S.A. Resolution #18
Reinstating the Publication of Median Grades

ABSTRACT: This resolution seeks to encourage the Faculty Senate to investigate the possibility of publishing median grade reports.

Sponsored by: Osai Egharevba '21

Whereas, from 1998 until 2011, the university published median grade reports at the end of each semester for all courses whose enrollment was greater than 10; and

Whereas, in May 2011, the Faculty Senate voted to cease the publication of median grades out of concerns regarding grade inflation; and

Whereas, median grades are recorded on student transcripts for graduate schools and employers to view, but students are not allowed to view this data until after they have completed the course; and

Whereas, at other universities, such as Dartmouth College and University of Michigan, median grades are published in addition to being recorded on transcripts, establishing a concept known as “Truth in Grading.”; and

Whereas, median grades for many courses have largely stayed the same (and in some cases have increased) since the last time they were published, contradicting the argument that the publication of median grades contributes to grade inflation; and

Whereas, a student’s course grade can easily be compared to the median grade for that course by looking at their transcript, contradicting the argument that one can “shop” for supposedly easy courses based on a median grade report; and

Whereas, various courses inherently have different grading bases and different faculty members may have different grading standards for the same course, contributing to the difference in median grades; and

Whereas, faculty often announce the expected median grade before the drop date for their courses at the beginning of the semester, having the same effect as publishing a median grade report; and

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1 For instance, a student who earns a B+ in a course whose median grade is a B would indicate stronger performance than one who received an A- in a class whose median grade is an A.

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Whereas, academic transparency can be significantly improved by reinstating the publication of median grades, in addition to maintaining them on student transcripts; and

Whereas, the Faculty Senate has the authority to reinstate the publication of median grades, reintroducing the Truth in Grading concept; and

Be it therefore resolved, that the Student Assembly calls on the Faculty Senate to investigate the possibility of reinstating the semesterly reporting of median grades.

Be it further resolved, that such investigation shall include, but is not limited to the following: median grade reports since 2011 and feedback from faculty, undergraduate and graduate/professional students.

Be it finally resolved, that said investigation include the following: how enrollment would be impacted, correlation between student satisfaction and median grades, how overall median grade trends have shifted since the cease of publication of median grades in 2011, and how other schools have been impacted by public median grades.

Osai Egharevba ’21
College of Engineering Representative, Student Assembly
Member, Academic Policy Committee

Moriah Adeghe ’21
Chair, Academic Policy Committee

Robert Sanchez ’21
Member, Academic Policy Committee

Jojo Cheng ’21
Member, Academic Policy Committee

TJ Hunt ’21
Member, Academic Policy Committee

Rachel Marciano ’20
Member, Academic Policy Committee

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