

## Commission Looks To Combat Grade Inflation at UNC

By Lauren Hills, NBC17, 14 hours, 42 minutes ago

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### CHAPEL HILL, N.C.

Freshman Emily Smith was studying hard on UNC's campus Friday afternoon.

"I'm studying French right now and I just hope I get an 'A' on my French test," said Smith.

It's a grade she strives for in every class, but she's concerned grade inflation could devalue her 'A' since it's becoming increasingly common at UNC.

According to the Education Policy Commission at UNC, the average GPA has gone up nearly an entire point since 1967 when it was 2.49, to last fall when it was 3.21. It also found that more than 80 percent of students are getting A's and B's which officials said is decreasing the value of good grades.

"If you're one of those students who otherwise would have gotten an 'A' anyways you can't really separate yourself from the pack," said Elise Stevenson, UNC sophomore.

Andrew Perrin, Education Policy Commission Chair, gave a presentation to the UNC Faculty Council to talk about the issue on Friday. He said grade inflation is happening across all departments, but more so in the arts and humanities. He said part of the reason might be because grading is more subjective in those areas.

"But that's the kind of thing we want to try to address when we formulate policy here," said Perrin. "So at least comparisons across departments are fair with regard to different grading practices."

He also said many instructors teaching the same course grade differently which may add to the disparity. Not to mention the fact that universities country-wide are seeing grade inflation as well and students want to be on an even playing field with their peers.

"The policy that we adopt should be careful and measured," said Perrin. "We want to make sure we track the impacts of the policy over the next few years."

The details of the policy have not yet been hammered out, but Perrin said it won't be about punishing students, it's simply making sure only the very best get an A.

One faculty member at Friday's meeting suggested that the reason for the better grades might also be because the caliber of students being admitted has risen.

Meanwhile, the Faculty Council asked the commission to come up with a specific policy proposal to present to the Council in April.

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