

**EPC RESOLUTION TO REMOVE MEDIAN GRADES FROM THE WEB
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WHEREAS public publishing of the median grades for all courses on the Cornell website is used by students to select courses that give high grades, and,

WHEREAS this practice is contributing to grade inflation at Cornell,

WHEREAS the practice of posting median grades on the web is being exploited by external websites to match median grades to specific professors allowing students to choose those courses or sections with higher median grades (see www.aptstudents.com),

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that Cornell will cease the public publishing of median grades of Cornell courses (thus removing them from the Cornell website), and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that median grades of Cornell courses continue to be recorded by the Registrar and made available to persons with need to know (Deans, Department Chairs, etc., and persons needing the data for scholarly research, with decisions to be made by the appropriate Dean).

1997

RESOLUTION RE GRADE REPORTING

WHEREAS, the Committee on Academic Programs and Policies, has determined that it is desirable for Cornell University to provide more information to the reader of a transcript and produce more meaningful letter grades,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate adopts the following policies on grade reporting:

1. Transcripts and grade reports for undergraduate students shall indicate, along with the grade earned, the median grade given in the course and the course enrollment. Independent study, honors courses, and individual research may be exempted upon recommendation by the department (or program) and appropriate college committee. Courses with enrollments of fewer than ten students will also be exempt from this policy. This policy shall become effective as soon as technically feasible, but will apply only to classes entering after the effective date.
2. The Office of the University Registrar shall publish at the end of each semester, a list of median grades and enrollments of all undergraduate courses with ten or more students. This policy shall become effective in Spring 1997.

Rationale

Students will get a more accurate idea of their performance, and they will be assured that users of the transcript will also have this knowledge. A grade of B- in a course of substantial enrollment in which the median was C+ will often indicate a stronger performance than, e.g., a B+ in a large course in which the median is A. More accurate recognition of performance may encourage students to take courses in which the median grade is relatively low.

Outside users of the transcript will have more information on which to base their assessment of a student's performance in his or her courses.



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**Quest for Knowledge and Pursuit of Grades:
Information, Course Selection, and Grade Inflation**

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Grade Information and Grade Inflation: The Cornell Experiment

Talia Bar, Vrinda Kadiyali, and Asaf Zussman

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two related hypotheses

- 1)“the availability of online grade information will lead to increased enrollment into leniently graded courses.”
- 2)“high-ability students will be less attracted to the leniently graded courses than their peers.”

FIGURE 3 - INFORMATION GATHERING

daily visits to the median grades website: May 2002 - December 2004

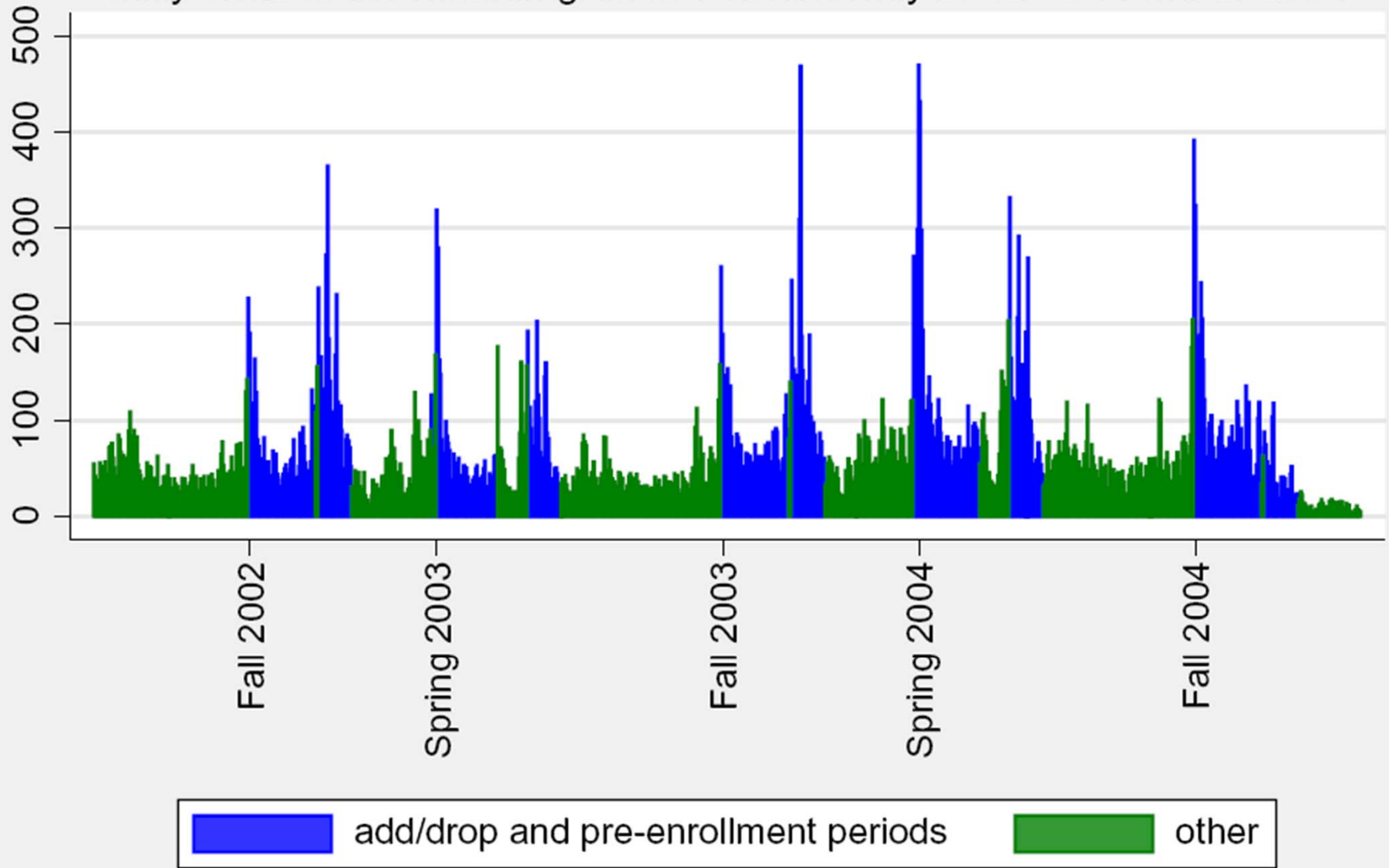
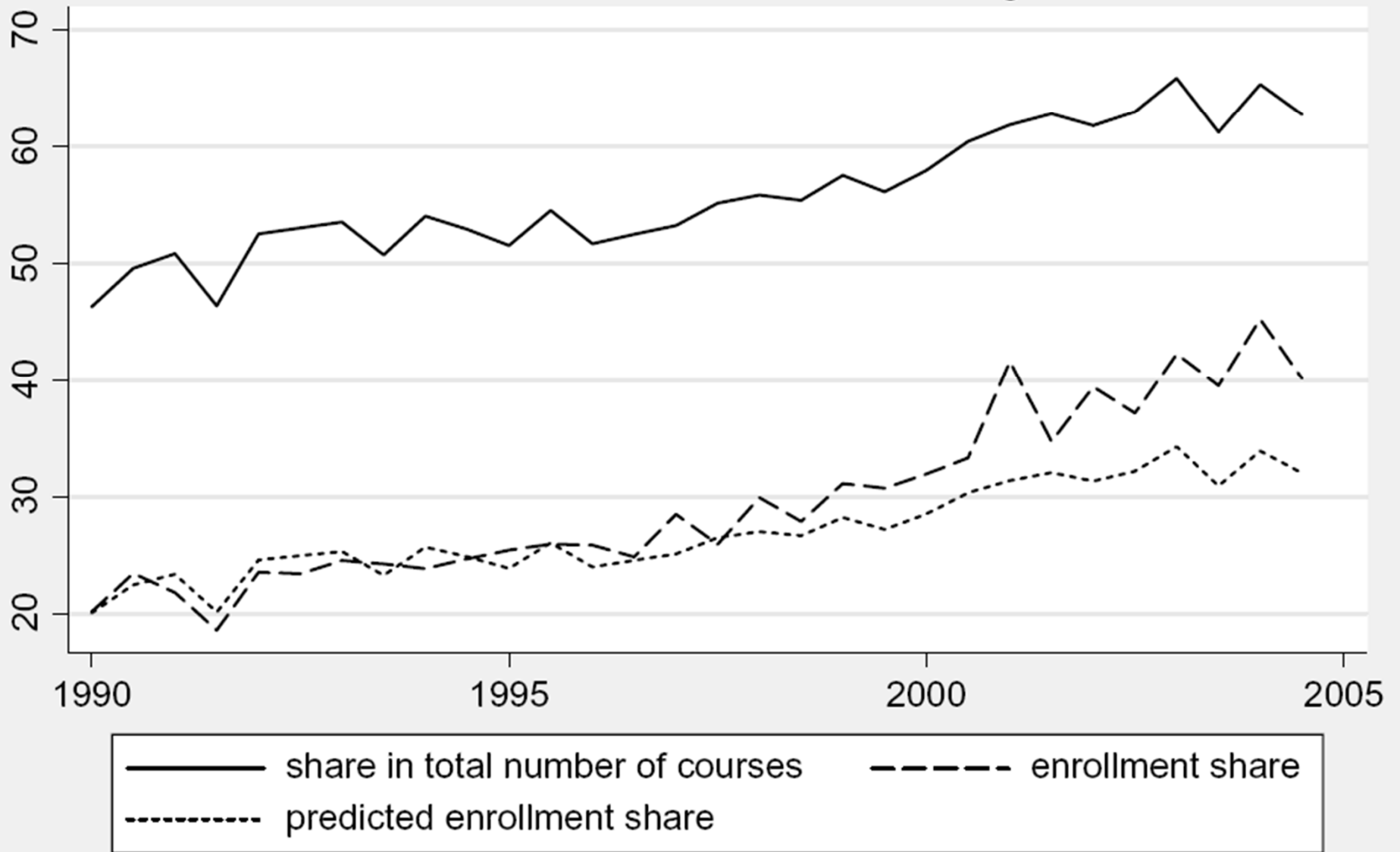


FIGURE 5 - COMPOSITIONAL GRADE INFLATION

courses with a median in the A range



“..... the provision of grade information online induced students to select leniently graded coursesto opt out of courses they would have selected absent considerations of grades.”