few markers can really discriminate between results that are only one percentage point apart. But I believe that most markers can distinguish results that are five percentage points apart. In other words, while we cannot distinguish properly between results of 72 and 73 per cent, we can between 72 and 77 per cent. Of course, there will always be borderline cases between any two grades. This is a difficulty that no grading system can circumvent. But in a finer grading system the consequences of misplacing a student by one grade are not so severe. There is not that much difference between a B and a B- or between a B- and a C+. In a coarser grading system the consequences of misplacing a student by one grade are much more severe. It matters a great deal whether a student gets a second class (B) or pass (C).

A major advantage of a finer grading system is that it provides for a much more accurate calculation of the average results for a student over a year or over his university career. In a coarse grading system it is quite common for a student of lower performance to come up with a higher average than a student of higher performance. For instance, a student who makes consistently a high B will show a lower average than a more erratic student who usually rates only a low B but gets a single A somewhere in his record. This cannot happen if a high B student is always credited with a B+ mark and a low B student with a B-.

Finally, I should like to reiterate the point I made previously that the system I have proposed is easily reconciled with or converted to almost any one of the other grading systems commonly in use. (See the table in my memorandum of January 27th.)

P. Copes

SM 29/19/66

*Edna & Grading*

UNION FRASER UNIVERSITY

RECEIVED

MEMORANDUM

JAN 19 1966

To: Dr. P. D. McTaggart-Cowan, Deans,  
Mr. D. P. Robertson, Department Heads,  
Subject: Grading Scale.

From: P. Copes,  
Dept. of Economics and Commerce,  
Date: January 27th, 1966.

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE  
FILE

*Page 2 of 2*

I would like to suggest the adoption of a grading scale shown in the left hand column of the table below. Its advantage, as I see it, is that it can be reconciled with, and converted to, almost any one of the other systems commonly used. Comparisons are shown in the table below.

A+	First class	A	85+	A+	4.5	4	
A				A-			4
B+	Second class	B	75-79	B+	3.5	3	
B				B			3
B-				B-			2.5
C+	Pass	C	60-64	C+	2	2	
C				C			1.5
D		D	50-54	D	1	1	
F	Fail	F	under 50	F	0	0	

Note: I have just received an alternative proposal by Dr. Evans which has been sent out to Department Heads. While it is close to the proposal put forward in this memorandum, it differs in that it has one category less in the second class and uses minor symbols rather than plus symbols. I feel the extra category in second class is warranted in terms of the range of ability represented by the second class and to preserve a five percentage point interval in the conventional percentage scale. I would also prefer the use of plus symbols instead of minus symbols to produce a psychological lift rather than a depressant. Also the distribution of marks tends to leave considerably more students at the lower end of any class than at the upper end. In a system that would give a minor symbol for the lower half of the range of marks in a class the majority of students are likely to end up in minus categories. This, I feel, would tend to present an unduly pessimistic picture.

## MEMORANDUM

To Mr. D. P. Robertson, Registrar

From H. Hammerly, Med. Lange

Subject Grading System

Date July 13, 1966

Page 1 of 1

I think most faculty members agree to the idea of a double grading system with a fine scale for internal use and a coarse scale for external use. (Making the fine scale optional should satisfy those who are against it.)

The problem with the fine scale proposed by the President's Committee is that it lacks two very useful grades (A- and C+) and that it is asymmetrical.

1. The grade A- is very useful because it tells the student that unless he works a little harder in the next course in a series (or, for that matter, in that same course, since whatever grading system is adopted will by necessity be used in prelims and midterms too), his grade may drop to B.

2. The grade C+ similarly encourages students to work a little harder through the hope of getting into the B category.

3. Both A- and C+ should be useful to the Committee on Scholarships, as a student who barely made an A is less deserving of a scholarship than one who has a strong A, and a student who almost made a B is more deserving than one who received just a fair C.

Hammerly

SM 29/18/66  
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

*Exam & Grading*

MEMORANDUM

To: <u>Dr. C. D. Nelson,</u> <u>Dr. K. E. Rieckhoff</u> <u>Dr. E. M. Shoemaker</u> <u>Mr. D. P. Robertson</u>	From: <u>Ronald Harrop</u> <u>Head, Mathematics Department</u>
Subject: <u>EXAMINATION GRADING</u> <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>	Date: <u>July 12, 1966,</u>

*Page 1 of 2*

I am writing this memorandum in my capacity as a member of Faculty and not as Head of the Mathematics Department, even though I know that the views I am expressing are also held by quite a number of members of the Department. In consequence the memorandum must be considered purely as a personal one.

It is with regret that I notice that the Senate has now rescinded its previous decision to accept a grading structure which, although not entirely satisfactory to many members of the University, did at least hold out a hope of being a sensible compromise. During both the fall and spring semesters I was a lecturer in one of the large classes and as such was responsible for the grading of the students concerned. In common with many members of the Science Faculty I did not use fine structure grades in the fall. On the other hand I used the new grading, with its semi-fine structure, in the spring. My policy has been to have the marks assembled by the persons marking the papers, to check a reasonable number of papers to see if my intuitive idea of where the grade divisions should lie seemed sensible, to fix course grades for the students purely on a total mark basis, noting all borderline cases and cases, if any, where the grade did not seem sensible to the tutorial instructors (all this was done in collaboration with the tutorial instructors), and to check at home all borderline cases and other doubtful cases which had arisen. I felt that if any difference was to be considered as existing between, say, C and C+ or B and B+ then the C/C+ B/B+ borderlines and other similar borderlines must be considered as significant. It was found that the number of such cases which arose last semester were so high that it was impossible to give to these cases quite as much consideration as was given to corresponding cases in the fall and I was left at the end of the grading with the feeling that although I had only about 500 students in the spring to deal with instead of 800 in the fall there was more likelihood of injustice having been done to students in the spring semester than in the fall semester. I feel that it would be impossible to consider seriously the full fine structure grading wanted by some Arts Departments.

I feel very reluctant to spend the time repeating arguments in favour of the four points structure, since I think they are well known by science representatives on the Senate. They include, for example, the fact that by the time a student graduates he will be able to have a credit point total based on an integer scale between 240 and 480 (120 semester hours of credit at C or A average). It seems to me that this scale should be fine enough for anyone. What

SM 29/8/66

Exam & Grading

- 2 -

Page 2 of 2

the Arts Departments seem to me to be doing is imposing a superfine structure on a fine structure.

In conclusion I would repeat that I support the compromise proposal of the President's Committee, although I find that supporting it is very much against my personal preferred judgement of what is best. If, however, the Arts Departments really feel that they need the fine structure and are not prepared under any circumstances to accept a compromise, then I feel the Science Departments should again press for the four point structure, even though this will cause administrative difficulties in assessing students for scholarships, etc. I would assume that transcripts would then have to indicate that the grade structure was different for arts courses and for science courses.

KL

## SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

SM 29/18/66  
Memorandum*Exam & Grading*

To Heads of Departments  
Faculty members of Senate  
Members of the Faculty  
of Pure Science

From Dr. K.E. Rieckhoff  
Dr. D.G. Tuck

Subject Examination Grading  
Recommendations

Date 12 July 1966

*Page 1 of 3*

During the Spring semester, a committee consisting of representatives of the three Faculties under the chairmanship of the Registrar met a number of times in order to establish a marking system to which all parties could agree, and which could then be used throughout the University. The Pure Science representatives were K.E. Rieckhoff and D.G. Tuck.

The main area of disagreement at the outset of these discussions was that the Pure Science Faculty as a whole favoured a mark system involving only 4 passing grades, while the Faculty of Arts felt the necessity to work with a finer set of divisions, in which each of the main grades would be divided into three. Some arguments were also advanced for a percentage point system, which requires effectively 100 grades. After a series of long and even-tempered discussions, a compromise involving a seven-point scale was recommended to Senate, who accepted this at the June meeting with only minor modifications. At a later meeting however this decision was rescinded, and Senate has decided to re-open the whole matter. It is of course natural to enquire why this unusual reversal occurred, at a time when there appears to be enough business requiring Senate's attention without going over matters on which a decision has been reached. The answer to this question seems to be that the Faculty of Arts now feels that the only compromise which it can accept is one in which the other faculties shall use the system which Arts prefers, irrespective of the views of the other faculties or of the committee on which their representatives committed them to an equitable, but now apparently unpalatable, decision.

The operation of the system which the committee compromised upon has been admirably set out in the memorandum which the Registrar circulated in April, and there does not seem to be any point in discussing this further. It is however worth looking at the aim of a marking scheme, and at the extent to which these aims can be met under any system, including the 4-point scheme which is in operation at many universities on this continent.

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Exam & Grading

- 2 -

12 July 1966

Examination Grading Recommendations (Cont'd.)

Page 2 of 3

It seems to us that one should look for a system which

1. is fair to the students, in that excellence is recognized and inability is not rewarded;
2. allows grades to be made known to the students within a reasonable time after the completion of examinations;
3. does not involve the faculty in a disproportionate effort;
4. can be understood by people outside this university, and allows relatively simple comparisons to be made with systems which are in operation at other universities;
5. does not discriminate in any way against students in any Faculty or Department by allowing different standards to be applied in different parts of the university.

The system recommended to Senate by the committee seems to us to meet these requirements, and has the additional advantage that it allows differing degrees of fineness to be applied to grades inside the university and those supplying information about our students to other people.

It should also be realised that there are two things which no marking scheme can achieve. Firstly, no scheme in itself will guarantee fairness to students, for the simple reason that fairness resides in the consciences of the faculty and cannot be built a priori into any scheme, no matter how many sub-divisions are applied. Secondly, no system which this or any other university can devise will enable our graduates to go out with a single parameter symbolic description which fixes the man concerned for all time in one bracket or another. Experience will allow one to recall innumerable cases in which the type of degree which a student is awarded is not a true reflection of the man's potential, but merely a measure of his ability or inability to pass the sort of examinations which are set at the university he attended. The university will delude itself if it believes that all our "A"-students will be accepted without question as the best of their generation, or that all our failures are destined to pass a life of ignominy as the result of unsuccessful years spent at SFU. It must also be obvious from experience that in practice the opinion of the man's professors, expressed in confidence, is the most important factor which decides for or against in the eyes of a potential employer or graduate school.

In sum, then, we believe that the search for a scheme which is sufficiently elaborate to appear perfect and

..5.. /

12 July, 1966

Examination Grading Recommendations (Cont'd.)

Page 3 of 3

emotionally fair on paper is seeking pie in the sky, and we would do better to look for something which can be operated inside and outside SFU to the greatest good of the greatest number. Although the Faculty of Pure Science believed, and to a large extent still believes, that a 4-point scheme is the best, the Faculty resolved to accept the compromise which was worked out. It is perhaps naive to be surprised that others are not prepared to sink a small amount of principle for the sake of overall unity, but we hope that even at this stage the original compromise proposal can be accepted.

*SM 2918/66*  
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

*Exam + Grading*

To..... Mr. D.P. Robertson ..... Registrar Subject.....	From..... Robert J.C. Harper, Head ..... Behavioral Science Foundations Date..... 15 July, 1966
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*Page 1 of 1*

I understand that Senate has decided to re-examine the whole question of the grading system. I would like to join with Doctors Rieckhoff and Tuck in protesting against this action. It is my belief that the committee chaired by you, exhausted and were exhausted by, consideration of all of the arguments for different grading systems. The grading procedure recommended by your committee represents the best compromise possible and I would like to see an extended trial of the new system.

*Robert J. Harper*

RJCH:rb

RECEIVED

JUL 15 1966

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE  
FILE

SM 29 18 166

*Exam to Grading*

TO: SENATE  
FROM: REGISTRAR  
SUBJECT: GRADING

PAPER 3A  
July 22, 1966  
File: 7-A-28

Attached are two additional papers received from the Faculty on  
the Grading System.

D. P. Robertson  
Secretary to Senate

SF  
MF

SM 29/18/66  
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

*Exam. & Grading*

To Mr. D.P. Robertson,

From D. Meakin,

Registrar.

Department of Chemistry.

Subject Examination Grading.

Date 14th July 1966.

Since the compromise solution worked out by the joint faculty committee, and initially agreed upon by all parties, has now been rejected, I would like to reiterate some of the arguments presented in favour of the four-point grading system.

To me, the most important argument is that with present methods of evaluating students, particularly in large classes where a number of people including instructors and teaching assistants are involved, any finer grading system would simply not have any statistical significance. I say this in spite of the fact that science examinations are usually much more objective and can readily be given numerical grades. With essay examinations, I believe it completely impossible to give an absolute grade accurate to within 5%, which is what the 10 point system implies, and anyone who believes otherwise is deluding himself.

regarding fairness to students, any system is only as fair as the individual faculty members is prepared to make it. Most people in fact usually give the student the benefit of any doubt, and give them the higher grade. Here the 4 point system is obviously to the advantage of the student since he is elevated by a greater amount.

*D. Meakin*

D. Meakin,  
Assistant Professor.

DM:mp

RECEIVED

JUL 19 1966  
REGISTRAR'S OFFICE  
FILE

MEMORANDUM

To: THE REGISTRAR  
c.c. Prof. Baker (English Dept.)  
Subject: Grade Structures - a suggestion.

From: G. Guy Whieldon  
Modern Languages  
Date: July 21, 1966.

The following is based on the system used at Virginia Military Institute, where I taught before coming to S.F.U. and where it works quite well.

PROPOSAL

1. Letter grades to be abolished for internal use, and replaced by numerical grades. The final grade to be out of 100, instructors weighting the various elements of their courses according to individual or departmental policy.

2. Transcripts for external use, e.g. transfers to other universities or entry to graduate schools, to be expressed in the conventional letter form:

90 - 100 = A  
80 - 89 = B  
70 - 79 = C  
60 - 69 = D  
under 60 = F

3. For internal purposes only, a score of 50-59 could be deemed a conditional pass, to be validated only if the student achieved at least 75 in the next higher course where applicable.

4. Students transferring in could be credited, as experience dictates, with either the minimum or the median score for each category (e.g. a "C" student would get either 70 or 75).

ARGUMENT.

1. The requisite fine grades would be instantly available for such purposes as merit awards - or the opposite: This applies as much to the student as to the faculty and administration - he could evaluate with great accuracy his current standing in individual subjects or overall.

2. Instructors who prefer a "coarse" system could achieve their end by simply approximating marks to the nearest five or ten.

SM 29 18/66  
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

*Exam & Grades*

From.....

Date..... July 21, 1966.

Subject..... page 2-

3. "Curving" of results could be achieved if desired by multiplying actual scores by a suitable factor. The mathematics involved are so simple that even Arts Instructors could handle them !

4. The "Conditional Pass" suggestion is admittedly not an integral part of this proposal, but it is connected with marks and should, I feel, be given consideration, perhaps as a discretionary procedure, to be invoked only when the bad performance is known to be atypical of the student, and the result of genuine distress, hardship or illness. I am convinced that such a scheme, calling on the student to redeem himself by extra endeavour, is preferable to the alternative of "giving" him a "D", in the hope, too often unjustified, that he will do better next time.

*G. Guy Whieldon*

G. Guy Whieldon  
Instructor in French  
Modern Languages

SM 29/18/66

*Exam questions*  
3-A-3

TO: Senate

FROM: Registrar

RE: Comments on the Grading Question

DATE: July 18, 1966

1. Too often, I think, arguments on the grading system ignore the fact that the President's Committee recommendations allow for very fine distinctions to be drawn between one student's average and another's. For example the grade point averages of students shown on the attached sheet take the distinctions to two places of decimal. The actual grades received by four of the students is also attached.
2. The attached grade sheet from another University, employing the percentage scale, illustrates the fact that for the purpose of sorting out student averages, the percentage scale is not much better than the grade point average system. Thus if a coarser system had been used there would have been no difference in the class of standing (they would all have remained first class students) and they would still be ranked in the same order. However, to my knowledge, if you wanted to know the difference in merit of the students on the sheet you would have to ask their professors. The University recognized the imperfections of the 100 point scale in as much as it did not release the actual percentage grade to the student, but converted the grades to A, B, C, D, with a letter grade for the overall average. In this way it was possible to protect the faculty from being hounded by students who missed a first or a second or a scholarship, or whatever, by one or two marks. You will notice the promotions committee had to fiddle marks for the three students at the bottom of the page to get them into the first class range. This was done frequently when the committee, from its knowledge of the student, felt he was clearly a 'first class' student, regardless of what the grades said.
3. I have sat on graduate admissions committees for the past six year. One of those committees was dealing with one of the largest graduate student increases in Canada. The graduate enrolment was over 500. Other people may have different experiences, but it is worth commenting that I cannot recall a single instance when the committee felt in need of a finer breakdown of the applicant's grades. A large number of the applicants were from the U.S.A. (4 point scale) and from the U.K. and Commonwealth (class of degree is the limit of the detail one gets). Graduate admissions committees, in my experience, are more interested in the class of degree and letters of reference from professors than they are in whether the applicant got a B- or a C+ on a second year course two years ago.

Attachment - 3 sheets

D. P. Robertson

SCHOLARSHIP G.P.A. REPORT

*Edna S. ...*

65300-1522	COLLINS	TERRYL	R	4.23
65300-0323	ALKE	JANICE	M	4.20
65301-4703	JOHNSTONE	JOYCE	J	4.20
65300-1863	DISNEY	GLENN	W	4.18
65300-7135	POPE	PETER	M	4.16
65300-5039	KRUETZER	MARY	A	4.15
65300-9514	WONG	MING	D	4.13
65301-1047	BOYLE	SHARON	R	4.10
65300-2734	FAIRMAN	BLAINE	A	4.05
65301-5449	MANDERS	PHILIP	J	4.04
65300-0347	ALLISON	LINDA	J	4.03
65300-4760	JUERGENS	DIETER	H	4.00
65300-5773	MOESER	SHANNON	D	4.00
65300-7621	RUNNELS	BRENDA	J	4.00
65300-9042	VITINS	PETER		4.00
65300-98	ZINNER	HARALD	H K	4.00
65301-0923	BETTS	JOHN	E	3.98
65300-5021	KORBIN	DONN	G	3.95
65300-5370	MERCHANT	VIVIAN	E	3.95
65300-9626	WYMAN	VIRGINIA	J	3.95
65302-9680	YANDLE	SHARONROSE	H	3.95
65300-1016	BOLT	JOHN		3.93

R. L. C. ...

SMO 29/8/66

Exam Grading  
NUMERICAL  
EQUIVALENTS

					GRADE	Wts.	Grade	Wts.
GENERAL PHYSICS 1	PHYS	101	3	A+	3	4.5	13.5	
FUNDAMENTAL MATHEMATICS 2	MATH	112	3	A+	3	4.5	13.5	
GENERAL CHEMISTRY 2	CHEM	102	3	A+	3	4.5	13.5	
CHEMISTRY LABORATORY 2	CHEM	112	2	A+	2	4.5	9.0	
GEOGRAPHY OF EUROPE	GEOG	161	3	A	3	4.0	12.0	
FUNDAMENTAL MATH 1	MATH	111	3	A	3	4.0	12.0	
INTRO. GEN. CHEM 1	CHEM	101	3	A	3	4.0	12.0	
GENETICS	BISC	202	3	A	3	4.0	12.0	
FIELDS OF PSYCHOLOGY	PSYC	101	3	A	3	4.0	12.0	
INTRO. CHEM. LAB. 1	CHEM	111	2	A	2	4.0	8.0	

GRADE POINT AVERAGE 4.20

65301-5449 PHILIP J MANDERS

FUNDAMENTAL MATHEMATICS 2	MATH	112	3	A+	3	4.5	13.5
GENERAL CHEMISTRY 2	CHEM	102	3	A+	3	4.5	13.5
GENERAL PHYSICS 2	PHYS	102	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
METHODOLOGY IN PSYCHOLOGY	PSYC	102	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
GENERAL PHYSICS 1	PHYS	101	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
FUNDAMENTAL MATH 1	MATH	111	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
INTRO. GEN. CHEM 1	CHEM	101	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
FIELDS OF PSYCHOLOGY	PSYC	101	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
CHEMISTRY LABORATORY 2	CHEM	112	2	A	2	4.0	8.0
INTRO. CHEM. LAB. 1	CHEM	111	2	B	2	3.0	6.0

GRADE POINT AVERAGE 4.04

65300-0347 LINDA J ALLISON

GENERAL PHYSICS 2	PHYS	102	3	A+	3	4.5	13.5
GENERAL CHEMISTRY 2	CHEM	102	3	A+	3	4.5	13.5
INTRODUCTION TO ANALYSIS	MATH	221	2	A+	2	4.5	9.0
CALCULUS 2	MATH	214	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
GEOGRAPHY OF EUROPE	GEOG	161	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
GENERAL PHYSICS 1	PHYS	101	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
ALGEBRA AND GEOMETRY	MATH	231	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
CALCULUS 1	MATH	213	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
INTRODUCTION TO ECOLOGY	BISC	204	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
INTRODUCTORY RUSSIAN	RUSS	100	3	B	3	3.0	9.0

GRADE POINT AVERAGE 4.03

65300-5773 SHANNON D MOESER

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY	PSYC	201	3	A+	3	4.5	13.5
PSYCH APPIN OF STATISTICS	PSYC	204	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY	PSYC	203	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
SOCIAL STRUCTURE	PSA	121	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCES	PHIL	205	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
INTRO. TO STATISTICS	MATH	101	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
METHODOLOGY IN PSYC.	PSYC	102	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
FIELDS OF PSYCHOLOGY	PSYC	101	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
GENERAL GEOGRAPHY	GEOG	101	3	A	3	4.0	12.0
SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY	PSA	101	3	B+	3	3.5	10.5

GRADE POINT AVERAGE 4.00

SM 2918/66

UNIVERSITY OF TEXE  
70 AGE SCALE

Student	Average	Math 130	Math 131	Math 132	Math 230	Phys 131	Engl 130	Chem 131	Psych 110	130	131	Result
JA	79.0	91	80	89		81	61	72				Passed
LE	75.8	96	91	87		66	70	72				Passed
WF	78.5	91	86	81		74	61	71				Passed
LJ	83.0	91	88	92	50X	75	68	64				Passed
RC	78.3	83	86	92		86	54	69				Passed
JE	78.3	80	82	99		83	62	64				Passed
RA	77.8	85	88	95		77	69	62				Passed
RJ	77.5	99	84	71		64	76	78				Passed
DW	77.5	92	78	90		71	68	66				Passed
BD	77.5	90	91	79	71X	70	64	71				Passed
PH	77.2	90	72			79	72	67	80			Passed
AC	76.8	82	85	85		76	59	76				Passed
J	76.7	86	73	91		69	69	72				Passed
JJA	76.3	96	72	81		73	64	72				Passed
JG	76.3	77	73			81	75	77				Passed
JE	76.3	88	91	65		74	66	74				Passed
LA	76.2	89	78	78		80	70	62				Passed
DB	76.0	89	69	73		80	70	75				Passed
DG	75.8	79	77	99		65	65	70				Passed
HJ	75.7	100				69	73	72				Passed
TW	75.7	82	73	93		68	70	68				Passed
GM	75.3	80	80			74	75	69				Passed
BD	75.2	82	72	88		72	67	70				Passed
AG	75.0	89	89	75		62	72	63				Passed
GB	75.0	84	78			85	57	72				Passed
KL	74.7	82	76	74		61	5	73				Passed
CA	74.7	88	73	89		60	68	72				Passed

RANGE:  
 A: 75-100  
 B: 66-74  
 C: 60-65  
 D: 50-59