

For release September 18, 2006

Grading Results for 2005-06

The Faculty Committee on Grading today announced the results of the first two years of implementation of Princeton's new grading policy. The news comes in two parts: a comparison of grading results for 2004-05 and 2005-06 (the first two years under the new policy) with grading patterns in 2002-03 and 2003-04 (the two years before the faculty adopted the new policy); and the relationship between the new grading policy and the post-graduation fortunes of Princeton students. As for the first, the committee said, "The faculty has succeeded in sustaining the overall accomplishments achieved in the first year of the new policy in bringing grades in undergraduate courses under better control." As for the second, "We see no evidence of detrimental effects from the new grading policy on the fortunes of Princetonians in the various external marketplaces in which they compete for jobs and graduate and professional school admissions."

Princeton's new grading expectations, adopted by the faculty in April 2004, posit a common grading standard for every academic department and program, under which A's shall account for less than 35 percent of the grades given in undergraduate courses and less than 55 percent of the grades given in junior and senior independent work. The standard by which the grading record of a department or program will be evaluated is the percentage of A's given over the previous three years.

The grading policy is still too new for the Grading Committee to report three-year averages, but it is possible to compare two-year averages: 2004-06 (again, the first two years under the new policy) vs. 2002-04 (the two years before the adoption of the new policy). In 2004-06, A's (A+, A, A-) accounted for 41.0 percent of grades in undergraduate courses, down from 47.0 percent in 2002-04. In humanities departments, A's accounted for 46.4 percent of the grades in undergraduate courses in 2004-06, down from 56.6 percent in 2002-04. In the social sciences, there were 37.9 percent A grades in 2004-06, down from 43.7 percent in the previous two years. In the natural sciences, there were 35.8 percent A grades in 2004-06, compared to 36.3 percent in 2002-04. In engineering, the figures were 42.7 percent A's in 2004-06, down from 50.1 percent in the previous two years.

"While there is clearly more work to be done," the Grading Committee said, "we are heading in the right direction, and we are encouraged by the progress made thus far." The committee will be working closely with individual departments over the course of the fall semester, both to understand the factors that have contributed to success in

implementing the new grading expectations, and to gain information about the challenges that may be impeding further progress.

Turning to the impact of the new grading policy on the post-graduation fortunes of Princetonians, the Grading Committee observed, “We can report with a high degree of confidence that there are no discernible ill effects from the University’s more rigorous, more responsible grading policy.” The data that follow provide the evidence on which the committee based its assessment.

EMPLOYMENT

The Office of Career Services’ annual Career Plans Survey Reports yield data that can be used to compare the fortunes of members of the Class of 2004, the last class to graduate before the new grading standards went into effect, with those of members of the Classes of 2005 and 2006 (2005 had senior-year grades given under the new grading standards; 2006 had junior- and senior-year grades given under the new standards). Note, of course, that many other factors affect these data, chief among them the state of the economy.

Full-time jobs in hand as of May of the senior year

<u>Class year</u>	<u>Number of graduating seniors</u>	<u>Percentage of graduating seniors</u>
2004	325	29.4
2005	365	32.5
2006	387	35.0

Intending to work; still seeking employment as of May of the senior year

<u>Class year</u>	<u>Number of graduating seniors</u>	<u>Percentage of graduating seniors</u>
2004	258	23.4
2005	249	22.2
2006	208	18.8

The following table presents a count of the number of graduating seniors in each class who had accepted full-time jobs at sixteen investment banks and consulting firms that employ significant numbers of new Princeton graduates (Accenture, Bain, Barclays Capital, Bear Stearns, Boston Consulting Group, Citigroup, Credit Suisse First Boston, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan/JP Morgan Chase, Lehman Brothers, McKinsey, Mercer Management, Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley, UBS). These data do not take account of hiring practices in these firms, which varied from year to year

depending on the state of the economy, the state of the financial services industry, and other factors. The numbers are as follows:

<u>Class year</u>	<u>Number of graduating seniors employed at 16 firms</u>
2004	115
2005	109
2006	152

GRADUATE STUDY

The Career Plans Survey Reports also yield data with respect to students pursuing graduate study in the year following graduation from Princeton. The following table presents a count of the number of graduating seniors in each class who had accepted places in Ph.D. programs at twenty-three universities (Berkeley, Cal Tech, Cambridge, Carnegie Mellon, Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Duke, Harvard, Illinois, Johns Hopkins, MIT, Michigan, NYU, Northwestern, Oxford, Penn, Princeton, Stanford, UCLA, UCSB, UCSD, Yale). The numbers are as follows:

<u>Class year</u>	<u>Number of graduating seniors entering Ph.D. programs at 23 universities</u>
2004	44
2005	57
2006	54

MEDICAL SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

The Office of Health Professions Advising reports annually on the fortunes of Princeton applicants to medical school. The following table presents the number and percentage of Princeton applicants accepted to medical school, as follows:

<u>Year of matriculation</u>	<u>Number of applicants accepted</u>	<u>Percentage of applicants accepted</u>
2004	106	88.5
2005	117	92.9
2006	107	95.0

LAW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Law school applications are submitted without the centralized University administration and oversight of the application process that occurs in medical school admissions. That means that it is not easy to report on the universe of Princetonians

applying to law school. Drawing on annual reports from the Law School Admissions Council, the University's Pre-Law Adviser reports a 25.9 percent admit rate (452 of 1,742) in 2003-04 for Princeton applicants to eighteen law schools that draw significant numbers of Princeton applications (American, Berkeley, BU, Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Duke, Georgetown, Harvard, Michigan, NYU, Northwestern, Penn, Stanford, Vanderbilt, UVA, William and Mary, Yale); in 2004-05, the admit rate for applicants to those same law schools was 29.8 percent (526 of 1,766). (These numbers include multiple applications.) The Pre-Law Adviser will have the 2005-06 numbers this winter.

“We will, of course, continue to track carefully the fortunes of Princetonians as they compete for jobs and admission to graduate and professional schools,” the Grading Committee said. “At present, with all caveats taken into account, and all limits in the data acknowledged, we find no evidence of any harm to Princeton undergraduates' further schooling and future careers.”

The Faculty Committee on Grading consists of six elected faculty members: Lynn Enquist, Molecular Biology; Michael Gordin, History; Martha Himmelfarb, Religion; Jaswinder Pal Singh, Computer Science; Anne-Marie Slaughter, Woodrow Wilson School; and T. Kyle Vanderlick, Chemical Engineering. The Dean of the Faculty, the Dean of the College, and the Registrar serve *ex officio*. The Committee's charge from the faculty is to assess the progress made in implementing the new grading expectations and to advise on ways of making further progress.