

# CONTRACT GRADING & SELF-ASSESSMENT WITH RUBRICS: A TOOL FOR DIALOGUE, COACHING & FEEDBACK



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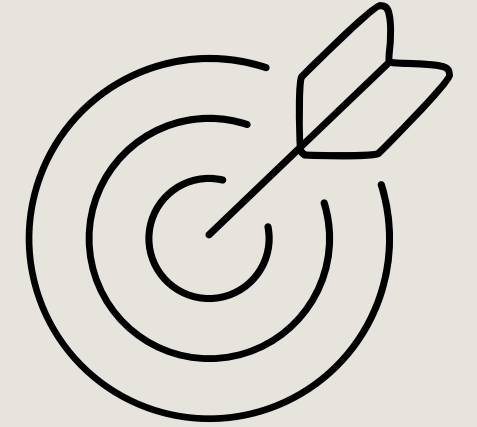
*Business & Professional Studies*



Have you ever felt frustrated that a student seemed more interested in their grade than in their learning?

Do you wonder how you could motivate students to take more responsibility for their own learning?

# OBJECTIVES:



How can alternative grading:

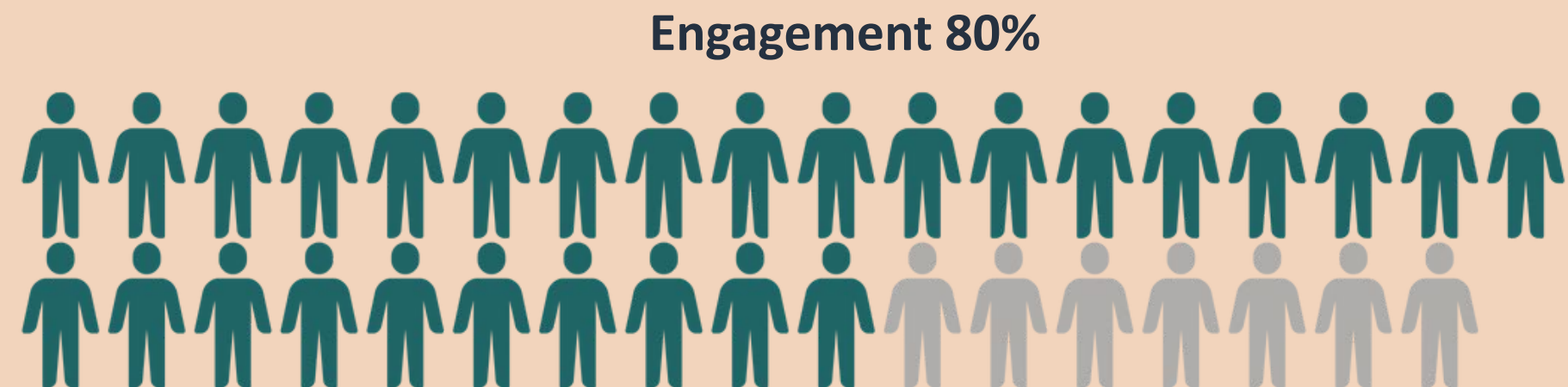
- increase student learning, agency and motivation?
- encourage dialogue around learning and feedback rather than grades?

# CONTEXT & METHOD:

35 students, 19-21 years old with diverse cultural backgrounds/identities in 2nd year required business course on intercultural communication.

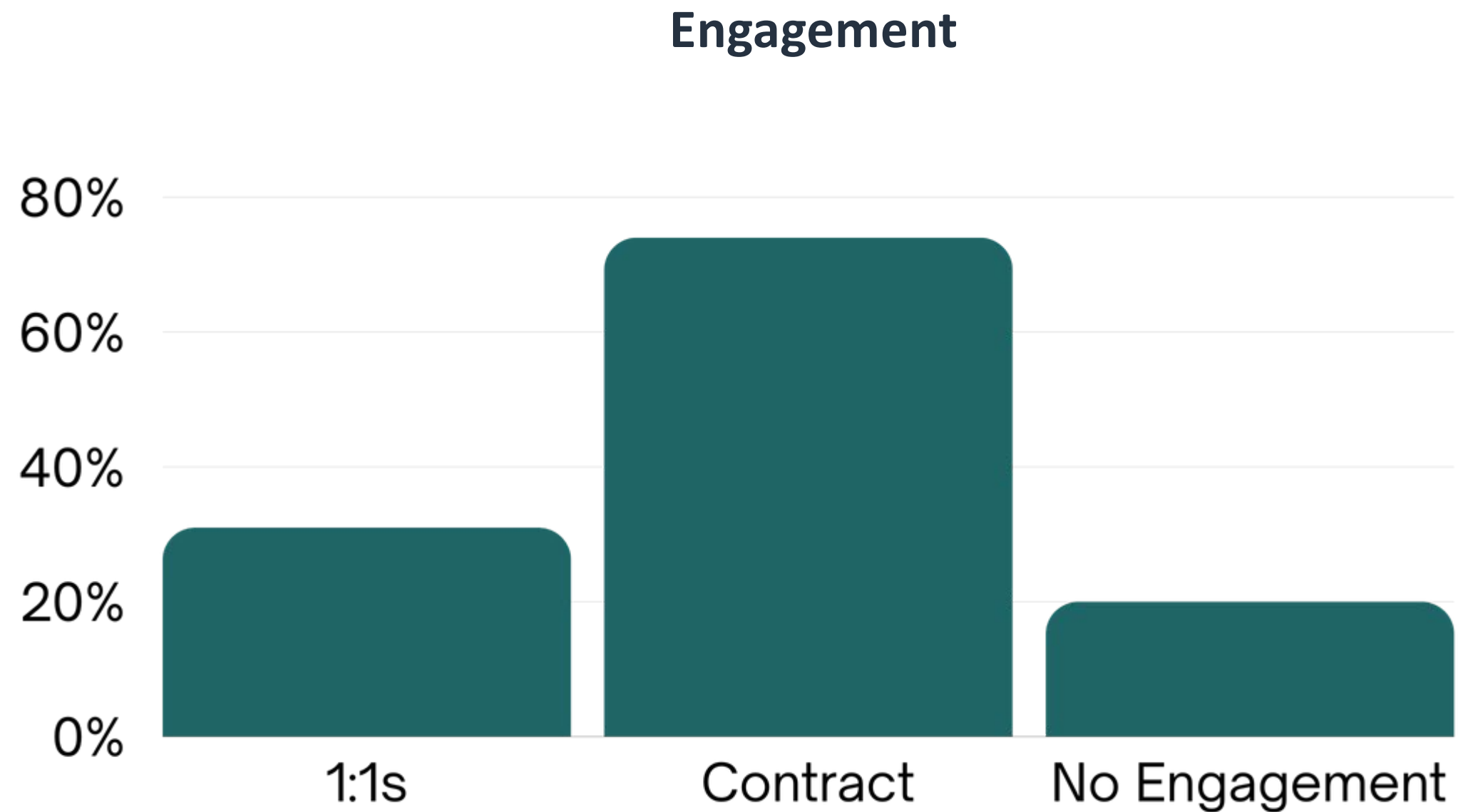
Interventions included:

- Student contract rubric submission first 2 weeks of classes
- Student self-assessment mid-way and end of term
- Mid-way 1:1 student-instructor feedback and learning conversations
- Course feedback surveys



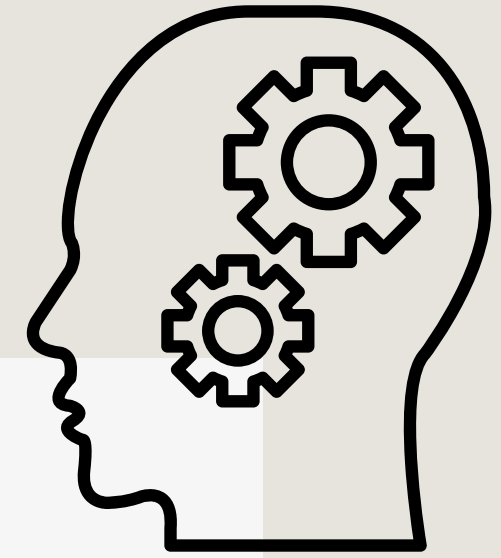
# FINDINGS:

- Goal-setting as motivation
- Increased clarity of expectations
- Less judgement
- More reflection
- Learning centred feedback & dialogue



# CONCLUSIONS:

- The process offered clarity, reflection and motivation for students through setting and tracking goals.
- True shift to conversations on learning?
- Learning and feedback conversations for 31% of students offered students more agency and deepened their meta-cognitive skills.



## Further Reflections:

- How did students' context, motivations, prior educational experiences, and expectations impact participation and benefit to students?
- How to develop students' meta-cognitive skills through coaching, teaching, co-creation of contracts and peer feedback?



# REIMAGINING GRADING: ENGAGING STUDENTS THROUGH CONTRACT GRADING AND SELF-ASSESSMENT



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## INTRODUCTION

Within the context of a small teaching focused university, I explored how to practically and systematically approach grading student work differently (if grading at all) to increase student learning, motivation and agency. I implemented a combination of contract grading and self-assessment, and held 1:1 feedback and learning conversations mid-way through the term.

## OBJECTIVE

To engage and motivate students through increased agency and a shift in focus from grades to feedback and learning.

## CHALLENGES

- Student prior experiences and expectations
- Some lack of meta-cognitive skills for goal-setting and self-assessment.
- Engaging everyone

## CONTEXT & METHOD

35 students, 19-21 years old with diverse cultural backgrounds/identities in 2nd year required business course. Interventions included:

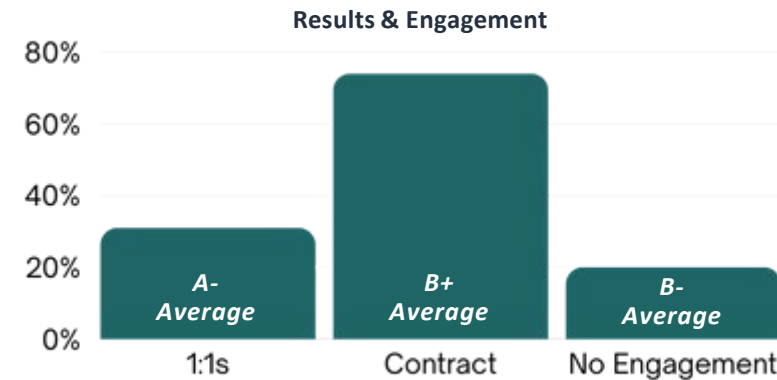
- Student contract rubric submission first 2 weeks of classes
- Mid-way 1:1 student-instructor feedback and learning conversations
- Student self-assessment mid-way and end of term
- Course feedback surveys

Engagement 80%



## FINDINGS/KEY OUTCOMES

- Goal-setting as motivation
- Increased clarity of expectations
- Less judgement
- More reflection
- Learning centred feedback & dialogue

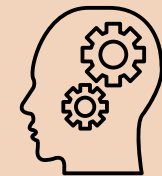


## CONCLUSION

The process offered clarity, reflection and motivation for students through setting and tracking goals. One may question if the focus truly shifted to increase learning; however, the learning and feedback conversations for 31% of students certainly offered students more agency and deepened their meta-cognitive skills.

### Further Reflection:

- *How did students' context, motivations, prior educational experiences, and expectations impact participation and benefit to students?*
- *How to develop students' meta-cognitive skills through co-creation of contracts and peer feedback?*



## CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION



## REFERENCES

- Arnaud, C. H. (2021). How an alternative grading system is improving student learning. Undergraduate Education. Volume 99, Issue 15.
- Chamberlin, K., Yasué, M., & Chiang, I-C. A. (2018). The impact of grades on student motivation. Active Learning in Higher Education, 1-6.
- Kohn, A. (2012). The Case Against Grades. Education Digest, 77(5), 8-16.
- Stommel, J. (2020). How to ungrade. In S. Blum (Eds). Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do About It) p.25-41. Morgantown: West Virginia Press.
- Streifer, A. and Michael Palmer, M. (2020) Alternative Grading: Practices to Support Both Equity and Learning.

# CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

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- Arnaud, C. H. (2021). How an alternative grading system is improving student learning. *Undergraduate Education*. Volume 99, Issue 15.
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- Kohn, A. (2012). The Case Against Grades. *Education Digest*, 77(5), 8–16.
- Stommel, J. (2020). How to ungrade. In S. Blum (Eds). *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do About It)* p.25-41. Morgantown: West Virginia Press.
- Streifer, A. and Michael Palmer, M. (2020) *Alternative Grading: Practices to Support Both Equity and Learning*.

## IBUS 255-81: Grading Rubric for In-Class Assignments/Learning Activities & Participation (Total 15% of course mark)

Student Name:

I contract for the following grade:

Date:

Signed (student):

Signed (instructor):

Criteria	A	B	C	D
<b>Application of assigned readings, terminology and course concepts in activities</b>	<p>Consistently adapts and applies a deep and extensive understanding of multiple worldviews, experiences, and cultural patterns and identities.</p> <p>Contributions/comments are always insightful &amp; constructive and uses appropriate course terminology. Contributions are continuously relevant to the discussion/activity and/or ideas.</p>	<p>May demonstrate adequate understanding of multiple worldviews, experiences, and cultural patterns and identities.</p> <p>Contributions/comments are mostly insightful &amp; constructive; mostly uses appropriate terminology. Occasionally contributions are too general or not relevant to the discussion/activity and/or ideas.</p>	<p>May explain multiple worldviews, experiences, with some acknowledgement of cultural patterns and identities.</p> <p>Contributions/comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Student sometimes uses appropriate terminology. Contributions are sometimes not relevant to the discussion/activity.</p>	<p>May describe the experiences of others historically or in contemporary contexts primarily through one cultural perspective.</p> <p>Contributions/comments are rarely constructive, or insightful. Student does not use appropriate terminology. Contributions are not relevant to the discussion/activity.</p>
<b>Contribution to an inclusive, brave and respectful learning environment for all</b>	<p>Consistently demonstrates behaviours* to co-create an inclusive learning environment that seeks to include all student voices and identities in the classroom. Co-creates ideas and asks thoughtful questions.</p> <p>Initiates and develops conversation with culturally different classmates. Suspends judgment in own interactions with culturally different others.</p>	<p>Often demonstrates behaviours* to co-create an inclusive learning environment that seeks to include all student voices and identities in the classroom.</p> <p>Begins to initiate and develop conversation with culturally different classmates. Begins to suspend judgment in own interactions with culturally different others.</p>	<p>Sometimes demonstrates behaviours* to co-create an inclusive learning environment that seeks to include all student voices and identities in the classroom.</p> <p>Expresses openness to most, if not all, interactions with culturally different classmates. May have difficulty suspending any judgment in own interactions with culturally different others, but is aware of own judgment and expresses a willingness to change.</p>	<p>Rarely demonstrates behaviours* to co-create an inclusive learning environment that seeks to include all student voices and identities in the classroom.</p> <p>Receptive to interacting with culturally different classmates. Has difficulty suspending any judgment in own interactions with culturally different others but is unaware of own judgment.</p>
<b>Participation** and Preparedness in class (1/3 weight)</b>	<p>May miss one class. On time and prepared for all other classes. Always stays focused during class by minimizing distractions.</p>	<p>May miss two classes. Be on time and prepared for all other classes. Usually stays focused during class by minimizing distractions.</p>	<p>May miss three classes. Be on time and prepared for all other classes. Sometimes stays focused during class by minimizing distractions.</p>	<p>May miss four classes. Be on time and prepared for all other classes. Rarely stays focused during class by minimizing distractions.</p>

\**Behaviours* for an inclusive, brave and respectful learning environment for all include (but are not limited to): Listening, reaching out, making sure all voices are heard, awareness of own assumptions and bias, showing vulnerability, collaborating, supporting and caring for others in the classroom.

\*\**Participation* does not equal attendance. Participation includes actively listening and taking part in the learning. If occasionally unable to participate (and attend) in-class due to illness, students must notify the instructor (and other classmates/group as relevant) prior to class, and take responsibility to catch up on anything missed.

**Assessment Rubric for Weekly Learning Activities (10%) & Participation (5%)      Name**

Criteria	A	B	C	D
<b>Application of assigned readings and course concepts including reflection on relevant personal experience.</b>	Personal reflections always draw on/weave in course concepts; and the concepts are consistently applied correctly to personal experiences.	Personal reflections often draw on/weave in course concepts; and the concepts are frequently applied correctly to personal experiences.	Personal reflections may draw on/weave in course concepts; and the concepts are sometimes applied correctly to personal experiences.	Personal reflections seldom draw on/weave in course concepts; and the concepts are rarely applied correctly to personal experiences.
<b>Contribution to learning community (collegiality, kindness and interpersonal communication)</b>	Student consistently contributes to the class learning community through demonstrated kindness, support, interest and respect in interacting with others. I.e. they frequently offer supportive and helpful comments and/or build on other ideas to further understanding for everyone.	Student often contributes to the class learning community through demonstrated kindness, support, interest and respect in interacting with others. I.e. they offer supportive and helpful comments and/or build on other ideas to further understanding for everyone.	Student sometimes contributes to the class learning community through demonstrated kindness, support, interest and respect in interacting with others. I.e. they may offer some supportive and helpful comments and/or build on other ideas to further understanding for everyone.	Student has made no or very little contribution to the class learning community through kindness, support, interest and respect in interacting with others. I.e. no evidence of supportive and helpful comments and/or build on other ideas to further understanding for everyone.
<b>Personal Growth &amp; Curiosity</b>	Evidence of significant personal growth and progression in relation to course learning outcomes and personal learning goals.  Student often shows curiosity and bravery in relation to learning and to trying something new.	Evidence of personal growth and progression in relation to course learning outcomes and personal learning goals.  Student may also show curiosity and bravery in relation to learning and to trying something new.	Some evidence of personal growth and progression in relation to course learning outcomes and personal learning goals.  Student may not show much curiosity and bravery in relation to learning and to trying something new.	Little or no evidence of personal growth and progression in relation to course learning outcomes and personal learning goals.  Student did not show much curiosity and bravery in relation to learning and to trying something new.

<p><b>Academic Integrity and critical, ethical and authentic engagement with sources, including generative AI*</b></p>	<p>Student demonstrates own work and thinking, while critically and ethically engaging with sources including generative AI as relevant.</p> <p>All sources are properly referenced, and use of AI is documented along with choices and rationale.</p>	<p>Student generally demonstrates their own work and thinking, while critically and ethically engaging with sources including generative AI as relevant.</p> <p>All sources are mostly properly referenced, and use of AI is documented along with choices and rationale.</p>	<p>Student sometimes demonstrates their own work and thinking and may sometimes engage critically and ethically with sources including generative AI as relevant.</p> <p>Some sources are properly referenced, and use of AI may be apparent and lack documentation and rationale.</p>	<p>Student rarely demonstrates their own work and thinking or engage critically and ethically with sources including generative AI as relevant.</p> <p>Few if any sources are properly referenced, and use of AI may be apparent and lack documentation and rationale.</p>
<p><b>Participation &amp; Contribution (13 weeks)</b></p> <p><b>(Double weight or 5% of total course mark)</b></p>	<p>All activities completed on time each week except for one.</p>	<p>Most activities completed on time each week (may miss 2-4).</p>	<p>Some activities completed on time (may miss 5-6).</p>	<p>Few activities completed on time each week (7 or more missed).</p>

*\*If you use AI for any of your work, activities or assignments in this class, you must document your process including which prompts you used and where, where you added or changed what AI generated and why you did so.*

The grade I recommend for myself is:

The reason for this is: