

First reading: April 13, 2010  
Second reading: May 6, 2010  
Third reading: Feb. 15, 2011

# LSU Faculty Senate Resolution 10–09

## “A Faculty Member’s Right to Assign Grades”

*Introduced by Senator Charles Delzell*

*Whereas* the LSU Faculty Handbook declares:

It is the right and responsibility of the instructor to determine and assign the grade for each student who is enrolled in the course beyond the final date for withdrawing. The instructor’s assignment of a grade is final, and the grade may not be changed or altered except through the academic appeals procedure, following appropriate investigation.

*Whereas* the American Association of University Professors’ statement, “The Assignment of Course Grades and Student Appeals,” declares:

The assessment of student academic performance . . . , including the assignment of particular grades, is a faculty responsibility. Recognizing the authority of the instructor of record to evaluate the academic performance of students enrolled in a course he or she is teaching is a direct corollary of the instructor’s “freedom in the classroom” that the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure assures. The faculty member offering the course, it follows, should be responsible for the evaluation of student course work and, under normal circumstances, is the sole judge of the grades received by the students in that course.

*Whereas* Faculty Senate Resolution 03-04, “On Grades and Standards” (introduced by then-Senate Vice-President Carruth McGehee, and adopted in 2002) declares:

The appropriate officer of each academic unit will take special care to see that all teaching personnel are informed about pertinent policies and expectations with respect to grades, and *supported as they undertake to uphold appropriate standards* [emphasis added].

*Whereas* PS-44 (“Grades”) declares:

There is no “University curve” or other table of numerical equivalents of letter grades to which a faculty member must adhere.

*Whereas* the 2008 AAUP report, “The Use and Abuse of Faculty Suspensions,” <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/comm/rep/A/facsup.htm>, declares:

... Sometimes, as we will show, administrators decline to use the term [“suspension”] and claim that in fact what they are imposing is not a suspension at all...  
... [I]ncreasingly the Association is dealing with cases that involve partial suspensions, in which the faculty member is blocked from some duties or locations,

but not others.... Removal from even a single class can, of course, pose serious complications for the faculty member's standing as a teacher.

*Whereas* the Regulations of the LSU Board of Supervisors declare:

The faculty or Faculty Council shall establish curricula, fix standards of instruction, determine requirements for degrees, *and generally determine educational policy*, subject to the authority of the Board... [emphasis added].

*Therefore be it resolved* that the Faculty Senate hereby (1) reaffirms the above-quoted passages from Resolution 03-04, PS-44, and the Faculty Handbook, and therefore (2) prohibits the LSU administration from suspending or otherwise removing any instructor from teaching any course, or punishing or disciplining any instructor, on the basis of the grades the instructor gives students, as long as the instructor “assigns grades equitably and consistently in accordance with the standards established by the faculties of the various colleges and schools” (as provided in PS-44); nor may anyone change any grade so assigned (whether it be a final grade or an interim grade on any work during the course), except through the Grade Appeals procedures described in LSU’s General Catalog.