

Second Placement Teaching Reflection:

Comparing an ungraded placement following a graded placement has been challenging and a rewarding journey. By engaging in ungraded pedagogical approaches I have had a chance to reflect on my own teaching experiences during this placement. I realized the importance of connection with students that goes far beyond traditional grading. Students often prioritize achieving a high grade rather than engaging with the curriculum content. This can affect both students' curiosity towards a subject and their overall personal growth. An ungraded approach fosters authenticity and genuine interest towards the curriculum content which supports intrinsic motivation.

A realization that I had noticed was how grades affect students' ability to focus on genuine learning rather than on memorization. Students often feel anxious in situations that are surrounding grading and may often feel as though they are permanent. Allowing students to demonstrate progress by challenging similar type assessments over again, they are able to show progress over time. Having additional time for students to demonstrate learning progress leaves the door open for students to come back into a course at any point in time. This supports alternative forms of feedback with the students such as student-led interviews to reflect on their learning. This allows students to take ownership of their progress and builds a strong connection with the teacher. The measurement of students' success and progress is not just a written form, but also in oral and performance communication metrics. By demonstrating all three forms, students are able to become well-rounded and have personal reflection skills needed beyond the classroom.

Engaging in an ungrading process, I have witnessed a remarkable transformation in my students' engagement and attendance. At the start of my second placement, I had noticed that students' attendance was lower than expected. However, by building an individual connection with those students, I was able to bring classroom attendance back to near full attendance. Students have had an increase in openness to discussion and become more likely to take risks that support their learning progress. In a lower-skewed classroom environment, I have had an opportunity to witness personal growth in all of my students. Removing the focus surrounding grading has created a supportive and engaging learning environment which has helped students' comprehension and mastery of curriculum concepts.

I recognize that having an opportunity to see and use an ungraded teaching pedagogical approach during a student-teaching placement to be key to adopting this form of teaching. There have been numerous points to personally reflect on both how the style is measured and how it is implemented in a classroom. Moving towards an assessment strategy that refocuses outside of grades but students' experiences has made a lasting impression. Additionally, I recognize that refining my own classroom teaching approach will be an ongoing process. However, the positive changes between a traditional grading system and ungraded system has affirmed that my preference would be an ungraded pedagogical approach.