

# MOTIVATING STUDENT LEARNING THROUGH INNOVATIVE GRADING

Innovative grading approaches such as portfolio grading, competency grading, specifications grading, ungrading, labor-based grading, and contract grading eschew the sole evaluation of a single product by incorporating dimensions that contribute to student learning e.g., time on task, effort, completion, revisions, peer review, etc.

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## REFERENCES



## 01. PROBLEM

**Summative, traditional grading approaches** have been found to...

- Function as **reductionist proxies** for student learning
- **Insufficiently represent** actual skill development and knowledge attainment
- **Amplify student anxiety**
- **Deter students** from taking challenging courses and potentially meaningful academic risks
- **Reduce deep engagement** with instructor feedback

## 02. CONTEXT

**Course Information:**  
**C204 Business Writing**  
Kelley School of Business  
Spring 2024

- Intensive writing course required for undergraduate business majors
- Three sections
- ~ 25 students / section

## 04. GRADING APPROACH DESCRIPTION

All major individual writing assignments were graded using a **five-option initial scoring approach + a recommended but optional revise and resubmit: 100/90/80/70/0**

- 100= minor or negligible issues,
- 90= one or two issues,
- 80= three to four issues,
- 70= five or more issues,
- 0= an incomplete or missing assignment

**Optional resubmissions earn back up to ½ of the points missed on first submission; students use individualized instructor feedback to improve work**

## 03. GOAL

**Leverage an innovative grading approach to...**

- **Increase student engagement** with instructor feedback
- **Amplify understanding and growth** through individualized examples and critique
- Decrease student fixation on summative scores and **reduce student anxiety** through a formative assessment approach
- **Motivate learning and promote student success** by providing a clear and meaningful process to improve assignments' grade/score

## 05. ASSESSING APPROACH'S EFFECTIVENESS: THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

**Spring 2024 Online Course Questionnaire:** Added two quantitative and one qualitative question

**Q1:** The grading approach (first submission scored 100/90/80/70/0 with the opportunity to revise to earn back up to 1/2 of points missed) **contributed positively to MY LEARNING** in this course.

**Q2:** The grading approach (first submission scored 100/90/80/70/0) with the opportunity to revise to earn back up to ½ of points missed) contributed positively to **MY MOTIVATION FOR IMPROVEMENT** on these assignments.

**Response Options:** Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1)

**Q3:** Consider the different **grading approaches** you've experienced as a college student. What is your **preferred method** and why do you prefer it?

**Response Options:** Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1)

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## 06. SELECT FINDINGS

- **45** respondents across three course sections
- Response rate= **60.8%**
- **Q1** average= **4.3**; **Q2** average= **4.3**

### TAKEAWAY

**On average, students reported that the grading approach contributed positively to BOTH their learning and their motivation to learn.**