



## Honors College

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25 February 2019

RE: Fractional Grading

Emerson Morrow, President  
ASNMSU  
New Mexico State University

Dear President Morrow,

I am happy to have this opportunity to voice my opinion on the proposal to reject the current fractional grading system in favor of a whole-grade grading system. I was here at NMSU when the fractional grading was first implemented, and I have experience with whole-letter grade systems at NMSU (prior to 2011) and at my previous university. I confess some ambivalence about this proposed shift, as I've mentioned in previous communication that I see large differences between students completing B+ work compared with B- work which would be masked somewhat in a whole grade system.

I have tried to keep an open mind about this issue, and I am persuaded by the presentation and data martialed by the ASNMSU leadership that moving away from fractional grading is the best option at the moment. Specifically I am concerned that the current system results in an inordinate number of students losing undergraduate financial aid or graduate assistantships (which is clearly a retention issue), I'm concerned that this disadvantages our students compared with peer institutions, and I'm concerned that the current system does not offer credit above 4.0 for A+ grades.

Thus I offer my support to the ASNMSU proposal to return to a whole-grade system rather than a fractional grading system, and I wish you the best in implementing this system. If I can provide any additional support, please let me know.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Miriam Chaiken'.

Miriam Chaiken, Ph.D.  
Dean, William Conroy Honors College  
Distinguished Professor of Anthropology

