

**Wilcox:** Why don't I add IUPUI data in this area?

**Larson:** I think that it would be more helpful to divide between tenure line and non-tenure line faculty. Because we know that a lot of minorities and women tend to get non-tenure line positions.

**Warren:** The only non-tenured faculty included in this are those recruited in minority searches that we launched two years ago. All of those are being moved under tenure line appointments. It doesn't include part-time or adjunct faculty or full-time, but non-tenured faculty.

**Nyikos:** It would be important to have the statistics on who of the tenure line faculty, who have not yet achieved tenure, are among the minorities and then see whether they achieve tenure. What proportions do we have of these different groups in already tenured positions.

**Warren:** That would be easy to do.

**Boone:** Just a little question since I wasn't here in 84-85. On the data reported here, especially for African-Americans and Hispanics, how much stability has there been in those numbers? Is the one African-American for 1984-85 the same as recorded later on?

**Ingersoll:** Of the three that are listed in 84-85, only Sadie Grimmett, the African-American female remains.

**Bull:** Are there questions or concerns at this point? There is no action for us to take on this unless someone has something. As item 94.25, we have a document that we reports some college policy recommendations for changing grading policies. These recommendations are now being considered by the Bloomington Faculty Council. They might be instituted as university policies. At this point, we don't decide these things, but these proposals seem different enough from our current practices at the School of Education that they were worth at least putting on the agenda for discussion. There are three specific recommendations that are under consideration. If we were to take a position as a Policy Council, I could communicate this information to the BFC. Starting on page 2, the first recommendation is that the FX policy be eliminated. The second recommendation is that beside each grade on the transcript that there would be a distribution of grades giving some idea of what proportion of students in that class got that same grade. The third recommendation is that the day for automatic withdraw be set four weeks after classes meet. These are fairly significant changes.

**Larson:** Are these only for undergraduates?



**Bull:** Only for undergraduates.

**Goodman:** I like proposals 1 and 3 a great deal. I am in real sympathy with the motivation behind 2. I think that the motivation is to try to get students to start putting pressure on faculty. For our department, every year we talk about grade inflation. As a faculty member who feels the pressure that students put on me, I am ashamed to admit that I have inflated my grades over the years because of students pressure. But the thing that I don't really need is more pressure, even if it's counter-pressure. What I really need is some way so that I can pass the buck such as the School of Education has a policy that I can only give, unless I am willing to defend exceptions, 25% A or A- s. This punishes students for grade inflation. I do get vibes when somebody gets a B and thinks that they have failed the course. The worst part about this from my perspective is that I would like to encourage people to explore education, but if the only grade I can give so that they don't get discouraged is an A, then that really undermines the integrity of what I am trying to do here. I don't think this is going to do it. It is just going to add pressure to the situation.

**Bull:** I have heard that this Edgerton proposal is viewed as a compromise between some kind of dictatorial policy that says twenty percent As, thirty percent Bs, etc. and the status quo in which there is no accountability for grades. This allows for you to inflate your grades or have any distribution that you want, but it becomes a matter of public record what that distribution is.

**Kuh:** This is a national phenomenon, even the prestige liberal arts colleges are working under the same pressures. This began in the late 1960s. It has only worsened and seeped into the highest citadels. Why should we penalize such good students by giving them something less than a B? A C is now a B+.

**Nyikos:** Do you know of any institutions which have actually instituted this?

**Kuh:** No, I don't.

**Nyikos:** I find it to be a very dangerous precedent. In many situations, professors do grade on a curve, to answer Jesse's question somewhat. You can always resort to that if you really need some starch in your socks. The other issue is whether it really reflects what we think it will reflect ultimately. In many classes, due to the nature of the teacher, there really is virtually no possibility that students will make a D, at least in my classes, because of the way that I push the students. Therefore, if certain students were to be compared to grades on a transcript or a curve, it would reflect an entirely lop-sided and invalid sort of comparison.



**Boling:** This number 2, unless it comes with a statement on every transcript on how that class was run and what instructional strategies under which those students functioned, you cannot know if the course itself was set up to operate on the basis of full competency. That may be the instructional strategy for a course. This is discouraging to any sort of any attempt to run courses in which students actually come out all in the same form. If the notion is that grading on a curve is the best way to get students to all learn, then there will always be students who don't learn.

**Goodman:** I don't like the idea of a curve either. If learning more is the criterion, then all of my students should get an As and I should relax. My criterion for someone getting an A isn't just somebody who learns more. It discourages me when I have students at the end of semester who say something like "I worked harder, I learned more, I did my best work in this course, and I got the worst grade." And they got an A- or a B+. There is something wrong with that. If you look at my grades, I bet the average grade point level is over a 3.3. If only a certain percent can get As but you can still give as many of other grades, everybody can be above average. Does everybody have to be A?

**Larson:** I wouldn't want that. Classes have certain kinds of ethos from the combination of people. Sometimes they urge each other on, and sometimes they bring the whole class down in terms of performance. Grades have to matter, or why do we do it? Right now, it seems like that in a lot of courses grading does not matter. You really can't tell anything by looking at an undergraduate transcript. Student performance should make a difference. We are hired to make judgments about students and to give students good honest feedback about their performance.

**Bull:** The truth of the matter is that there are departments, like the mathematics department, that have extremely low average grades. They believe that they do an honest job of grading just as we believe that. They feel that their students are disadvantaged by the circumstances that exist.

**Kuh:** I think what you said is right about mathematics, and Liz is right about a competency-based instructional approach, but only a fraction of professors teach that way. This is one of education's dirty little secrets. We don't say this to each other very often. I can't wait to see the minutes of the Policy Council and how this is represented. This is exactly the kind of conversation that we have to have at the program level. None of us know how to handle this. Specific policies won't really fix the kind of pressure problem that Jesse is talking about. We have to get a clearer sense of how we wish to approach this and what alternatives we are investing in. Can we stand shoulder to shoulder and at the same time operate in different ways that fit our instructional purposes and goals?



**Stage:** It strikes me as very odd that the way of solving this is to put these numbers on a transcript. Admissions officers and people at other universities are so busy at just trying to evaluate mountains of transcripts without figuring out what these numbers mean.

**Ingersoll:** Jesse's point is absolutely critical. When I teach the undergraduate course in Life Spans, if I give somebody a B, the grade knocks them out of the Nursing School. This is the kind of pressure that these kids are working under. We've done the same thing in the School of Education where you have to have a 2.5. If we adopt these minimum requirements, then we face students who say "If you give me a C in this course, then I am out of teaching. I've wanted to be a teacher all of life and you just killed me." This is a real problem. The students are under enormous pressures under the system.

**Goodman:** But I don't think that that is true in Teacher Education. I maybe have given 5 Cs in the ten years that I have been here. My GPA is very high, so I really shouldn't be feeling this pressure. Yet, I'm still feeling the pressure. There is no risk if someone that I am teaching gets a B. No administrator will not hire somebody to become a teacher because they got a B in my class. There is in fact no pressure, yet I am still feeling all of this incredible pressure.

**Papesh:** Listening to this as a recent student and as one who always would strive for As, I perceived that if I didn't get an A, I might as well fail. Well, where did I get that message? The problem is that the message is being sent that it is A or fail.

**Goodman:** That's the problem right there. For me, that is the message that the students get. We have to break that cultural message. The way to interrupt that message is to say that for the next five years we will say to our students that only 25 percent will get an A, unless a faculty member wants to make a special statement about teaching this class in a particular way.

**Wilcox:** I think that this is a huge problem. The grade appeals that we have had at IUPUI have been brought by people who got B+s who wanted A-s. I think that some of the problem comes from the grading system. We used to have A, B, C. We now have A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-. So roughly a B- is what used to be a C, C-, or a D. We differentiate but we don't use the full range of descriptors. I'd love to get rid of the +s and -s.

**Wood:** There is no place for excellence now. We have no means of measuring an outstanding student.

**Goodman:** Grading is simply a symbol system. It is a symbol and you give a meaning to that symbol. The symbol system has been eroded. I may give an A- and what I want to tell that student by that symbol is that "You have done extremely good work." But the meaning that the student has placed on that symbol is "I have done less than adequate."

**Kuh:** I don't want whatever comes of this discussion to go away. There is a culture of entitlement among undergraduate students. We are not talking about students who put in 30 to 40 hours a week trying to get As. We are talking about a group of undergraduates, not all by any means, who are putting in about 12 hours a week and expect to get As. That's a problem. We contribute to it because we don't tell them "You need to spend probably 15 hours a week in this class outside of class preparing."

**Nyikos:** My professors told me three hours outside for every hour in class.

**Kuh:** Say it and mean it. Tell students that they actually have to go to the library and tell them what to do there. The easy way out is for us to say "Here's the textbook that I have written, and all you need to do is buy and maybe even read it, but I'm not sure about the latter."

**Nyikos:** Students do work. A lot are saddled with hours outside the university earning a living. That's something that should be recognized.

**Kuh:** I am referring primarily to undergraduates in Bloomington. I am not referring to students in Indianapolis who are a very different portrait. If you look at what we know about our undergraduate students in Bloomington, some are working but most live in the residence halls, first and second year students primarily, and that is the group that we are finding out don't spend a whole lot of time studying.

**Friend:** Maybe another dimension as well is that we have students who say "But I did everything and I did all of it. I can I do more work." It winds up being things that are rather superficial. I call it multiplying mediocrity. It is not true that quantity leads to quality. There is also a quality issue that needs to be addressed. Simply because you put in hours does not mean that you are an adequate student.

**Kuh:** Absolutely. Time is not effort, but you can't get effort without time.

**Larson:** This also comes up in our year end evaluations, where they have questions like "Is the grading fair in this class?," "Is there too much work?" and all of those things. How



are we supposed to interpret those things? Because we don't have conversations around these issues, we don't necessarily know what other people expect. Whether we are in bounds or out of bounds. There's a conversation that needs to be addressed.

**Nyikos:** I propose that we do have these sorts of conversations. In fact, this coming Monday, we have a brown bag to discuss certain types of issues.

**Warren:** It's not this issue specifically that will be discussed.

**Nyikos:** But I was thinking that something along those lines would probably be very appropriate. For right now, to get back to the order of business, I am on the Educational Policy Council which is meeting on Friday and we are going to be voting on this so if anyone would like to further voice pros or cons about these particular proposals, I would be very happy to hear them.

**Metcalf:** I like all three of them, even number 2, especially when you consider the alternatives. I don't like the idea of saying that we have to use norm-referenced grading. At least with number 2, if I want to use a competency-based approach, I can still do that. I like that better than either of the two extremes: the forced norm-referenced system or the status quo.

**Guskin:** I am inclined to agree with him.

**Boone:** I am curious about how this would be implemented. Would it just start with freshmen? Or would everybody have these rankings, so that upperclassmen would just have a few rankings?

**Kuh:** These are simply technical adjustments to a system that isn't working, at least in our romanticized view. We all went through rigorous undergraduate programs, right? I endorse all three, too. But if that is where we let the matter rest, we are fooling ourselves. This isn't going to fix the student culture. It isn't going to fix the kinds of demands that get placed on you.

**Goodman:** It could actually exacerbate them.

**Warren:** I've been involved in these kinds of discussions over fifteen or so years. I would urge you to find some way of keeping it going. George referred to the Study study, there's been some questions raised about the design of that study, but it's the only source of data that we have about Bloomington undergraduates and their study habits. Maybe, we need one of the School of Education students.



**Kuh:** I am not endorsing the Study study, but nobody is willing to step forward, including students, to say that they got it generally wrong. It also fits with my understanding of what's going on at other campuses in terms of the amount of time that students spend on educationally purposeful activities.

**Stage:** Just to comment on number 3, that proposal would be better if they would require professors to provide some sort of feedback to their students by the fourth week of the semester, before they force students to decide whether they drop a class.

**Warren:** None of these three proposals speak to George's point; they all blame the students for this problem. None of them say that we as a faculty are not expecting enough of our students and we are not communicating that to students. That's why I think that this discussion has been so healthy. We have put those kinds of concerns on the table. We can't really blame the students for this culture. They come and go every four or five years. We tend to hang around. If the culture is going to be changed, it's us that has to do it.

**Bull:** We do have some additional business that we have to take up which won't take too long. There are also people in the School of Education who are in the BFC. Perhaps, I ought to make sure that they are cognizant of this. But there is the question of where do we go from here? We could conceivably charge the committee which deals with undergraduate instruction with something. We could ask them to do something in the way of studying the issue, making recommendations to us as Policy Council on the issue of grade inflation. I don't know if we are ready to do that.

**Goodman:** I'll make a motion. The Teacher Education Council will explore the problem of grade inflation at the undergraduate level, solicit proposals from departments and the faculty, seek input into the problem, and by this time next year come up with some resolutions.

**Larson:** I wonder if we should let graduates off so easily, just because it's a greater issue for teacher education. Graduate education should also do it.

**Goodman:** I don't have any problems with the graduate program being included. I don't have the same worries about graduate education in terms of grade inflation. Grade inflation exists, but everybody accepts it, and nobody looks at grades.

**Kuh:** What we have just done is what we always do. We've looked around for the points of least possible resistance, and we've given them to committees that really don't deal with this stuff. Grade inflation to me is symptomatic of the challenges that we have to address. We will end up with policies designed



to do something with grades, when the challenge is fundamental to the teaching and learning enterprise that we are engaged in. If we are really serious about this, then we have to make it a problem for the faculty. Each of us and the administration have to deal with this on an ongoing basis. It has to go right to the program level. It has to engage students and faculty who have joined in this compact that says "If you leave me alone, I'll leave you alone." Two standing committees of this group will not do it. I am willing to endorse this charge, if we also add some additional charges. If we believe that this is a major issue facing us, as important as research on teacher education, then we will expect the departments and at least those faculty who are interested to take this on and to work on it. If we wait until next spring, I have a prediction for you, we are going to have some technical adjustments in policies, we are going to hear debates on how we can't come up with certain percentages for As, Bs, and Cs, why it shouldn't be incumbent on the faculty to use an effective approach to add notes to their grade rosters as to why I have a 112% As. My plea is simply to not let this one go to committee. Find another strategy which throws the heart of the teaching-learning effort back onto our laps and those of our students.

**Goodman:** We could suggest that every program issue a statement about their grading. C & I has been dealing with this issue at all of its coordinator meetings. We are at a place now where we are dealing with a set of 8 different proposals.

**Nyikos:** May I withdraw my second. I propose more of an open forum to discuss this issue, not necessarily through departments. Our department does this every year. It is a regular ritual. AIs particularly suffer because of this message. They need to be brought into the conversation. In a forum such as that, there is a much better ebb and flow to the conversation. People can voice issues and come to some kind of resolution within that forum.

**Bull:** In the department, we go through this continuously. We feel bad about it, we apologize, but we keep doing it. Having something like the teacher education council which has some sort of larger perspective on the enterprise of teacher education and the connection between programs and grades, is a much more likely place to take action. I don't think that our department ever gets to the larger questions of "What happens to the quality of our graduates?" and things of that nature.

**Wilcox:** I just want to share something about the new teacher ed program at IUPUI that will very much help us change the culture. We are structuring semesters so that they end a week earlier than normal. Everything is pushed back. All faculty who are teaching teacher education students sit together and look at students. They talk among themselves and with



teachers from the professional development school about the work and grades of students. We began that process, last semester, by convening all the faculty and saying "Who are students that deserve an alert?" instead of just leaving the burden to individual faculty. If people were at risk, they all got letters and conversations with the director of teacher ed, the director of students services, or an area chair. The students were thankful that they could get in to see them. I think that there are some mechanisms to get faculty together to discuss problems.

**Wood:** I second the motion for the teacher education committee and the graduate committee to look into this issue. I think that it is important enough that we ought to look at it in individual departments and at the school level.

**Bull:** We do have a resolution on the floor.

**Goodman:** We can make a recommendation that the committee hold an open forum.

**Warren:** The teacher education council is in Bloomington only, it is not a core campus committee.

**Wilcox:** We probably have a group that would work.

**Bull:** We will also refer it to that group at IUPUI.

(The resolution unanimously passed.)

## V. Remonstrances

**Bull:** There are several remonstrance items. The most important one is the proposal for a non-licensed minor in corporate and community education. We don't have to vote on this, but if you have a remonstrance, it would be appropriate to raise it here. Ed Jenkinson and Tom Duffy, who were members of the committee that developed this proposal, are here. Perhaps, they could speak briefly about this.

**Duffy:** I think that it is reasonably self-explanatory

**Bull:** As I understand this, there was originally a possibility that this could be a major for those interested in education but not teaching in the schools or in education in the corporate setting.

**Duffy:** Actually, it is much wider than that. We started surveying people in their sophomore and junior years in psych classes, described the program, and passed out surveys on whether they were interested in this program. Twenty percent who responded to the survey rated themselves as very interested in