


**The University of New Mexico**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** LAW FACULTY  
**FROM:** ROBERT J. DESIDERIO, DEAN   
**DATE:** December 15, 1997  
**SUBJECT:** FACULTY MEETING

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**Faculty Meeting Agenda  
Tuesday, December 16, 1997  
Dean's Conference Room  
4:00 p.m.**

1. Approval of Minutes of November 17, 1997, Faculty Meeting
2. Grading Curve - Attached
3. New Business

RJD:mb

Attachment

December 16, 1997

Faculty Meeting Minutes  
School of Law  
Dean's Conference Room, 4:00 p.m.

Present: Baum, Bergman, Browde, DuMars, Ellis, Fritz, Gill, Hall, Hart, Kelly, Kovnat, Land, Martinez, Mathewson, Montoya, Moore, Norwood, Rapaport, Sedillo Lopez, Valencia-Weber, Winograd.

Student Representative: Berkheimer

Absent: Bobroff, Blumenfeld, Creel, Desiderio, Fort, Gonzales, MacPherson, Taylor, Zuni

Associate Dean Alfred Mathewson called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

**Spring Semester Work Study Funding:**

Associate Dean Peter A. Winograd reported that there is a serious problem with work study funding for the spring semester. The University has overspent their allotment, and will not certify any additional students. First-year students who are expecting to be able to work in the spring semester and do not have their award yet will not receive work study certification. No more applications will be accepted by the University--there will be no exceptions. It is possible that this freeze will continue through June 30, 1998. Dean Winograd stated that we should be able to fund more hours from Bondurant money, but that faculty members should realize work study hours for their research assistants will be tight. First-year course tutors, of course, will still be hired.

**Grading Curve:**

Associate Dean Alfred Mathewson distributed a report (attached) by the Curriculum Committee reviewing the law school's experience with the mandatory grading curve in response to concerns raised by several faculty members and students. The Committee sent out a questionnaire to the faculty and the student members of the Student Affairs Committee held an open meeting with the students to find out their concerns. After reviewing this information, the Curriculum Committee, by a majority vote, recommended abolishing the mandatory grading curve, but made no recommendation as to when any change in the current policy should become effective.

Professor Jenny Moore, Chair of the Student Affairs Committee, reported that there were a variety of views expressed by the students at the open forum, but there was a general lack of understanding of the curve. The students have requested an informational meeting (perhaps as part of an orientation session in the spring semester). The students

also stated that they wanted to be judged against a standard rather than be compared to each other.

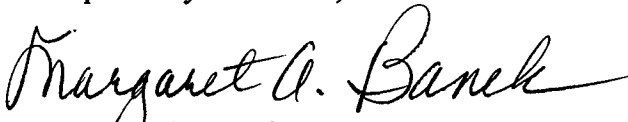
Associate Dean Mathewson reported that the Curriculum Committee received 21 responses to the questionnaire. The faculty is evenly divided on the continuation of the curve; however, those who wished to continue with the grading curve did request modifications.

After extensive discussion, Professor Ruth Kovnat moved to abolish the mandatory grading curve. Adjunct professors would not be bound by the curve, but would grade their courses Credit, C-, D+, D, D-, and F. Grades given in courses taught by full-time law professors which are abnormally high or low would be discussed with the dean. After additional discussion, it was the consensus of the faculty to postpone the vote on the grading curve until the next faculty meeting and to seek input from other faculty members who favor continuing the curve.

Associate Dean Peter A. Winograd suggested that Dean Desiderio put out a memo advising the students that the faculty will be voting on the continuation of the mandatory grading curve and that there might be a change sometime during the spring semester.

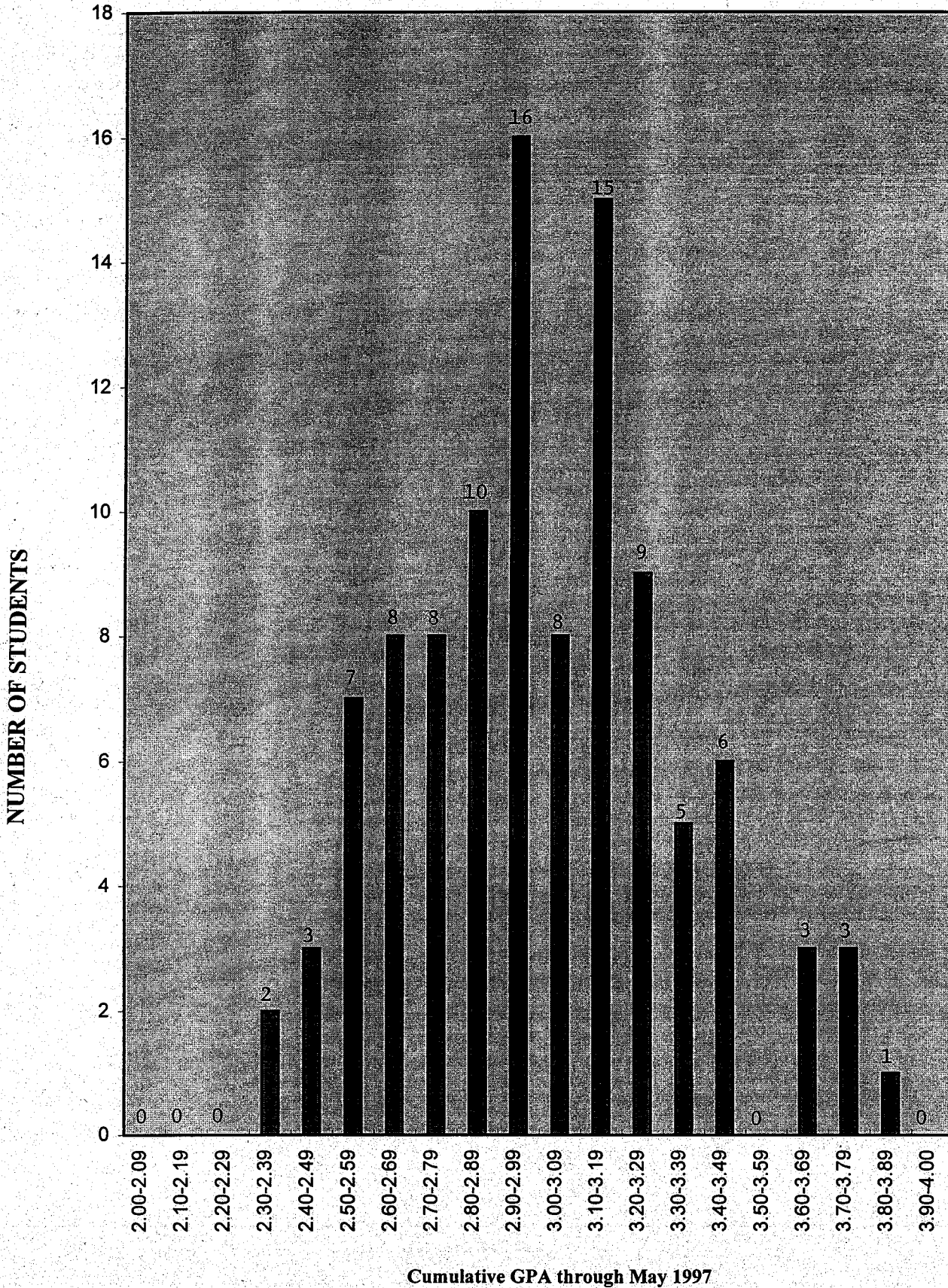
The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Margaret A. Banek

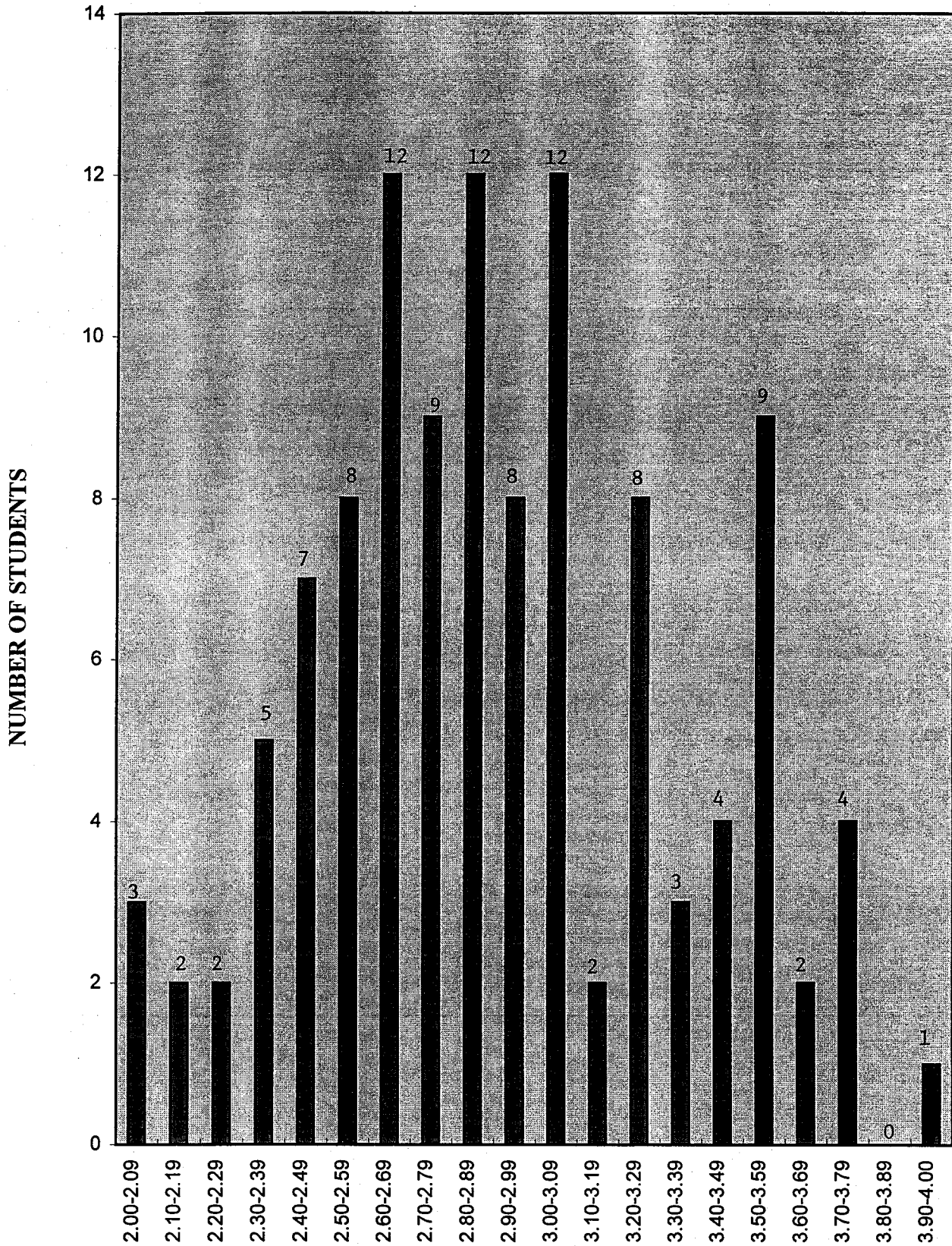
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Attachment

**Class of 1997 GPA Distribution (104 students)  
Spring Semester - 1997**



The difference between the cumulative GPA for a student at the bottom of the top third of the class (66%-ile) and the cumulative GPA for a student at the top of the bottom third of the class (33%-ile) is .30 on a 4.00 scale.

**Class of 1998 GPA Distribution (112 students)  
Spring Semester - 1997**

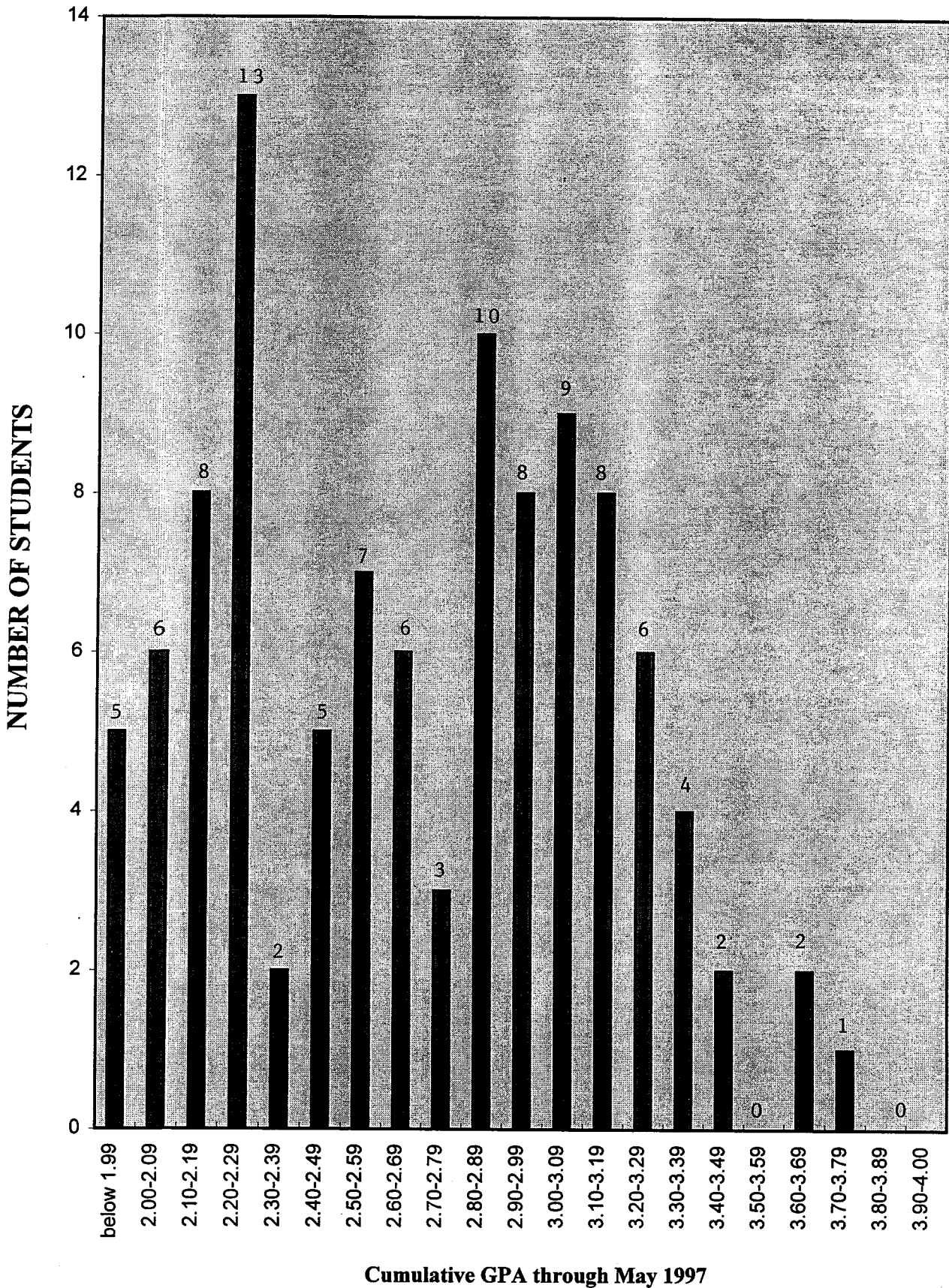


**Cumulative GPA through May 1997**

The difference between the cumulative GPA for a student at the bottom of the top third of the class (66%-ile) and the cumulative GPA for a student at the top of the bottom third of the class (33%-ile) is .40 on a 4.00 scale.



**Class of 1999 GPA Distribution (105 students)  
Spring Semester - 1997**



The difference between the cumulative GPA for a student at the bottom of the top third of the class (66%-ile) and the cumulative GPA for a student at the top of the bottom third of the class (33%-ile) is .54 on a 4.00 scale.