Date: October 7, 2013
To: Educational Policy Committee
From: Grant Tanenbaum, Chair, WSA Academic Affairs Committee
Subject: Proposal to Extend the Deadline for Grading-Mode Change

Introduction
After consulting with the Chair of 2012-2013 EPC, the Class Deans, and the Registrar, the Academic Affairs Committee of the Wesleyan Student Assembly would like to propose a policy change that would extend the deadline for the choice of grading mode until two weeks after the end of the Drop-Add period. We believe that offering students more flexibility in grading-mode change would reduce the amount of stress students face at the beginning of each semester and allow them to explore more freely the rich liberal-arts curriculum at Wesleyan.

Proposal
• Extend the choice of grading mode deadline to two weeks after the Drop-Add period ends.
• Maintain the current online registration system; students would submit a written grading-mode change request to the Registrar after the end of Drop-Add.
• Students can only change the grading mode once per course during the two-week period after Drop-Add ends.
• Students can either change the grading mode from Graded to Credit/Unsatisfactory or Credit/Unsatisfactory to Graded.

Rationale
In courses offering grading-mode options the current policy requires students to decide the grading mode by the end of the Drop-Add period. Often, students’ semester schedules are not finalized until the very end of Drop-Add. Consequently, many students may not have enough information about the difficulty of their course load at that point. In addition, the introductory nature of initial course meetings often does not allow students effectively to gauge the workload of a given course.

Through this proposal, the Academic Affairs Committee intends to give students as much information as possible before they must make a final decision regarding their grading-mode choice. This move may also diminish the number of withdrawals at the end of the semester, by allowing students to assess academic demands that may not have been apparent in the first week or two of classes more accurately.

Many of Wesleyan’s peer institutions allow grading-mode changes after Drop-Add, and some schools’ deadlines are set as late as the ninth week of a semester. A comparative chart of those schools and their respective policies is attached with this proposal.
**Resolution X.35:** Resolution Supporting the Extension of Grading Mode Changes

**Sponsors:** Grant Tanenbaum ‘15 (Principal), Andrew Trexler ‘14, Nicole Updegrove ‘14, Jacob Musinsky ‘15, Alton Wang ‘16, Rebecca Hutman ‘17, Aidan Martinez ‘17, Ben Marvin-Vanderryn ‘17,

Addressing the proposal brought to the faculty advocating the extension of grading mode changes to two weeks after the end of the Drop/Add period,

Recognizing Wesleyan’s commitment to individual academic freedom,

Appraising Wesleyan’s decision to employ a two-week Drop/Add period to promote said freedom, enabling students to maximize the benefits they might derive from their classes,

Highlighting the uncertainty of student schedules throughout the Drop/Add period,

Noting the difficulty in assessing the rigor of Wesleyan courses during the first weeks of classes, particularly while navigating Drop/Add,

Noting that increased flexibility in determining grading mode may improve student success in rigorous courses, and lead to a decrease in withdrawals from courses and low grades,

Noting further that increased flexibility during the highly stressful initial weeks of class may also have positive effects on students’ stress levels,

Therefore be it **resolved** that the Wesleyan Student Assembly (WSA),

1. **Urge** the faculty to vote in favor of the proposed grading mode change.
2. **Resolve** to remain actively seized of the matter.

[Introduced 6th October 2013 / Unanimously Adopted 6th October 2013]