

Student Government Resolution 114.004

A Resolution in Opposition to the Implementation of a Plus-Minus Grading System Sponsored by President Matt Cooper and Vice President Katherine Scheidt

WHEREAS,

- The Student Government is the official governing body of the Student Association and exists to represent the present and long term best interests of the Student Association in the formulation of the University policy and in the fulfillment of the University mission; and
- A plus-minus grading system has been proposed and approved by the Undergraduate Council; and
- This plus-minus grading system would fundamentally change the way that grades are assigned at Truman; and
- This change would have the affect at reducing the number of 4.0 GPAs, and deflating the GPAs of some of Truman's best performing students; and
- Increasing the stratification of grades would place more emphasis on the final grade received in a course, which will distract students from the overall learning experience; and
- This increased emphasis would cause more borderline grades that would become issues of contention between students and professors; and
- Possible deflation of the GPAs of higher performing students could lead to the loss of some or all of the student's academic scholarships; and
- In the most recent Student Government survey, 77.3 percent of students reported disagreeing with the implementation of a plus-minus grading system, with 66 percent strongly disagreeing; and
- In the same survey, 53.5 percent of students who oppose the implementation of this policy do so for fear of losing their academic scholarships, and 51.9 percent fear not meeting their major GPA requirements; and
- Lowering the GPAs of top performing students would make them less attractive candidates to graduate school admissions, scholarships, internships, and jobs; and
- In the 2013 Missouri College Health Behavior Survey, Truman Students consistently reported higher levels of suicidal thoughts and gestures, stress, anxiety, and depression than the Missouri average for college and university students¹ ; and
- In the same study, 86.6 percent of Truman students reported feeling stressed, and more than a fifth of Truman students reported being overwhelmed by or having unbearable levels of stress; and
- 89 percent of students stated that one of their reasons for opposing the plus-minus system was the additional stress it would cause; and
- An increased focus on grades and differentiating grade levels would only serve to increase the levels of stress felt by students, and have a negative impact on the well-being of students overall.

¹ 2013 Survey by the Missouri Partners in Prevention, available at <http://trumanpip.truman.edu/mchbs/>

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT,

- Student Government strongly opposes the implementation of the plus-minus grading system.

THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT DIRECTS THAT

Additional copies of this resolution are disseminated to University President Troy Paino, Dean of Student Affairs Lou Ann Gilchrist, the Truman Media Network, and the Department of Special Collections.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matt Cooper". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the page.

Matt Cooper
President of the Student Government