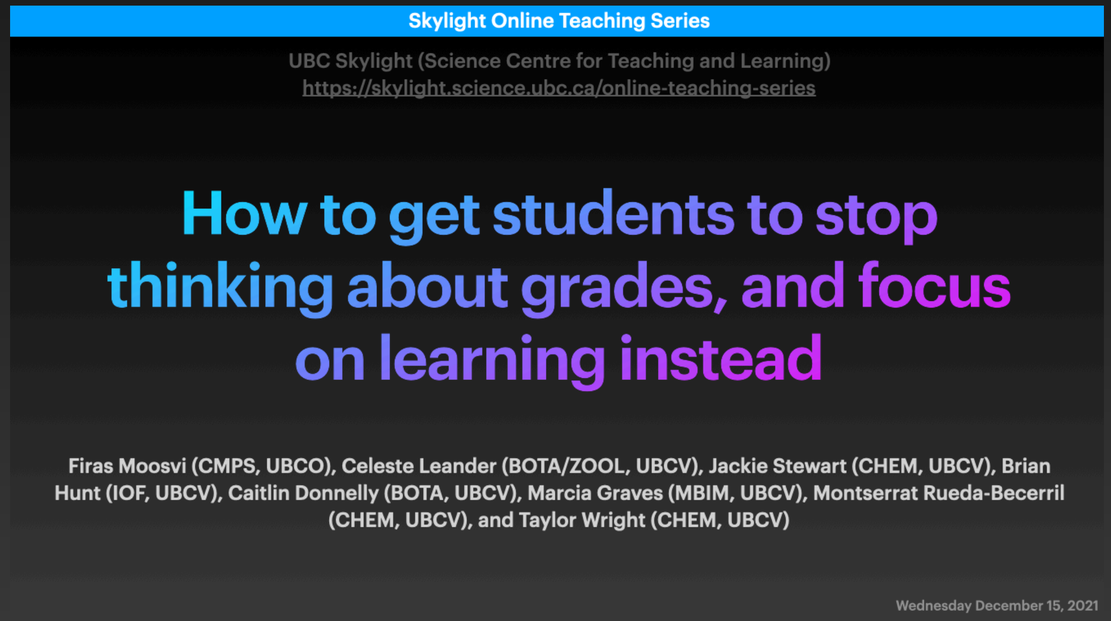
Welcome!

Say Hello in the Zoom chat!

(You can also include your role, department, and optionally, 1 sentence about what brought you to this session)



UBC Skylight (Science Centre for Teaching and Learning)
https://skylight.science.ubc.ca/online-teaching-series

How to get students to stop thinking about grades, and focus on learning instead

Firas Moosvi (CMPS, UBCO), Celeste Leander (BOTA/ZOOL, UBCV), Jackie Stewart (CHEM, UBCV), Brian Hunt (IOF, UBCV), Caitlin Donnelly (BOTA, UBCV), Marcia Graves (MBIM, UBCV), Montserrat Rueda-Becerril (CHEM, UBCV), and Taylor Wright (CHEM, UBCV)

Wednesday December 15, 2021

Land Acknowledgement

A student walks past a display at Ottawa's Hillcrest High School on Canada's first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Sept. 30, 2021. (Blair Gable/Reuters) - Ottawa earmarks $40B for Indigenous child welfare compensation | CBC News · Dec 13, 2021 |

Zoom Etiquette

- Please continue to keep your microphone muted during the presentation (except during Q&A periods).
- Please do write your questions and comments in the Zoom chat as we go, participants should free to respond and comment too!
- We will pause after each section for some Q&A, you can raise your hand on Zoom to join the queue.
- Presenter slides (PDF) are posted in the Zoom chat, and will also be posted on the Skylight Online Teaching Series website after the session.
- During breakout rooms, if you cannot participate, there’s no need to leave the session! Feel free to hang out in the Main Room and take a break for a few mins!

Presenters

Firas Moosvi
CMPS - UBCO

Celeste Leander
BOTA/ZOOL - UBCV

Jackie Stewart
CHEM - UBCV

Brian Hunt
IOF - UBCV

Caitlin Donnelly
BOTA - UBCV

Marcia Graves
MBIM - UBCV

Montserrat Rueda-Becerril
CHEM - UBCV

Taylor Wright
CHEM - UBCV

UBC Skylight (Science Centre for Teaching and Learning)
https://skylight.science.ubc.ca/online-teaching-series

How to get students to stop thinking about grades, and focus on learning instead

Firas Moosvi (CMPS, UBCO), Celeste Leander (BOTA/ZOOL, UBCV), Jackie Stewart (CHEM, UBCV), Brian Hunt (IOF, UBCV), Caitlin Donnelly (BOTA, UBCV), Marcia Graves (MBIM, UBCV), Montserrat Rueda-Becerril (CHEM, UBCV), and Taylor Wright (CHEM, UBCV)

Wednesday December 15, 2021

Session Outline

1. What are some practical options for shifting our focus to learning?
2. Why is it important to focus on learning instead of grades?
3. Course policies and activities that may promote learning.
4. Taking a scholarly approach to explore the impact of grades on feedback.
5. What if students were in charge of their own learning ?
6. What are some challenges and opportunities ?

What can you do next?

What are some practical options for shifting our focus to learning?

Alternative
Assessments

Alternative
Grading Systems

Alternative Assessments

Features of Alternative Assessments

Traditional Assessment	Alternative Assessment
Requires right answer	Requires high-quality performance or product, along with justifications of decisions.
Questions must be unknown to students in advance	Instructions/questions/purpose must be known to students in advance.
Disconnected from the real world	Tied to real-world contexts and constraints. Requires student to solve realistic problem.
Isolations of skills, focus on facts	A range of skills/knowledge need to be integrated in order to solve a problem.
Easily scored	Includes complex tasks for which there may not be a right answer.
"One shot" approach	Iterative in nature.
Given a score	Opportunity to provide diagnostic feedback.

Source:
Ryerson Learning & Teaching office
Indiana University Center for innovative Teaching and Learning

Alternative Assessments

Features of Alternative Assessments

Traditional Assessment	Alternative Assessment	What Makes it Authentic
Requires right answer	Requires high-quality performance or product, along with justifications of decisions.	Students must be able to think through why they made decisions that resulted in final product.
Questions must be unknown to students in advance	Instructions/questions/purpose must be known to students in advance.	Tasks that are to be judged should be known ahead of time. Rubrics should be provided.
Disconnected from the real world	Tied to real-world contexts and constraints. Requires student to solve realistic problem.	Task is similar in nature as to what would be encountered by a real-life practitioner.
Isolations of skills, focus on facts	A range of skills/knowledge need to be integrated in order to solve a problem.	Tasks are multi-step and multifaceted.
Easily scored	Includes complex tasks for which there may not be a right answer.	Meaningful assessment and feedback is emphasized.
"One shot" approach	Iterative in nature.	Knowledge and skills are used in more than one way.
Given a score	Opportunity to provide diagnostic feedback.	Designed to give practical experience and improve future performance.

Source:
Ryerson Learning & Teaching office
Indiana University Center for innovative Teaching and Learning

Examples

Alternative **Assessments**

- Abstract
- Advertisement
- Annotated bibliography
- Biography or autobiography
- Brochure, poster
- Budget with rationale
- Case analysis
- Chart, graph, visual aid
- Client report for an agency
- Cognitive map, web or diagram
- Contemplative essay
- Debate
- Definition
- Description of a process
- Diagram, table, chart
- Dialogue
- Diary of a real or fictional historic character
- Essay exam
- Executive summary
- Fill in the blank test
- Flowchart
- Group discussion

- Instructional manual
- "Introduction" to an essay or scientific report (rather than the full report)
- Inventory
- Laboratory or field notes
- Letter to the editor
- Matching test
- Materials and methods plan
- Mathematical problem
- Memo
- "Micro-theme" (a tight, coherent essay typed on a 5x 8 note card)
- Multimedia or slide presentation
- Multiple-choice test
- Narrative
- News or feature story
- Notes on reading
- Oral report
- Outline
- Personal letter
- Plan for conducting a project

- Poem, play, choreography
- Question
- Regulations, laws, rules
- Research proposal addressed to a granting agency
- Review of book, play, exhibit
- Review of literature
- Rough draft or freewrite (writer writes freely, with no constraints for a certain amount of clock time)
- "Start" (a thesis statement and outline or list of ideas for developing)
- Statement of assumptions
- Summary or précis
- Taxonomy or set of categories
- Technical or scientific report
- Term paper, research paper
- Thesis sentence (sentence that expresses author's main point)
- Word problem

and much more... !

Queen's Centre for Teaching and Learning; Ryerson Learning & teaching office; Berkley Center for Teaching & Learning: Alternatives to Traditional Testing

Alternative
Assessments

Alternative
Grading Systems

Alternative Grading Systems

Focus	Grading Systems
Performance	- Traditional Grading - Grading on a Curve
Skills or Competencies	- Competency-based Grading - Standards-based Grading - Skill-based Grading - Specifications-based grading - Mastery-based Learning
Work Completed	- Labour-based Grading - Contract Grading
Creativity and Agency	- Portfolio Grading - Ungrading

Grading for Growth

Standards and Contracts and Competencies, oh my!

A review of some common forms of alternative assessment

David Clark
Aug 23

There is a wide variety in alternative assessment methods, and even more names for them. You might have heard some of these names and wondered, “What is that?” In today’s post, I’m going to describe some of these approaches to assessment that *aren’t* standards-based grading, specifications grading, or things along those lines. I’ll take a look at their common features and differences with the forms of assessment that we more often discuss on this blog.

Alternative Grading Systems

Source: Grading for Growth Substack Blog Post

There are other options!

&

You are not alone!


Why is it important to
focus on learning instead of grades?

CBE—Life Sciences Education
Vol. 13, 159–166, Summer 2014

Feature
Approaches to Biology Teaching and Learning

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently)

Jeffrey Schinske* and Kimberly Tanner†

*Department of Biology, De Anza College, Cupertino, CA 95014; †Department of Biology, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently) by Jeffrey Schinske and Kimberly Tanner

Grades as an Objective Evaluation of Student Knowledge—Do Grades Provide Reliable Information about Student Learning?

In summary, grades often fail to provide reliable information about student learning. Grades awarded can be inconsistent both for a single instructor and among different instructors for reasons that have little to do with a students' content knowledge or learning advances. Even multiple-choice tests, which can be graded with great consistency, have the potential to provide misleading information on student knowledge.

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently) by Jeffrey Schinske and Kimberly Tanner

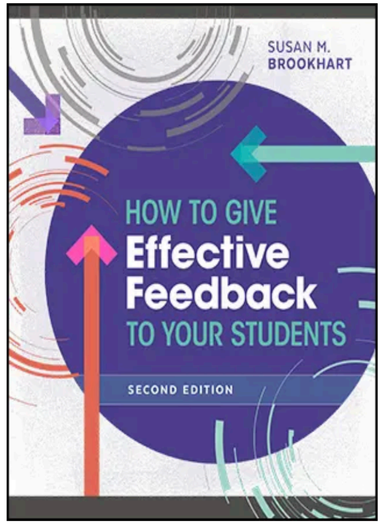
Grades as Feedback on Performance—Does Grading Provide Feedback to Help Students Understand and Improve upon Their Deficiencies?

> [This] work affirms an observation that many classroom teachers have made about their students: if a paper is returned with both a grade and a comment, many students will pay attention to the grade and ignore the comment.
>
> —Brookhart (2008, p. 8)

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently) by Jeffrey Schinske and Kimberly Tanner

Grades as Feedback on Performance—Does Grading Provide Feedback to Help Students Understand and Improve upon Their Deficiencies?

> [This] work affirms an observation that many classroom teachers have made about their students: if a paper is returned with both a grade and a comment, many students will pay attention to the grade and ignore the comment.
>
> —Brookhart (2008, p. 8)



How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students, 2nd Edition

By Susan M. Brookhart

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently) by Jeffrey Schinske and Kimberly Tanner

Grades as a Tool for Comparing Students—Is Grading on a Curve the Fairest Way to Grade?

In brief, curved grading creates a competitive classroom environment, alienates certain groups of talented students, and often results in grades unrelated to content mastery. Curving is therefore not the fairest way to assign grades.

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently) by Jeffrey Schinske and Kimberly Tanner

Grades as a Motivator of Student Effort—Does Grading Motivate Students to Learn?

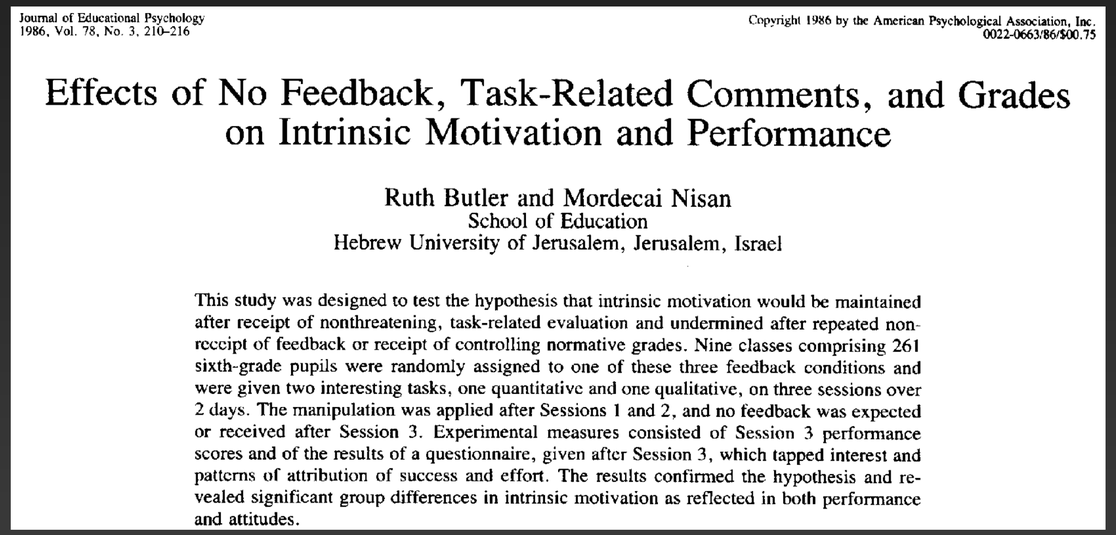
> Our results suggest…that the information routinely given in schools—that is, grades—may encourage an emphasis on quantitative aspects of learning, depress creativity, foster fear of failure, and undermine interest.
>
> —Butler and Nisan (1986)

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently) by Jeffrey Schinske and Kimberly Tanner

Grades as a Motivator of Student Effort—Does Grading Motivate Students to Learn?

Our results suggest...that the information routinely given in schools—that is, grades—may encourage an emphasis on quantitative aspects of learning, depress creativity, foster fear of failure, and undermine interest.

—Butler and Nisan (1986)



Journal of Educational Psychology
1986, Vol. 78, No. 3, 210-216

0022-0663/86/$00.75

Effects of No Feedback, Task-Related Comments, and Grades on Intrinsic Motivation and Performance

Ruth Butler and Mordecai Nisan
School of Education
Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel

This study was designed to test the hypothesis that intrinsic motivation would be maintained after receipt of nonthreatening, task-related evaluation and undermined after repeated non-receipt of feedback or receipt of controlling normative grades. Nine classes comprising 261 sixth-grade pupils were randomly assigned to one of these three feedback conditions and were given two interesting tasks, one quantitative and one qualitative, on three sessions over 2 days. The manipulation was applied after Sessions 1 and 2, and no feedback was expected or received after Session 3. Experimental measures consisted of Session 3 performance scores and of the results of a questionnaire, given after Session 3, which tapped interest and patterns of attribution of success and effort. The results confirmed the hypothesis and revealed significant group differences in intrinsic motivation as reflected in both performance and attitudes.

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently) by Jeffrey Schinske and Kimberly Tanner

Game changer:

“Just because students create/produce ‘stuff’ does NOT mean we have to grade all of it. There is pedagogical value in the mere creation of it.”

- Many people way smarter than me

Breakout Room Instructions

Question Prompt:

“Do you have a story or reflection about how grade-focused your students or classes are” ?

Share in your breakout rooms!

If for whatever reason you cannot or do not want to participate in breakout rooms (childcare, marking, whatever other reason) - no worries!

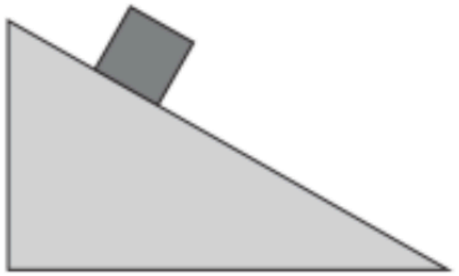
Feel free to stay (or come back) to the Main Room here and take a 5-7 minute break!

Course policies and activities that may promote learning

Course Policy 1: Unlimited attempts on assigned Homework problems

HW6.2. Block on a Ramp

A mass of 8 kg sits at rest on an incline making an angle of 22 $^\circ$ with respect to the horizontal.



If μ_s = 0.3, what is the friction force on the block? Choose the best answer.

- (a) 29.0 N, down the incline
- (b) 73.0 N, up the incline
- (c) 29.0 N, up the incline
- (d) 8.8 N, down the incline
- (e) 22.0 N, down the incline

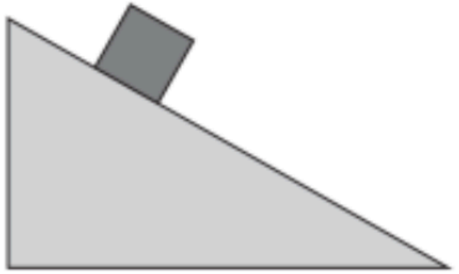
Save & Grade *2 attempts left* | Save only

Additional attempts available with new variants

Course Policy 1: Unlimited attempts on assigned Homework problems

HW6.2. Block on a Ramp

A mass of 8 kg sits at rest on an incline making an angle of 22 $^\circ$ with respect to the horizontal.



If μ_s = 0.3, what is the friction force on the block? Choose the best answer.

- (a) 29.0 N, down the incline
- (b) 73.0 N, up the incline
- (c) 29.0 N, up the incline
- (d) 8.8 N, down the incline
- (e) 22.0 N, down the incline

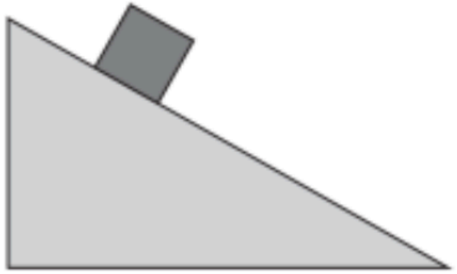
Save & Grade *2 attempts left* | Save only

Additional attempts available with new variants

Course Policy 1: Unlimited attempts on assigned Homework problems

HW6.2. Block on a Ramp

A mass of 8 kg sits at rest on an incline making an angle of 22 $^\circ$ with respect to the horizontal.



If μ_s = 0.3, what is the friction force on the block? Choose the best answer.

- (a) 29.0 N, down the incline
- (b) 73.0 N, up the incline
- (c) 29.0 N, up the incline
- (d) 8.8 N, down the incline
- (e) 22.0 N, down the incline

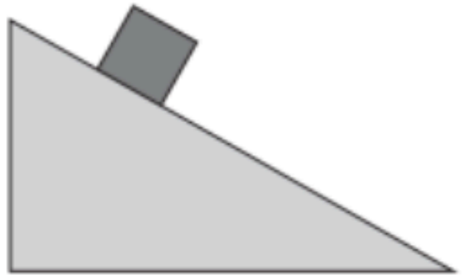
Save & Grade *2 attempts left* | Save only

Additional attempts available with new variants

Course Policy 1: Unlimited attempts on assigned Homework problems

HW6.2. Block on a Ramp

A mass of 8 kg sits at rest on an incline making an angle of 22 ° with respect to the horizontal.



If μ_s = 0.3, what is the friction force on the block? Choose the best answer.

- (a) 29.0 N, down the incline
- (b) 73.0 N, up the incline
- (c) 29.0 N, up the incline ✓
- (d) 8.8 N, down the incline
- (e) 22.0 N, down the incline

✓ 100%

Try a new variant

Course Policy 1: Unlimited attempts on assigned Homework problems

		AID	Students	Scores	Mean Score	Mean Duration
Homework						
HW1	HW1 - Introduction to PrairieLearn	HW1	338		95%	42m
HW2	HW2 - Math and Vectors	HW2	325		92%	1h 12m
HW3	HW3 - Kinematics in 1D	HW3	303		88%	2h 52m
HW4	HW4 - Kinematics 2D	HW4	300		79%	3h 55m
HW5	HW5 - Forces I	HW5	294		95%	2h 13m
HW6	HW6 - Forces II	HW6	292		91%	2h 42m
HW7	HW7 - Work and Energy	HW7	287		99%	1h 25m
HW8	HW8 - Energy	HW8	280		89%	2h 17m
HW9	HW9 - Momentum and Impulse	HW9	279		88%	2h 45m
HW10	HW10 - Torque and Rotation	HW10	273		92%	1h 27m
HW11	HW11 - Review (Bonus)	HW11	240		65%	2h 4m

Course Policy 2: Unlimited attempts on assigned Homework problems

For **only the Homework assignments** this year, here is the flexible grading policy I have instituted:

Submission Time	Maximum Possible Grade
Before the deadline	110%
2 days (48 hour grace period) after the deadline	100%
7 days after original deadline	80%
14 days after original deadline	60%
Any time before last day of classes	50%

Course Activity 3: Frequent Testing Paradigm

npj | science of learning

Explore content · About the journal · Publish with us

nature > npj science of learning > articles > article

Article | Open Access | Published: 12 November 2021

Interleaved practice enhances memory and problem-solving ability in undergraduate physics

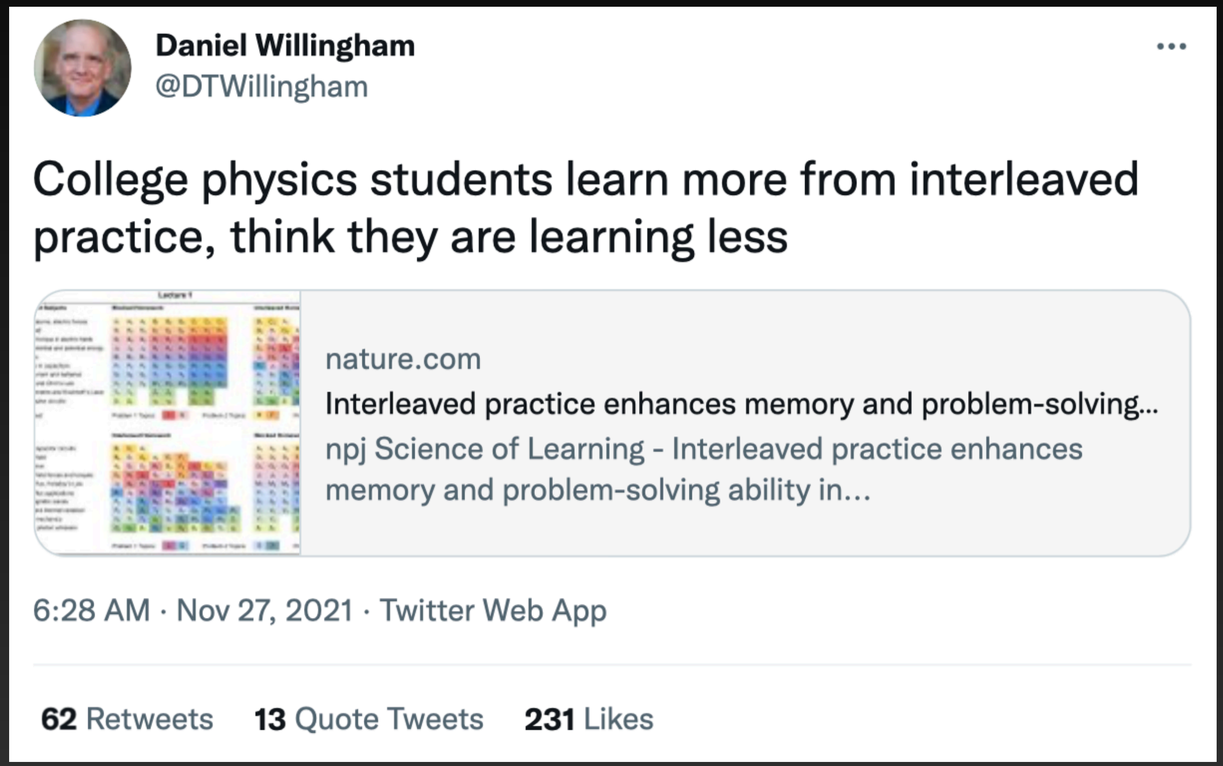
Joshua Samani & Steven C. Pan

npj Science of Learning **6**, Article number: 32 (2021) | Cite this article

2998 Accesses | **86** Altmetric | Metrics

Abstract

We investigated whether continuously alternating between topics during practice, or interleaved practice, improves memory and the ability to solve problems in undergraduate physics. Over 8 weeks, students in two lecture sections of a university-level introductory physics course completed thrice-weekly homework assignments, each containing problems that were interleaved (i.e., alternating topics) or conventionally arranged (i.e., one topic practiced at a time). On two surprise criterial tests containing novel and more challenging problems, students recalled more relevant information and more frequently produced correct solutions after having engaged in interleaved practice (with observed median improvements of 50% on test 1 and 125% on test 2). Despite benefiting more from interleaved practice, students tended to rate the technique as more difficult and incorrectly believed that they learned less from it. Thus, in a domain that entails considerable amounts of problem-solving, replacing conventionally arranged with interleaved homework can (despite perceptions to the contrary) foster longer lasting and more generalizable learning.



Course Activity 1: Frequent Testing Paradigm

Tests

T 1	Test 1	Test1	289		65%	46m
T 1-Bonus	Test 1 - Bonus	Test1-Bonus	214		82%	45m
T 2	Test 2	Test2	275		72%	48m
T 2-Bonus	Test 2 - Bonus	Test2-Bonus	212		70%	46m
T 3	Test 3	Test3	274		60%	42m
T 3-Bonus	Test 3 - Bonus	Test3-Bonus	235		72%	36m
T 4	Test 4	Test4	258		59%	50m
T 4-Bonus	Test 4 - Bonus	Test4-Bonus	249		69%	45m
T 5	Test 5	Test5	262		60%	49m
T 5-Bonus	Test 5 - Bonus	Test5-Bonus	231		77%	42m

Course Activity 3: Frequent Testing Paradigm

Tests

T 1	Test 1	Test1	289		65%	46m
T 1-Bonus	Test 1 - Bonus	Test1-Bonus	214		82%	45m
T 2	Test 2	Test2	275		72%	48m
T 2-Bonus	Test 2 - Bonus	Test2-Bonus	212		70%	46m
T 3	Test 3	Test3	274		60%	42m
T 3-Bonus	Test 3 - Bonus	Test3-Bonus	235		72%	36m
T 4	Test 4	Test4	258		59%	50m
T 4-Bonus	Test 4 - Bonus	Test4-Bonus	249		69%	45m
T 5	Test 5	Test5	262		60%	49m
T 5-Bonus	Test 5 - Bonus	Test5-Bonus	231		77%	42m

Course Activity 2: Learning Logs and Frequent Reflection

Q11 Earned Grade

2 Points

As an educator, I am very aware that learning is not easily measured by scores on labs, tests, and exams. There are many other ways and sources of learning, and I admit that not everything can be captured by the assessments that I give you.

Pretend that there were no guidelines in the syllabus for calculating your final grade. Based on the work that you have done all semester, and the learning goals for the course, what grade (out of 100) do you think you have earned?

Here are the learning goals for this course:

Insert Course Learning Goals

Try **NOT** to focus on calculating your earned grade and avoid mentioning or referring to average grades on the labs, tests, homework, or even the posted grade with your grade before the final exam.

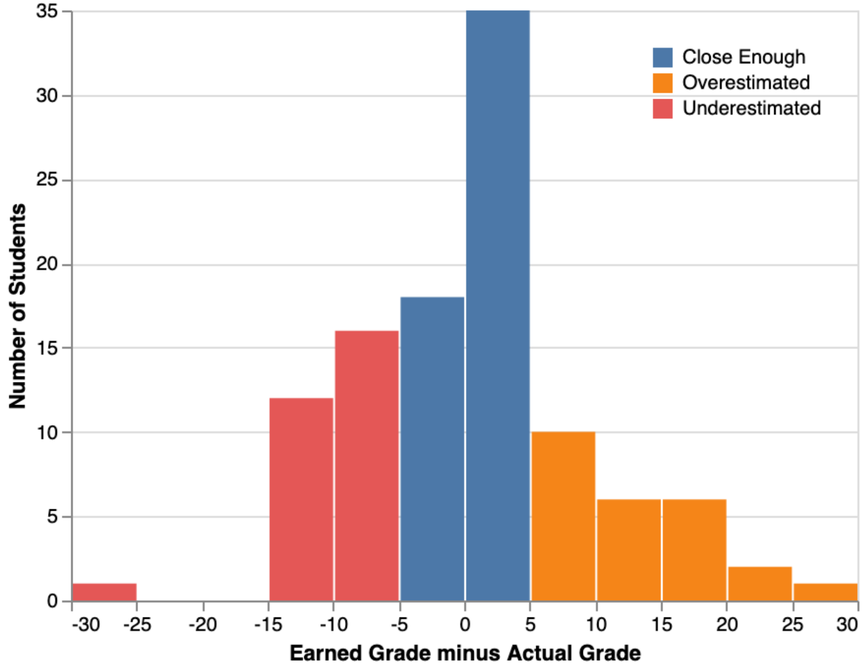
What is some other evidence of your learning? Consider not just what you have learned, but how much effort you put into the course (and whether that effort was productive or not), and honestly assess how much of the material you feel truly comfortable with.

Pretend that there were no guidelines in the syllabus for calculating your final grade. Based on the work that you have done all semester, and the learning goals for the course, what grade (out of 100) do you think you have earned in Course ?

Course Activity 2: Learning Logs and Frequent Reflection

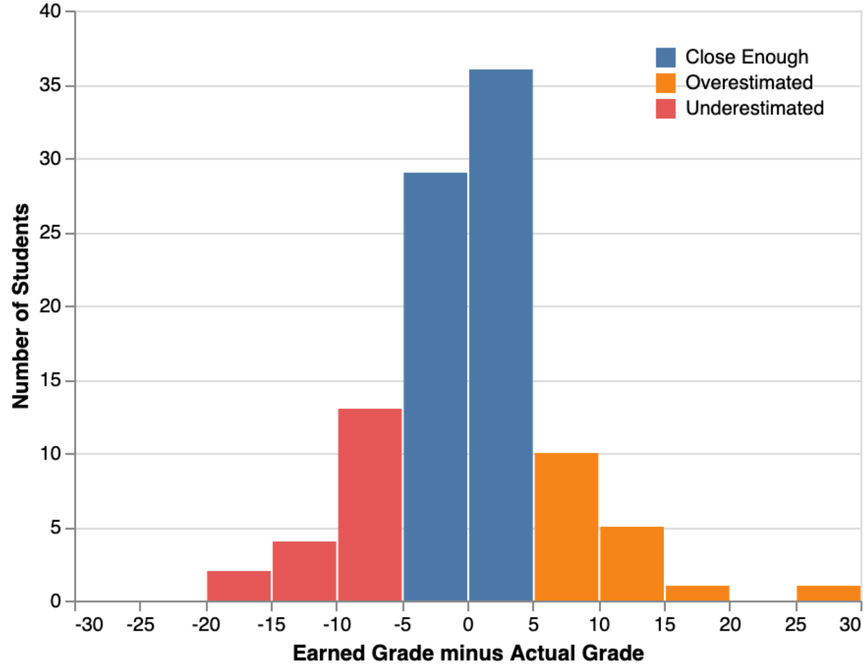
On the COSC 111 final exam, I asked my students what they think they earned in the course (ignoring the syllabus)

25 overestimated by >5%, 29 underestimated by >5%,
53 were close enough, and 38 did not answer



On the COSC 123 final exam, I asked my students what they think they earned in the course (ignoring the syllabus)

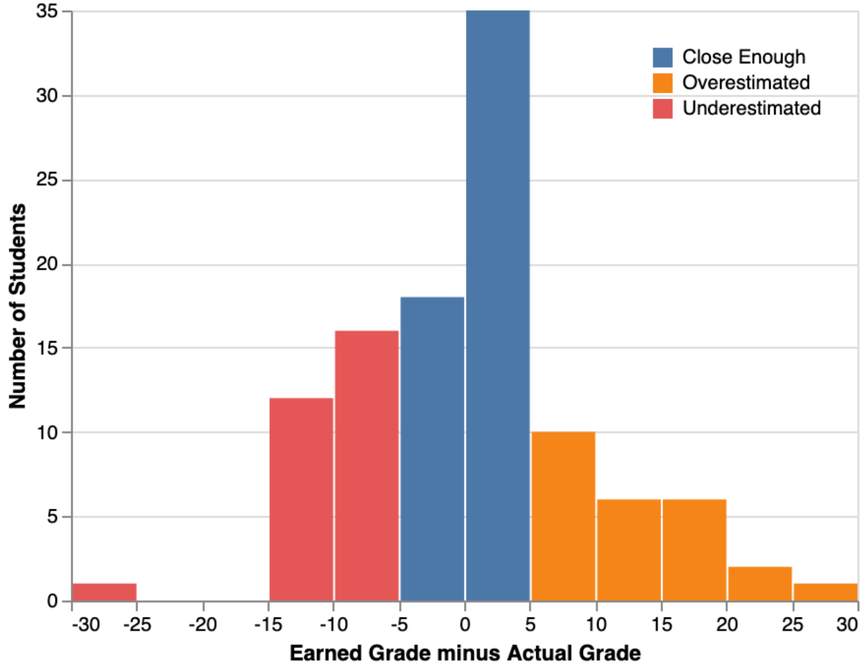
17 overestimated by >5%, 19 underestimated by >5%,
65 were close enough, and 23 did not answer



Course Activity 2: Learning Logs and Frequent Reflection

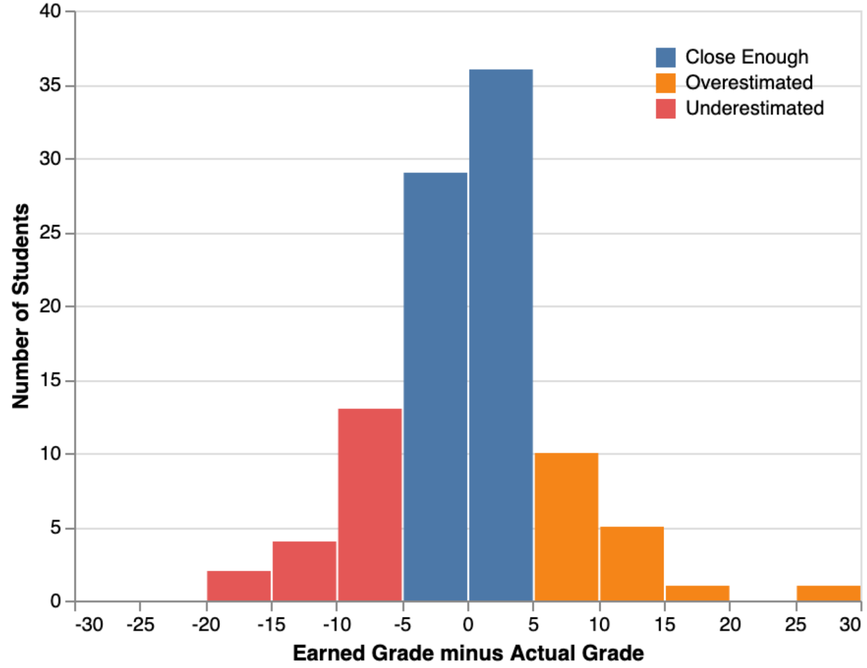
On the COSC 111 final exam, I asked my students what they think they earned in the course (ignoring the syllabus)

25 overestimated by >5%, 29 underestimated by >5%,
53 were close enough, and 38 did not answer



On the COSC 123 final exam, I asked my students what they think they earned in the course (ignoring the syllabus)

17 overestimated by >5%, 19 underestimated by >5%,
65 were close enough, and 23 did not answer




Taking a scholarly approach to
explore the impact of grades on feedback.

SCIE 113 Ungrading Research Pilot

xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Traditional Territory

Taylor Wright, Montse Rueda, Brian Hunt, Marcia Graves, Caitlin Donnelly

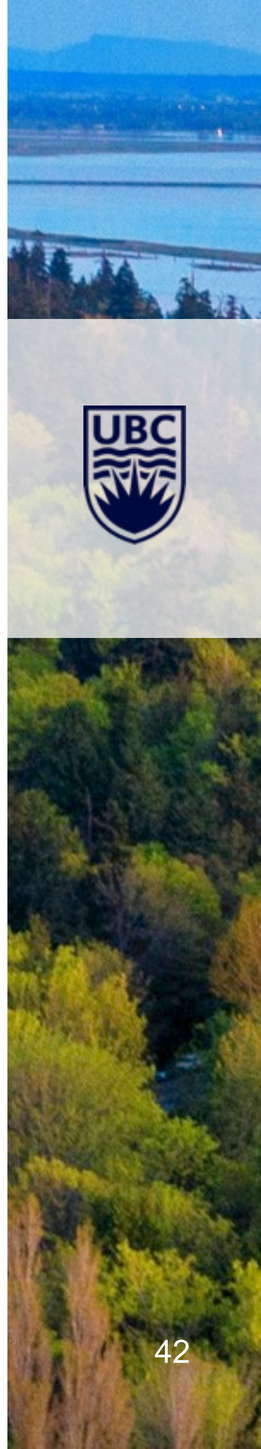
SCIE 113 Background

- **Scientific Communication** course focused on building arguments
  - Claims, Reason, Evidence, Uncertainty, Bias

- Open to **1st Year students** in the Faculty of Science

- 8 Sections of approximately 25 students each

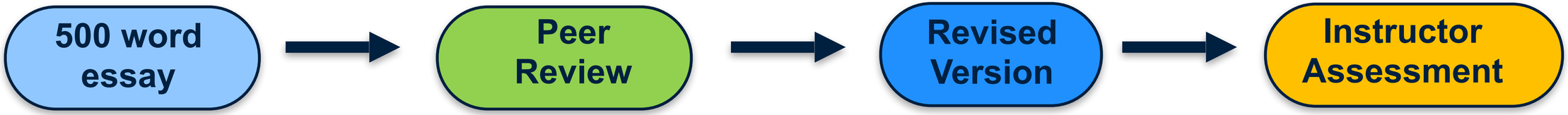
- Both **online** and **in-person** sections



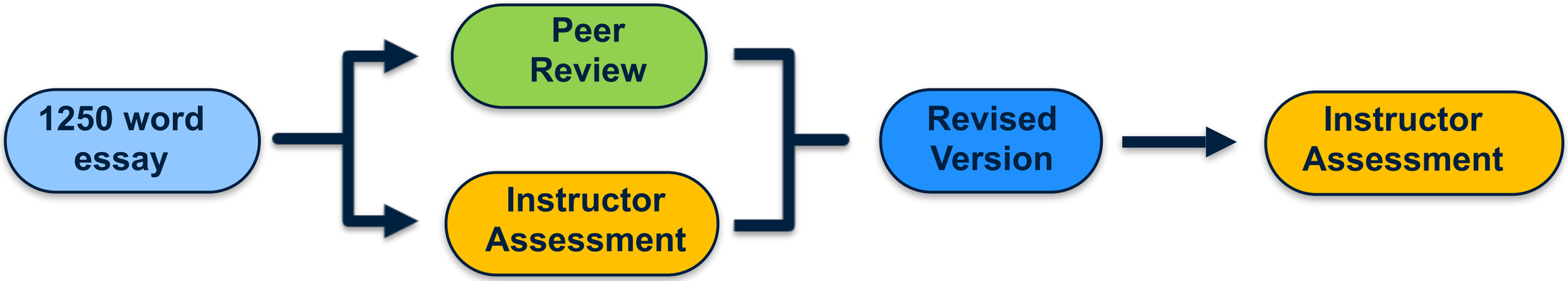
Major Assignments

- **2 major essays** worth ~50% of final grade
  - Argumentative essay with claim, reason, evidence, counterargument

Essay 1



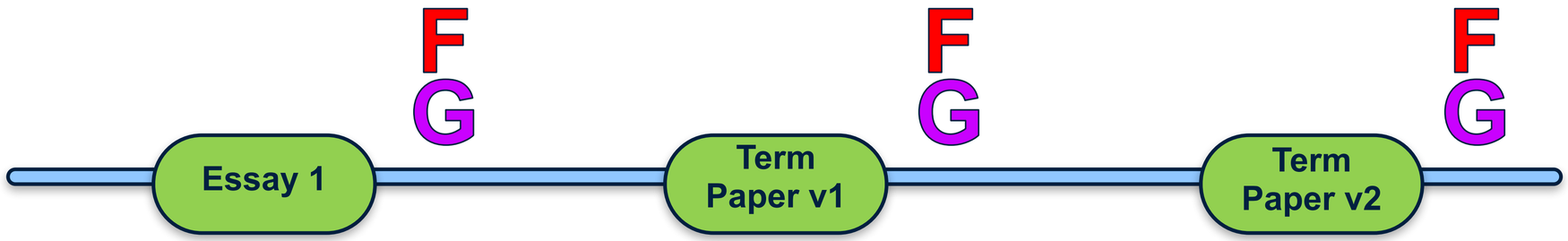
Term Paper



Current Grading Practices

- Each instructor has complete autonomy with when they **release grades to students**

Traditional Marking



F = Feedback released **G = Grades released**

Research Question

Does **de-coupling feedback and grades** promote greater student engagement with **metacognition** and self-reflection for written STEM essays?

- How accurate are students at self-assessing their work? Does this improve?
- What are **students perceptions** of ungrading practices?
- What motivates students in SCIE 113?

Self Assessment

Instructor Assessment

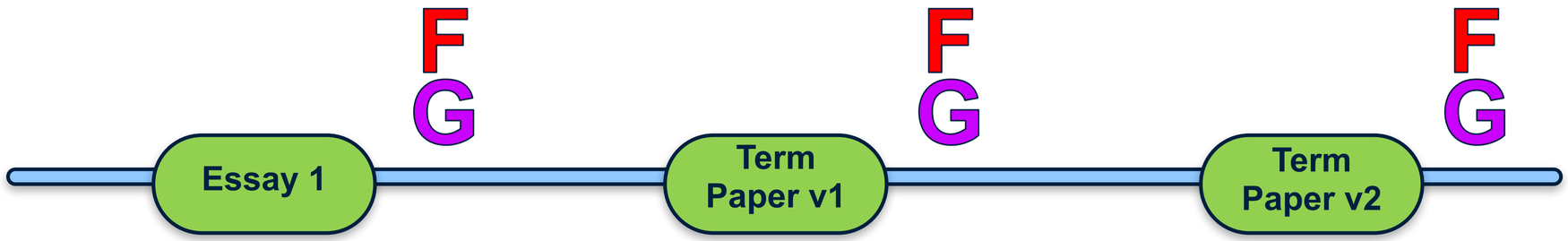
- Students submitted a **self-assessment** along **with every submission to instructor**
  - Self-assign a mark using the same rubric for instructor assessment
  - Also reflect on what areas of strength and weakness

Type your predicted scores in this column.	Fail (0-49%)	Poor (50-54%)	Acceptable (55-67%)	Good (68-79%)	Excellent (80-100%)
Claim Predicted score: Max score: 10	The paper lacks a claim. It may have a descriptive statement rather than a claim as the thesis statement.	The claim is both unclear and inconsistent.	The paper has a claim, but it is too broad. Or, the claim is inconsistent (e.g., the paper supports a different claim than that which is in the introduction).	The claim is clear and debatable, but could be more specific. It is consistent throughout the paper.	The claim is clear, specific, and debatable. It is consistent throughout the paper.

Reminder: Current Grading Practices

- Each instructor has complete autonomy with when they **release grades to students**

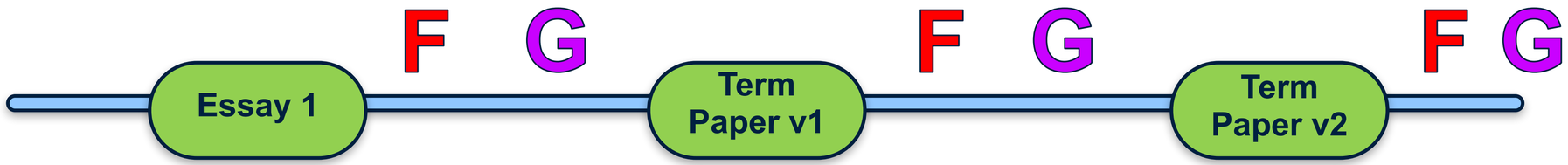
Traditional Marking



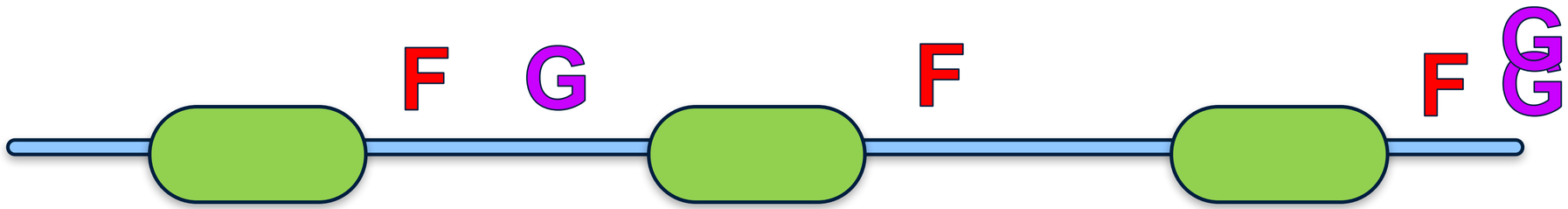
F = Feedback released **G = Grades released**

NEW: Detaching Grades from Feedback

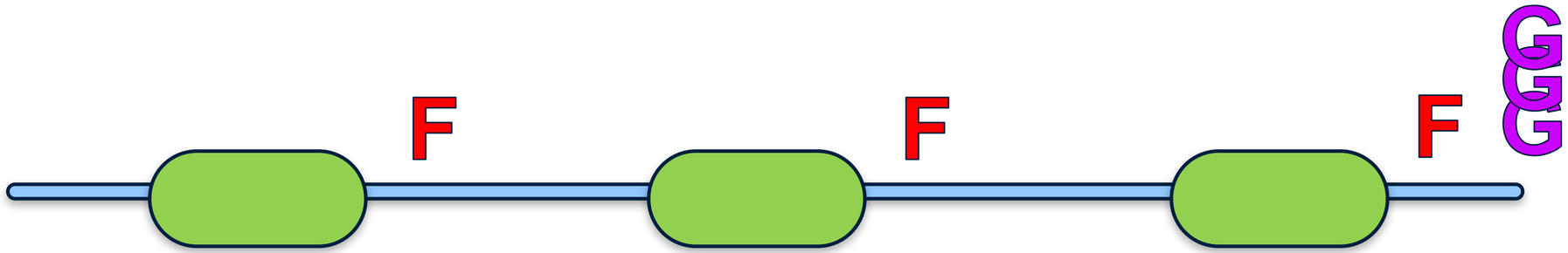
Mild



Medium



Large



F = Feedback released **G** = Grades released

Reflections on SCIE 113 Ungrading

Montse Rueda, Brian Hunt, Marcia Graves, Caitlin Donnelly

Reflections (Caitlin)

-Withheld grades on term paper version 1 only

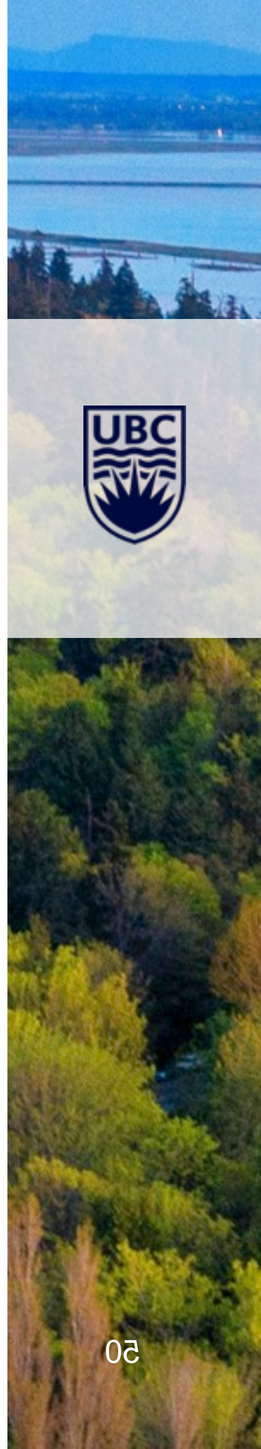
-Student self-assessments were consistently higher than mine (6.5% higher on Essay 1, 7% on term paper version 1)

-Shift in the focus of student reflections from **written expression to argumentation**

-Essay 1: 18/24 noted written expression as a major weakness, requesting feedback

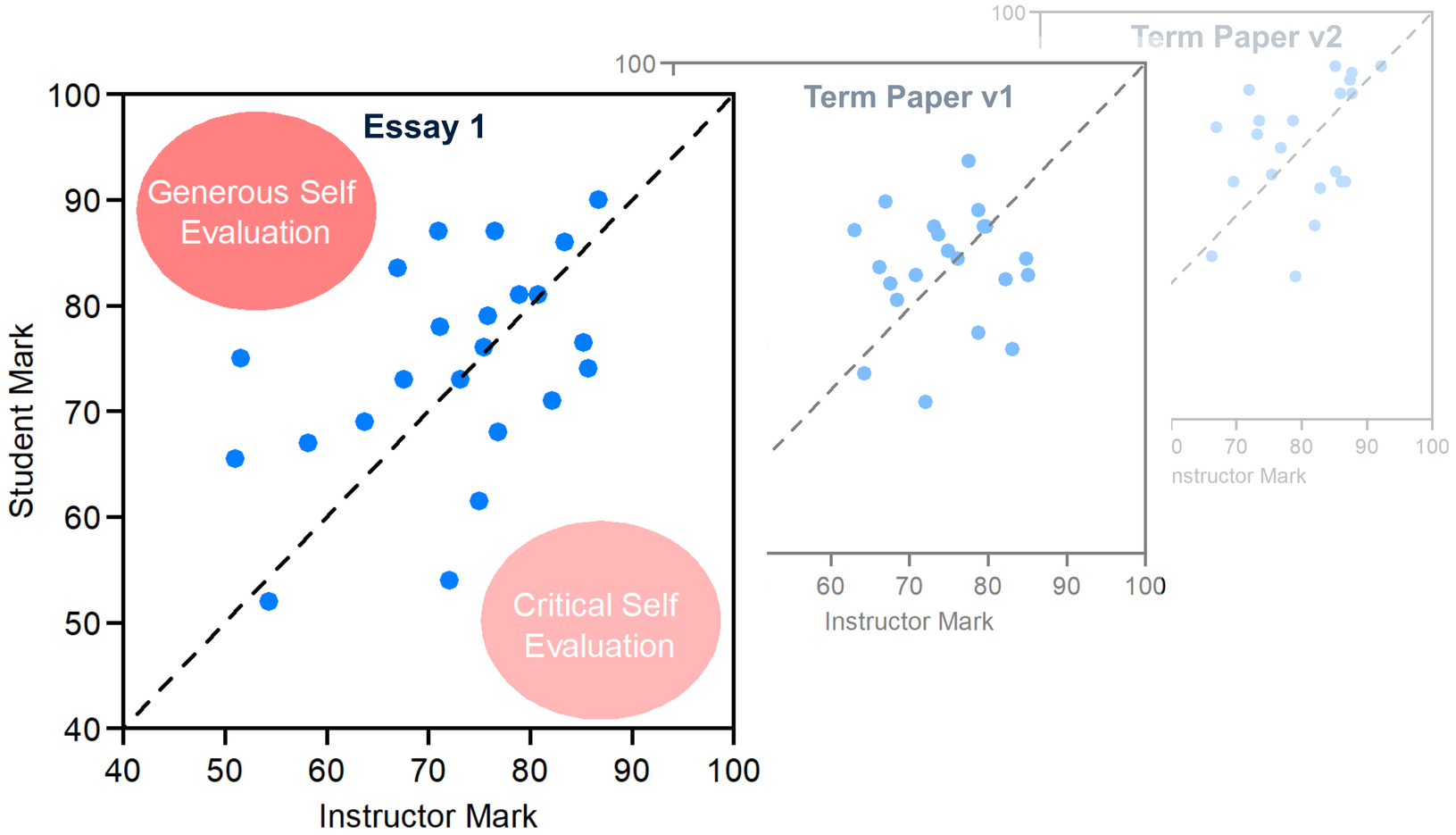
-Term paper version 1: 12/24 focused on written expression

-Term paper version 2: 10/25 focused on written expression



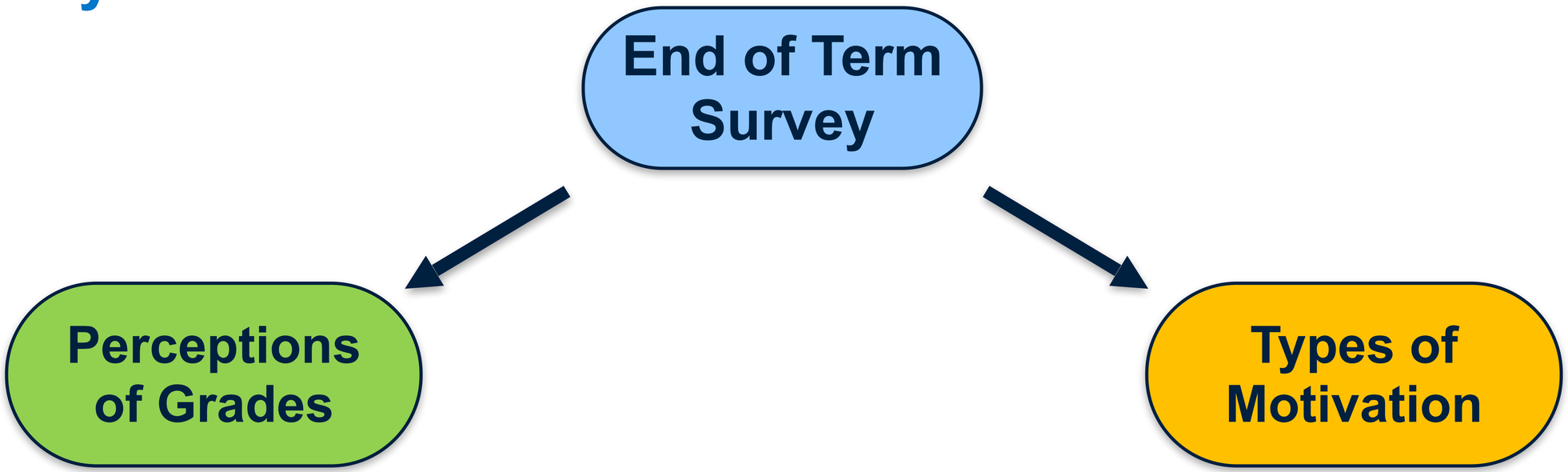
Research

- Each class is a **unique case study**
  - Examine the relationship between **instructor** and **student** assessment



*simulated data

Survey



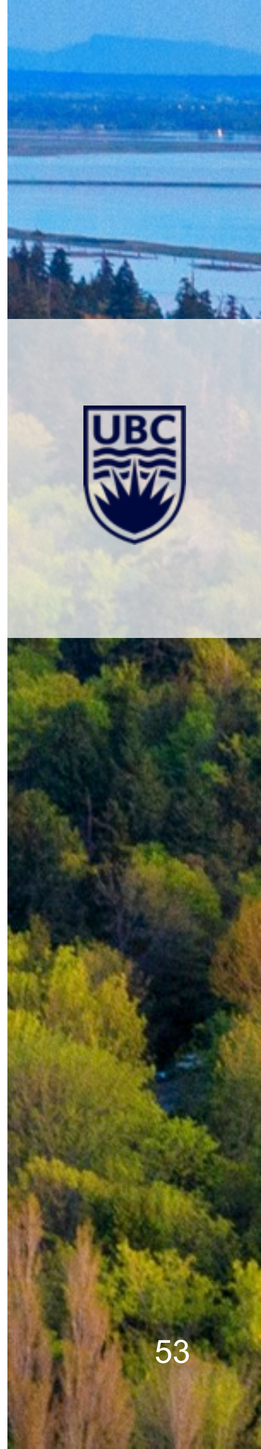
- Assess **how students value** different aspects of the grading and feedback processes
- 2 open ended questions regarding **how they performed** the self-assessment

- Assess extrinsic, intrinsic, amotivation using validated scale

Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., Blais, M. R., Brière, N. M., Senécal, C. B., & Vallières, É. F. (1993). Academic motivation scale (AMS-C 28), college (CEGEP) version. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *52*(53), 1992-1993.

Future Work

- Collect and Analyze **self-assessment vs grades** data
- **Code** open-ended survey questions
- Possibility of re-running in SCIE 113 **Term 2**
  - In Term 1, students performed their first self-assessment **prior to any midterm** marks
- **Learn from instructors** on how they engaged with ungrading



What if students were in charge of their own learning ?

FALL
2018

The Basics: There are no textbooks for this course. Instead, you need a labcoat and a bound sturdy lab notebook. Your mark in this course is based on your lab notebook (20%), a field ecology study (20%), a molecular biology study (10%), Kahoot quizzes (in lecture) (10%), and a grand finale student designed research project (40%).*** *(There are also secret bonus marks available. These are hidden in your lab notebook.)*

WELCOME TO BIOLOGY 342

Class tips

You will see me vary my teaching style to ensure that this course is accessible to everyone. You will have lectures, demonstrations, and active learning opportunities. Everyone has the right to be successful in this course and I want you to succeed; please come by my office** and introduce yourself. Because this is a lab course, your single biggest job will be to come prepared - this means reading* the lab manual before lab. Set aside an hour or so each week to grab a coffee, read the lab manual (and associated stuff), and prepare your lab notebook. Your projects are group based, so your second biggest job will be to communicate well and often with your group members.

Previously:

1. Project based
2. Audiences outside of UBC
3. Fairly standard grading

Biology 342 Self Assessment Form, Fall 2021

Your name:

Your lab section:

Congratulations!! You have made it through the term. We have shared a long and involved journey this semester as you have experienced what's it's like to be a scientist. I hope you have enjoyed this experience and were successful in meeting your learning goals. Because you are the one who has spent time learning this term (and I am not), you are best able to authentically evaluate your progress.

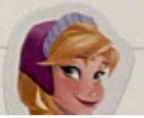
Gather your stuff from this course. The stuff you have created constitutes your portfolio of learning. This includes your lab notebook, your City of Vancouver mini-report, your salmon letter, your term project, and feedback for oral presentations. Grab some tea/coffee/water/a snack and settle in for some reflection. Plan to spend 30-60 minutes or so.

} **Currently**:
The first paragraphs of a 5 pg end of term self assessment

Instead: Students submit assignments, like normal, and receive detailed feedback with the opportunity to re-submit

A Sample Learning Goal (inlcudes the "why")

ELECTROPHORESIS! IT'S TIME FOR ROUND TWO BABY! Aye, I screwed up last lab when loading in our samples but I'm getting it right this time. This is my redemption lab, my second shot at this. My goal today is to make it through flawlessly without any mistakes so that I can feel better from last lab! Oh yeah, presentations for project proposals is today... I feel slightly unprepared but my team and I are gonna full send. I'm going to do my best to present my part clearly and hopefully my legs don't start shaking cause istg that'll be embarassing.. Presenting has never been a strong suit of mine but we gotta do what we gotta do, it's all about seeking discomfort! Let's get started!
LGI LETS GET IT LETS GO!!



How it went, week 4
(this is before anything was due)

Preliminary thematic coding (done by Tessa Blanchard)

"Please comment on what this "ungrading" experience was like for you this term."

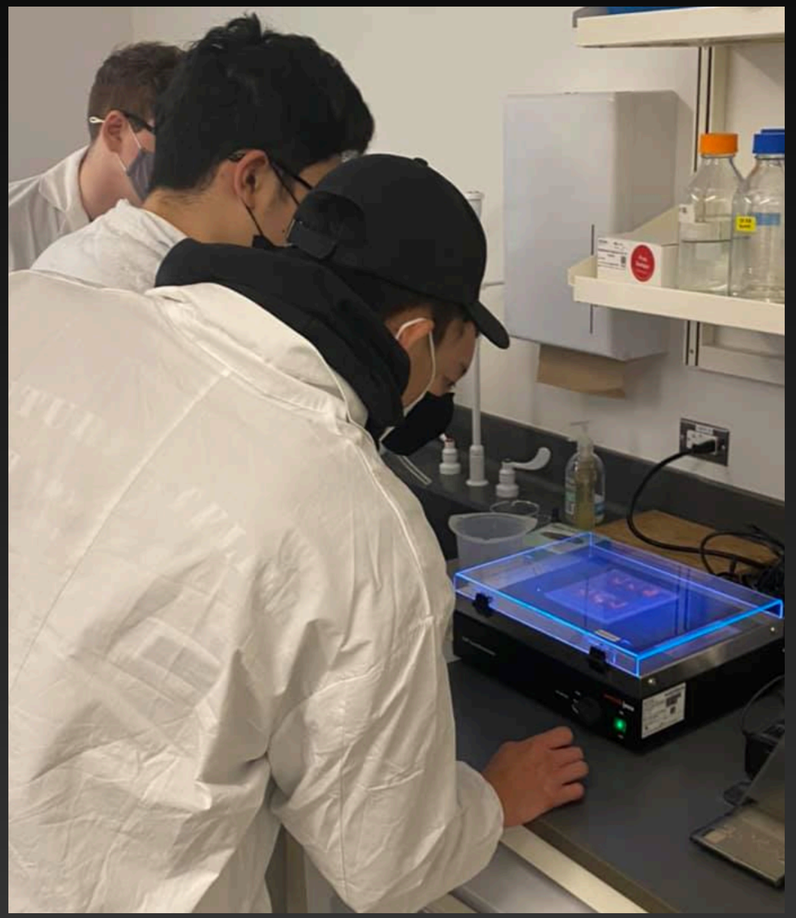
Themes	# Responses	Total	%	
"Less Stress/Less Worry"	44	84	52.380952	
"More Learning"	31	84	36.904761	
"Postive Experience/More Fun/Enjoyable"	51	84	60.714285	
"More Structure"	2	84	2.3809523	
"Learn at my own pace/changed how I learn/Be more creative"	19	84	22.619047	* I just add
Comments that stand out				
*Didn't complete taks just for the sake of gettting a grade.				
*Comments about lab members not taking I seriously since there was no grade				
*Other lab mates not putting enough effort.				

What we noticed

1. Students made brave choices on their projects
2. It was much more fun to provide feedback when marks were not associated
3. Student enthusiasm and commitment seemed higher
4. Projects seemed better (with the exception of salmon letters, which were about the same)

Considerations moving forward

1. Relative weighting suggestions
2. Options for landing outside the median
3. Feedback at all stages of submission (including final)
4. Peer review (more structured)



What are some Challenges and Opportunities ?

Challenges

1. **Upfront-time investment**

   hard to work against inertia with our workloads...

2. **Tools and technology**

   they just don’t do what we want !

3. **Getting buy-in from students is sometimes hard, from TAs is often even harder**

   Systems change is hard and sometimes soul-crushing.

4. **In the long-run, does what we do in one course matter?**

   Once they leave the course, it’ll be back to status quo.

Opportunities

1. **Upfront-time investment**

   Strategically (and collectively) apply for funds and grants !!

2. **Tools and technology**

   Invest (time, money, energy) in free and open source tech !

3. **Getting buy-in from students is sometimes hard, from TAs is often even harder**

   Idea: Faculty/University-wide TA training program (ISW+)

4. **In the long-run, does what we do in one course matter?**

   Foster Communities of Practice to promote these notions/ideas


What can you do next?

What can you do next?

Skeptical?

Want to know more?

Ready to dive in?

Have questions?

What can you do next?

Skeptical?

Want to know more?

Ready to dive in?

Have questions?

CBE—Life Sciences Education
Vol. 13, 159–166, Summer 2014

Feature
Approaches to Biology Teaching and Learning

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently)

Jeffrey Schinske* and Kimberly Tanner†

*Department of Biology, De Anza College, Cupertino, CA 95014; †Department of Biology, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132

Teaching More by Grading Less (or Differently) by Jeffrey Schinske and Kimberly Tanner

What can you do next?

Skeptical?

Want to know more?

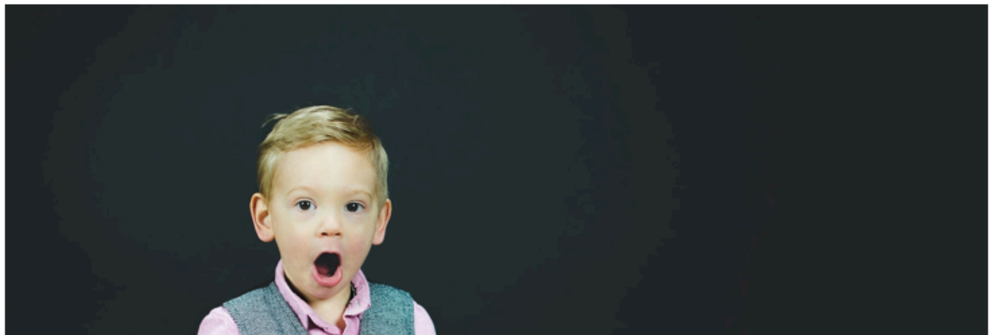
Ready to dive in?

Have questions?

What to expect when you're alternatively assessing

Things to be ready for when you jump in to alternative assessments.

David Clark
Dec 6



The Case Against Grades

By Alfie Kohn

[This is a slightly expanded version of the published article.]

> *"I remember the first time that a grading rubric was attached to a piece of my writing....Suddenly all the joy was taken away. I was writing for a grade — I was no longer exploring for me. I want to get that back. Will I ever get that back?"*
>
> — Claire, a student (in Olson, 2006)

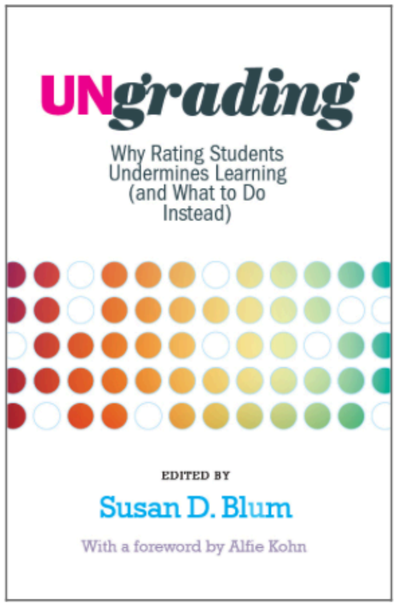
What can you do next?

Skeptical?

Want to know more?

Ready to dive in?

Have questions?



Ungrading

Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)

Summary | Contents | Author | Reviews

Summary

The moment is right for critical reflection on what has been assumed to be a core part of schooling. In *Ungrading*, fifteen educators write about their diverse experiences going gradeless. Some contributors are new to the practice and some have been engaging in it for decades. Some are in humanities and social sciences, some in STEM

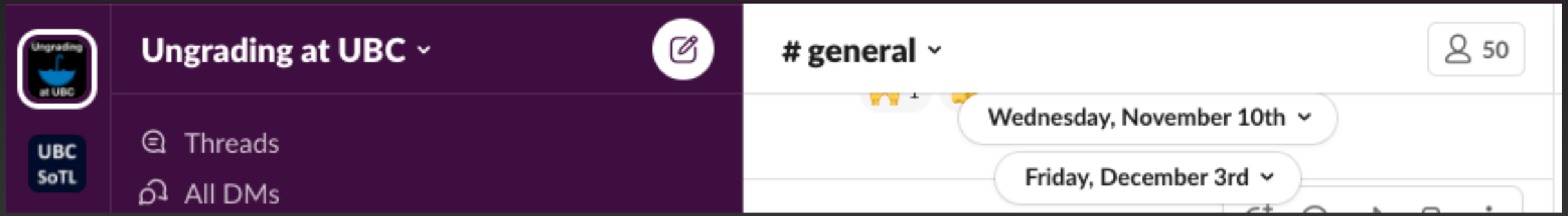
What can you do next?

Skeptical?

Want to know more?

Ready to dive in?

Have questions?



https://join.slack.com/t/ungradingatubc/shared_invite/zt-rjfxgvnl-reMnwPwhoQbhf0LCfC8WPA

Session Feedback

Please take a moment to complete this brief survey:

https://ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9QrDiXt5snsqTUq

Thank you!

UBC Skylight (Science Centre for Teaching and Learning)
https://skylight.science.ubc.ca/online-teaching-series

On Mastery learning, Courses Transformed by the Pandemic,

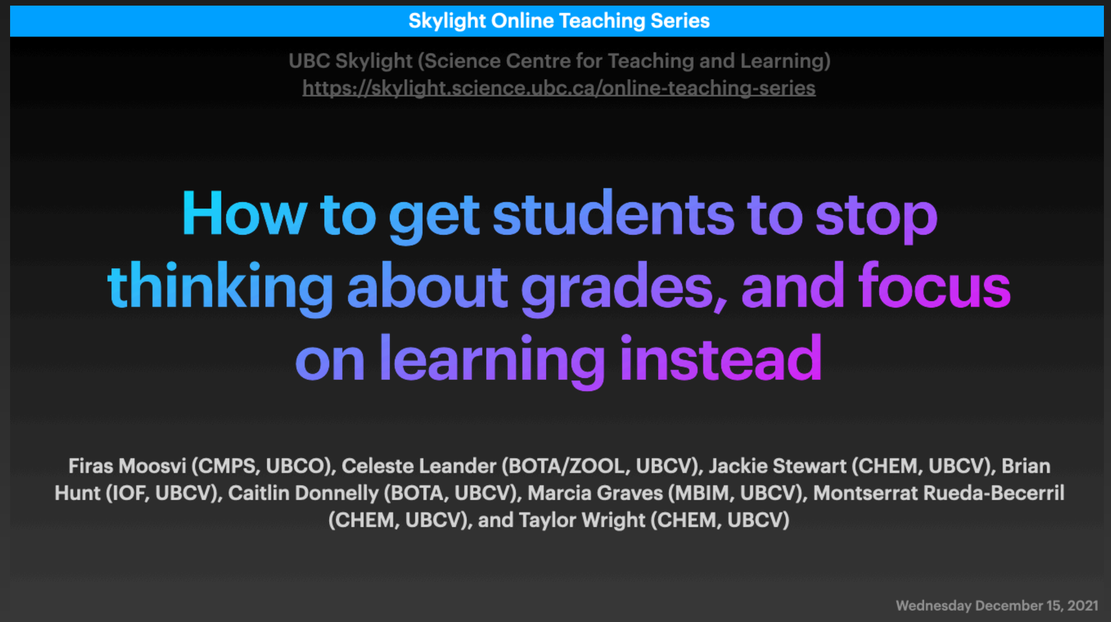
and more ...

Stay tuned!

Thank you for coming!!

Some of us will be around after the session if you want to stay and chat.

Happy Holidays!



LICENSE

CC BY 4.0

Attribution 4.0 International

This license requires that reusers give credit to the creator. It allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, even for commercial purposes.

BY: Credit must be given to you, the creator.

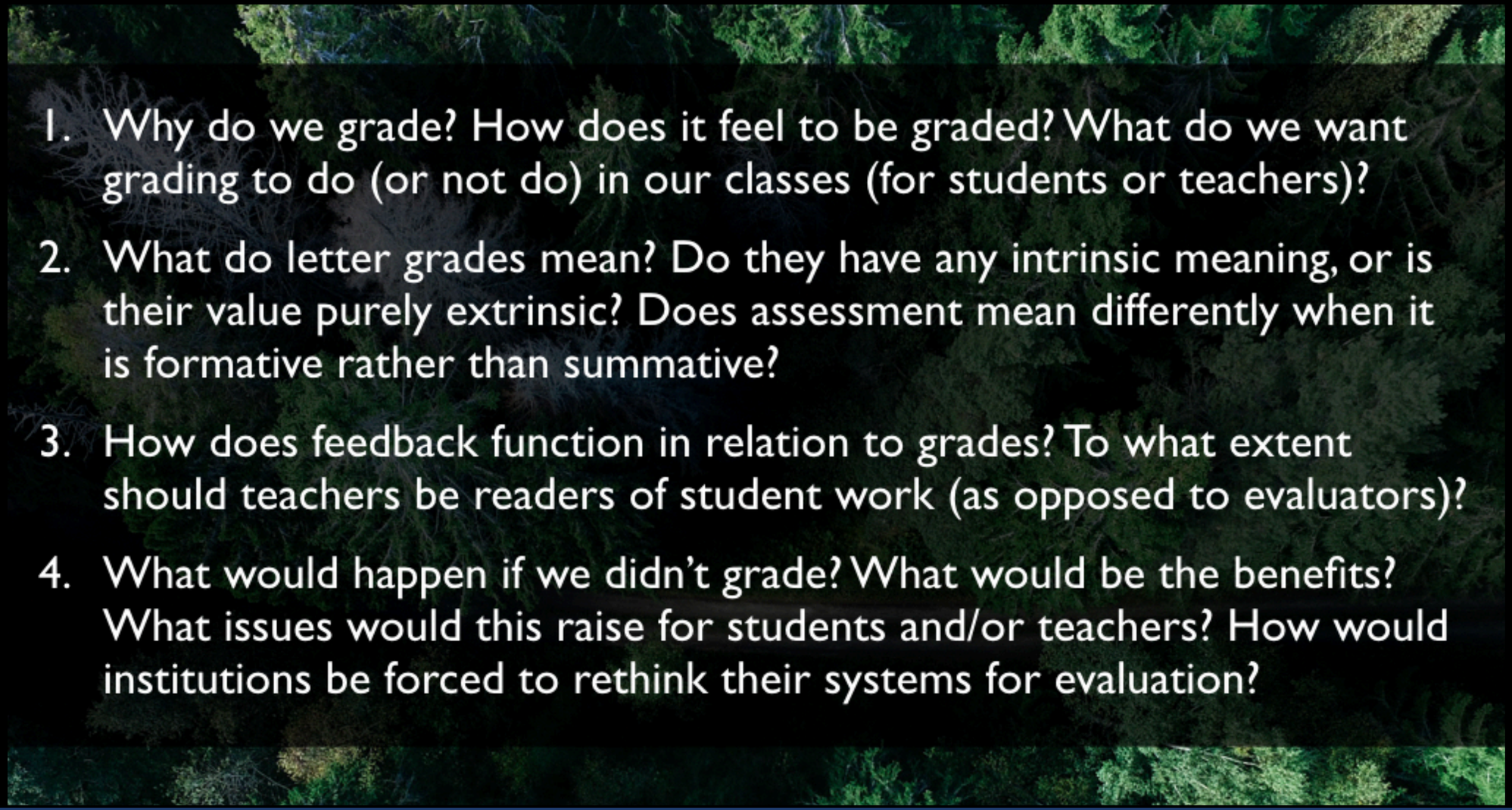
FEEL FREE TO ADAPT, REMIX, SHARE AS YOU LIKE!

Slides from previous related talks/workshops

Feel free to use/re-use as you like!

QUESTIONS TO LEAVE WITH

Source: Jesse Stommel - How to Ungrade



“Ungrading is not as simple as just removing grades. The word “ungrading" suggests that we need to do intentional, critical work to dismantle traditional and standardized approaches to assessment.”

- Jesse Stommel

Source: “What If We Didn't Grade?”