Resolution 01-07-S
Plus/Minus Grading System
February 12, 2007

PURPOSE: For the Student Government Association of Western Kentucky University to express its objection to the proposal of a plus/minus grading system.

WHEREAS: The University Senate is currently considering modifying the university-wide grading system to include plus/minus grades, and

WHEREAS: The addition of plus/minus grades, according to the subsequent Fall 2006 report on the Plus/Minus pilot program, to the University grading system will have a negative impact on students, and

WHEREAS: There are several reasons to believe that the educational importance of pluses and minuses may not be significantly substantial. As evident by the fact that plus/minus grading remains a minority practice nationally as such there is no broad educational consensus on its importance, and

WHEREAS: The following are quantitative statistics directly derived from the aforementioned official report on Plus-Minus grading:

- “On average, signed grading cause term GPA’s to decrease approximately -.025 points.”
- “Data in table eight show that in the course of this trial, more students would see losses in their term GPA than would see gains better than 2 to 1.”
- “If adopted, the majority of students (57%) would see a loss in their cumulative GPA, 16% would see a gain, and 26% would see no difference.”
- “The negative skewing of GPA’s can easily be seen in Table 3 that shows the number of minus grades awarded constantly outnumbers the plus
WHEREAS: Western Kentucky University's current academic standards are not compatible with the plus/minus grading system, and the intervals between pluses and minuses are mathematically questionable, and

WHEREAS: The added grading could cause unforeseen problems that will confuse and discourage students, and

WHEREAS: The potential deflation of GPA's would hinder the ability of students to be competitive for scholarships, admissions to existing undergraduate programs, graduate programs, and entrance into the workforce.

THEREFORE: Be it resolved that the Student Government Association of Western Kentucky University expresses its opposition to the adoption of a plus/minus grading system.

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grades awarded. Obviously, when this occurs the change in GPA is going to be more negative than positive.”

- “In comparing term GPA’s calculated with and without signed grades it was found that signed grading harms more students than it helps.”