

SUMMARY OF GRADING INITIATIVES, 1998-2003

- February 1998: “Grading Patterns at Princeton,” first report to the faculty from the Faculty Committee on Examinations and Standing. Distributes detailed data, by department and division, showing the distribution of grades in undergraduate courses in five-year increments from AY 1973-74 through AY 1996-97. Asks the faculty “to join in taking collective responsibility for halting grade inflation and grade compression at Princeton.” Asks for reports from the departments on “steps the department is prepared to take to make fuller use of the grading scale.”
- September 1998: “Grading Patterns at Princeton: Strategies Suggested by the Departments; Proposals for Institutional Action; Next Steps,” second report to the faculty from the Faculty Committee on Examinations and Standing. Provides updated data on distribution of course grades. Reports inventory of suggestions from the departments about good grading practices. Describes proposals from the departments for changes in institutional policy and practice.
- January 1999: Registrar adds summary section to grade sheets where instructor is asked to list the number of final course grades in each grading category (A+, A, A-, B+, etc.).
- September 1999: “Grading Patterns at Princeton: Report III.” Provides updated data on distribution of course grades. Reports for the first time on the historical distribution of grades in independent work. Reviews discussions in Faculty Committee on Examinations and Standing about suggestions received from the departments and individual faculty members for changes in institutional policy and practice. Reviews discussion in Ivy+ Deans’ group about opportunities for parallel efforts with respect to grading.
- March 2000: Distribution to individual members of faculty of grading reports showing their grades in undergraduate courses in the context of departmental (or program) and University grading patterns. Reports to be distributed annually; chairs and program directors to receive copies for all of their faculty.
- April 2000: Ivy+ Deans group reviews detailed grading data in a common format for all eleven institutions.
- May 2000: Approval by the faculty of new institutional policy on the use of the A+. Henceforth, faculty members wishing to award the grade of A+ will be required to submit A+ statements explaining the unusual distinction of the work. The A+ will be counted for internal purposes as 4.0 (the same numerical value as the A).

- September 2000: “Grading Patterns at Princeton: Report IV.” Provides updated data on distribution of course and independent work grades.
- October 2000: Publication and circulation to faculty and AIs of *Guide to Good Grading Practices*, incorporating suggestions made by members of the faculty.
- September 2001: “Grading Patterns at Princeton: Report V.” Provides updated data on distribution of course and independent work grades.
- February 2003: “Truth in Grading: Proposals and Questions,” sixth report to the faculty from the Faculty Committee on Examinations and Standing. Reports distribution of grades in undergraduate courses and independent work for the five-year period F97-S02 in the context of historical data. Asks all departments to undertake a serious review of their grading practices. Asks for written accounts of departmental guidelines on grading.
- Spring 2003: Departments adopt written guidelines on grading.
- April 2003: Department chairs ask the Faculty Committee on Examinations and Standing to begin work on an institutional grading standard.
- December 2003: At the request of the department chairs, the Registrar begins reporting grades actually given by the faculty rather than grades received by students. (All previous grade reports show grades received by students, where P’s replace grades of C- or better in courses elected on a P/D/F basis.)

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