

TUCVM Curriculum Committee Policy Statement

Policy Statement on Grade Adjustments

1. Purpose and Justification

The purpose of this policy is to ensure fairness, consistency, and transparency in applying grade adjustments ("curves"). Curving is **not a standard university practice**, and must be applied **only under exceptional and justified circumstances**, specifically to correct for unexpected variations in assessment difficulty or grading distribution that could unfairly affect student outcomes, if other methods could not be applied.

2. Authority and Implementation

The course instructor may propose a grade curve after assessing the distribution of raw grades. Any proposed curve must be submitted to the **Department Chair for review and approval prior to implementation**. This ensures proper oversight into these unusual circumstances.

3. Permissible Methods and Restrictions

Approved methods must uphold the principles of academic integrity and equitable treatment of all students.

- **Linear Adjustment** (adding a uniform number of points to all student scores) is a permissible method. This method fixes assessment difficulty without reducing any student's score.
- The selected method must be applied consistently to the entire class and **must not disadvantage any student relative to peers**.

4. Prohibited Practices

Grade adjustments **may not** be used for the following purposes:

- **Negative Curves:** Any adjustment that lowers student grades or reduces points.
- **Distribution-Based Curving:** Assigning grades to fit a statistical distribution or quota. (Note: The policy prohibits using curves to artificially inflate grades.)
- **Selective Adjustments:** Modifying grades for individual students or subgroups unless to correct a documented error.
- **Ad Hoc or Non-Transparent Adjustments:** Adjustments not communicated in the syllabus or justified by documented exam issues (as required by the Syllabus Requirement below).

5. Syllabus Requirement

Each instructor must include a clear statement in syllabus describing:

- How exam errors will be addressed (e.g., dropping a question, accepting multiple answers).
- What forms of grade adjustments may be used (from the Acceptable Methods list).
- Assurance that **no student will be disadvantaged** by any grade adjustment.

This ensures students understand expectations from the beginning of the course.

6. Record Keeping

Instructors must document and retain departmental records for at least three academic years. This documentation should include:

- The reason for any exam correction or grade adjustment.
- The method used.
- Evidence of the exam flaw, if applicable.
- The impact on grade distribution.

This documentation may be reviewed by department chairs and the Academic Standards Committee.