Tools and Resources for Giving Students Feedback

Scholarship on Giving Feedback

- Sommers, "Responding to Student Writing" (1982)
- Smith, "The Genre of the End Comment" (1997)
- Anson, "Response and the Social Construction of Error" (2000)

Popular Methods of Grading

- Ungrading

  What is it?

  "Why do we grade?" This isn't just a question grieving faculty ask themselves near the end of each semester, it is an important question to grapple with often. For some, the answer goes little further than, "because that's just how it works." But what purpose do grades actually serve? To objectively rank and order students, measure students' learning, or even motivate students? Yet, decades of research report the use of conventional grading systems do little to effectively evaluate or positively motivate students (Blum, 2020; Brennan & Magness, 2019; Schinske & Tanner, 2014; Supiano, 2019). Grades have problematic performance incentives for learning, are ambiguous and inconsistent, offer little (if any) valuable feedback, promote competitiveness and hinder collaboration, and inaccurately assess actual student learning (Blum, 2020; Brennan & Magness, 2019; Stommel, 2021). Grades neither motivate nor promote learning—they diminish it. Ungrading offers new evaluation practices without degrading students through the use of conventional grading systems.

  How do we use it?

  Ungrading requires leaving grades out of the student evaluation process. Students do not receive grades for assignments or other assessments, rather, they receive helpful, qualitative feedback that spurs further learning instead of halting it. Blum et al. (2020) contend, "When teachers give feedback together with a grade, the students see the feedback as justification for the grade, but if there is feedback without a grade, then students can see the feedback for its own sake and act on it" (p. 96).

- Labor-Based Grading

  What is it?

  Labor-based grading (also known as contract grading or a labor-based grading contract) is a type of alternative grading style where grades are based on the amount of labor that is agreed upon between students of the course and the course's

instructor. Labor-based grading involves the co-creation of a course contract at the start of the semester that is utilized to grade all members of the course. Faculty and students also return to the contract at midterm to review and make possible changes. This co-created contract only focuses on the labor required for learning, such as the amount of time spent on an assignment, rather than the "quality" of the work that is produced while learning.

How do we use it?

In labor-based grading contracts, the course typically has a default grade, which indicates that if a student does all of the labor that is agreed upon in the contract, a student will receive said default grade, no matter what. In this framework, a student can earn an "A" by engaging in more than the baseline amount of labor for the course. The course contract establishes what kinds of labor that further supports student learning can be asked of, but not required, by an assignment or activity to result in a higher grade.

- Portfolio Grading

  What is it?

  A portfolio can be defined as "a collection of texts the writer has produced over a defined period of time" (Hamp-Lyons, 1991, p. 262) and the collection may consist of "selected but not necessarily polished or finished pieces" (Privette, 1993, p. 60).

  How do we use it?

  A portfolio is a collection of work, but it is a collection that is a subset of a larger archive. Theoretically, the archive is the whole of a student's work, but more practically and more frequently, it is a subset of writing completed in a class, a program, and a school. The process by which the subset is created is one of selection, which is the second principle of portfolios. How entries are selected varies according to the rhetorical situation contextualizing the portfolio. A third principle is reflection, the process by which a student explains his or her learning. A fourth principle is communication, in the sense that the writing portfolio, like any portfolio, will communicate something about the writer, about what he or she values, about the context in which the writer has worked, and so on.

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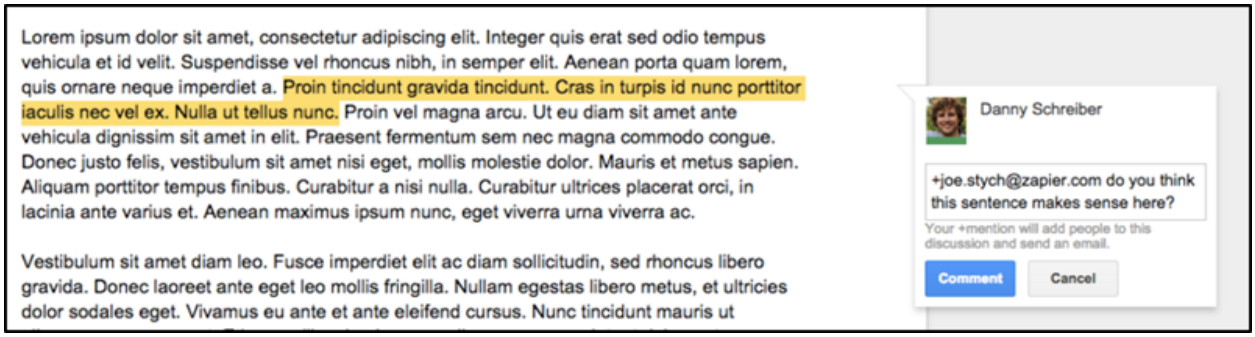
Tools for Giving Feedback

- Delta “Providing Effective Feedback”
- ScreenPal

  Boost comprehension and active participation with interactive video content.
- VoiceThread

  Supports highly interactive peer and instructor feedback through audio, video, text, and “doodling” on an image or video.
- Google Workspace

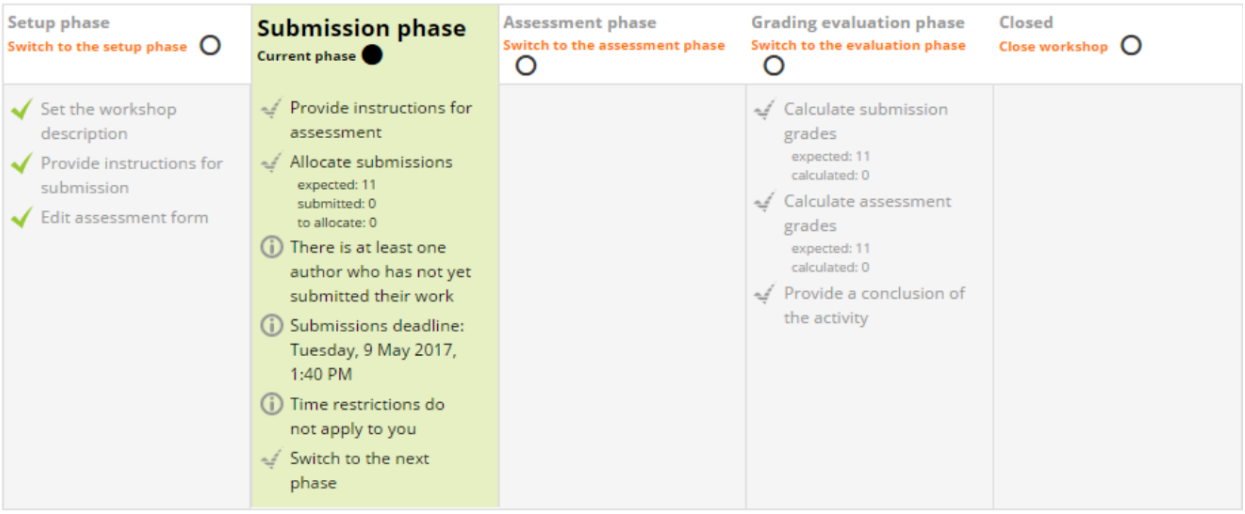
  Peers and instructors can provide feedback through the comment feature in Google Docs, or through an instructor-created Google Form that includes assignment criteria to guide students’ focus.



- Moodle Workshop Activity

  Supports peer assessment, and allows students to receive two grades: one for their own work, and another for assessing a peer’s work.

Tools and Resources for Giving Students Feedback



Setup phase Switch to the setup phase	Submission phase Current phase	Assessment phase Switch to the assessment phase	Grading evaluation phase Switch to the evaluation phase	Closed Close workshop
Set the workshop description Provide instructions for submission Edit assessment form	Provide instructions for assessment Allocate submissions expected: 11 submitted: 0 to allocate: 0 There is at least one author who has not yet submitted their work Submissions deadline: Tuesday, 9 May 2017, 1:40 PM Time restrictions do not apply to you Switch to the next phase		Calculate submission grades expected: 11 calculated: 0 Calculate assessment grades expected: 11 calculated: 0 Provide a conclusion of the activity	