

1/6/05 meeting of the Undergraduate Council: Minutes

Karen Sprague announced that Ron Severson is unable to chair the Council this quarter and that Deborah Baumgold will substitute for him.

Herb Chereck presented a plan for notifying students of the new Incomplete policy ([Undergraduate Incomplete Policy Implementation Procedures](#)) that has been worked up in consultation with the Senate. After discussion, adoption of the plan was moved (Roberts, Education) and seconded (Gilkey, Mathematics); and passed unanimously.

The next item of business was discussion of grade inflation. Mark Thoma took the lead, suggesting we divide our consideration into three parts: (1) defining the question/problem; (2) determining what needs to be measured in light of the question; and (3) identifying necessary adjustments.

Several members described methods of information distribution and self-regulation used by their units. These typically entail public distribution of averages and grade ranges, by course, within the unit.

It was noted that we need external as well as internal comparisons: i.e., comparisons with other schools as well as comparisons between units.

Gilkey (Mathematics) moved the following, which was seconded by Thoma (Economics).

The Undergraduate Council requests appropriate comparison data on undergraduate grade distributions at comparator institutions. Optimally, these data will go back historically in three 5-year slices. (See: [UGC Requests Grade Distribution Comparison Data](#), and [The Practice of Units, Regarding Grade Distribution and Feedback](#))

Also, we request internal data on (a) grade distributions in courses by unit (departments and Colleges) and (b) information on “outlying grade distributions” in courses (having enrollments >20).

The motion passed unanimously.

Gilkey (Mathematics) moved the following, which was seconded by Laskaya (English)

The Undergraduate Council will collect information on the practice of units across campus with regard to grade distribution and feedback so as to see what is being done in the area of self-regulation and information distribution. Collection of this information will provide a basis on which to develop recommendations concerning “best practices.”

We respectfully request that the chair of the Council attend a meeting of the Council of Deans to present and explain this motion.

The motion passed unanimously.