

MEMORANDUM

Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic)

To: Teri Shearer, Chair, Senate Committee on Academic Procedures (SCAP)
From: Alan Harrison, Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic)
Copy: Bo Wandschneider, Vice-Principal (IT Services)
Date: November 1, 2012
Subject: GPA Review Committee: Final Report

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Math



a.

- i. This would be helpful for ranking purposes and could be used by those departments that want to ensure a finer granularity in their rankings, specifically at the higher end.²

b.

- i. The cost to do this is prohibitive. Our best guess on this would be a minimum \$300k and six months.
- ii. Given that many departments have already transitioned to the GPA and do not submit a percentage grade, it was felt that it would be confusing to have letter

¹ There is a potential concern that if grades are appealed, only the GPA (Official Grade) will be changed. Linkages to the percentage grade may be lost. It was generally felt that this was an acceptable compromise as the numbers of these requests are likely small.

² As part of the due diligence for the implementation of People Soft, extensive simulations were run in the FAS using all student grades between 2006 and 2009. These were shared with various groups on campus, including Faculty Board, SCAP and the QUASR Executive Steering Committee. They showed no measurable difference in ranking between using Career GPA or Average Percentage. They also showed a high correlation between Career GPA and percentage averages, when correcting for failed classes. The Department of Physics looked at their student results specifically, under the GPA, and found significant compression at the higher end and there was concern about the ability to rank these students unless we preserve the percentage grades.

³ It should be noted that the current cohort of students feel strongly that more information on the transcript is better, and that if there is percentage information this should be included on the transcript.

grades for all classes, with percentages for only some classes. It was felt the transcript would



The main concerns being expressed by students and some faculty:

1. The move to a GPA has been impactful for some students. It has been most challenging for those bridging both the old and the new system.
2. There is no longer the ability to rank students. The granularity is lower, particularly at the high end.
3. There is an issue with cumulative GPA when students change degree programs. Should the cumulative GPA include all courses or do we need more careers?
4. Education uses a 4.0 scale instead of a 4.3 scale and this complicates the calculation of cumulative GPA's.

1. Did we fully understand the ramifications of the GPA and careers?
 - a. There was extensive discussion and research by various committees in 2008 and 2009 before reaching a decision on careers and GPA.
 - b. SCAP and Faculty Board made these decisions. They are documented and the process was transparent and consultative. There was also a Town Hall held on the use of GPA.
 - c. Real data were analysed to look at the impacts of moving to a GPA. Adjustments were made to items such as the 4.0 scale in response to the results.
 - d. Several questions and concerns have been raised, post go live, that are documented in Senate records.
2. Is there a flaw in the use of



