After extensive debate during several Committee meetings, the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee passed a resolution regarding the introduction of a +/- grading system at RPI at the meeting of November 26, 2003. The resolution is detailed below.

The FSCC has come to the conclusion that the advantages of the new system will outweigh by far any conceivable disadvantages either for students or faculty. This conclusion has strong support among the faculty, as indicated by informal polling.

The arguments pro and con considered by the FSCC are outlined in detail in the attached report. Also attached is a list of grade averages of about two dozen courses taught recently at RPI with a comparison of GPAs between the old system and the proposed new +/- system.

The main arguments in favor of a +/- system are that it allows for more accurate grading, giving a more reliable indication of student performance, and that it provides an incentive for students to continue working through the end of the semester because of the real opportunity to improve their performance. In addition, all studies including our own data suggest that a +/- grading system will have a minimal impact on overall course GPAs or the GPAs of individual students. Course grade averages with a +/- system are generally within a few one hundredths of a point of averages calculated according to the old system, except possibly for upper-level classes with very small enrollment.
Resolution

The FSCC recommends that Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute change its present grading system to a +/- system with the following stipulations:

1. The grade scale adopted is A, A-, B+, B, etc.
2. The numerical grade equivalents are as follows:
   - A = 4.0, A- = 3.67, B+ = 3.33, etc.
3. There will be no D-, only D followed by F
4. Probation: same as before
5. Graduation requirements: same as before (GPA of 1.8 for ug., 3.0 for grad)
6. Start of the new system in F 04, with a note in the transcript
7. The new system applies to all students (old, new; ug., grad)
8. Communication with FS and students:
   - C. Steinbruchel will report to the FS on 12-3-2003
   - C. Steinbruchel and G. Gabriele will report to the Student Senate on 12-5-2003.