

A POINT-LESS CLASS: UNGRADING IN A GRADUATE LEADERSHIP COURSE

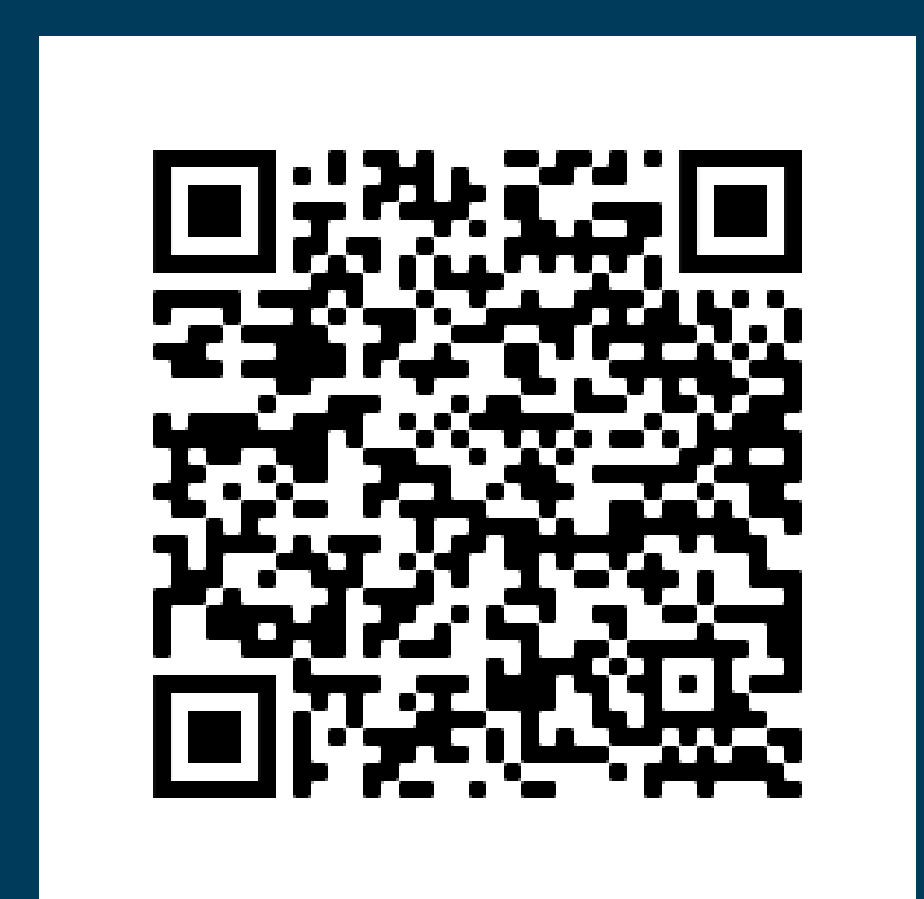
Haley Q. Traini
Kelsey J. Joseph
Jonathan J. Velez



An approach to mitigate
thoughtless compliance,
arbitrary deadlines, anxiety,
grade grubbing, & point-chasing.

UNGRADING

- Can foster healthy self-esteem, create more engaged & responsible learners, increases metacognition, reduces grade-related anxieties, and lessens power dynamics.
- Ranges from more self-assessment to removing letter grades or points entirely



Scan for resources including: grading policy, syllabus, & sample self-assessments

INTRODUCTION

- We developed an online graduate leadership course that utilized elements of ungrading.
- Ungrading is pedagogy that emphasizes student self-evaluation, formative feedback from the instructor, peer feedback, and dialogue with students about their learning progress

HOW IT WORKS

We included ungrading elements through all aspects of the course, including how and when students completed work, their interactions with peers and instructors, feedback methods, and assessment.

Course Assignment	Grading
Weekly Discussions (10 posts)	Complete/Incomplete
Contributions to "Tried It" Discussion Thread (7 posts)	Complete/Incomplete
Midterm Self-Assessment	A-F (this will be a negotiated grade based on your learning in the course thus far)
Leading Others Primer Primer document (1 submission/team) Primer self-evaluation (1 submission/person)	A-F A-F
End of Term Self-Assessment	A-F (this will be a negotiated final grade for the course)

FUTURE PLANS & ADVICE TO OTHERS

- Shifting to ungrading was an adjustment both for students & instructors. We realized that a lot of our communication in courses is centered around a grade (e.g., why points were deducted).
- Open due dates required adjusting.
- We recommend clearly communicating expectations on the grading philosophy as a whole as well as for each assignment.
- Unless you plan to develop a course from scratch, we recommend small, incremental changes to incorporate ungrading.
- Remember that ungrading doesn't mean "anything goes" or rigor is lost.

RESULTS

- 10 students completed course in Spring 2022
- Students submitted timely work 99.2% of the time on all assignments
- All students assigned themselves an A on course; the instructor agreed based on their evidence provided.
- We received overwhelmingly positive feedback; students appreciated the flexible deadlines, the menu of application activities, and the opportunity to reflect on their learning.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

"I think the flexibility in the course and the ability to engage with each other and apply the material to real-life experiences...has been really nice. I feel like I am constantly doing homework for this class but it takes the form of thinking critically about situations and analyzing my work teams and environments instead of un-helpful "busy" work."

"I worked hard to be proud of everything that I produced in this course and because of it feel confident in the grade that I will request. I am thankful for this opportunity to have this grading philosophy because it has reminded me what education is really about, if I am truly absorbing the information for the sake of my own learning and growth, and I believe that I am."