

Flexible Deadlines for Student Success

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Flexible Deadlines for Student Success

Outline of Presentation

1. The “Late Days” System of Flexible Deadlines
2. The Received System
3. The Argument from Student Success, EDI, and UDL
4. The Argument from Outcome-Based Education
5. The Received System Pushes Back

The “Late Days” System

How it Works

Students have a number of “late days” to spend as they see fit.

No grade penalty for late submission.

Late days are not sick days.

Late days are tracked through the grade book.

Using up late days triggers a conversation with the student.

The “Late Days” System

Adoption

I have 4 courses and use the Late Days system in all of them.

I know of 3 other CSAIT professors who have adopted and/or adapted the system in 5 other courses.

The Received System v. Flexible Deadlines

The Received System	Flexible Deadlines
Things are due when the professor says they're due.	Students have some say over when things are due.
Grade penalties are imposed for late submissions.	No grade penalties for late submissions.
Students can ask for exceptions.	Communication goes both ways.
Due dates build character.	Due dates exist for administrative reasons.

The Received System and Me

Type of Teaching	The Received System
University Teaching (1997-2005)	Unquestioned
High School Teaching (2006-2011)	Officially discouraged
College Teaching (2011 – present)	Dominant
Flexibility in the college classroom can be trickier Class sizes, timelines, pushback, etc.	

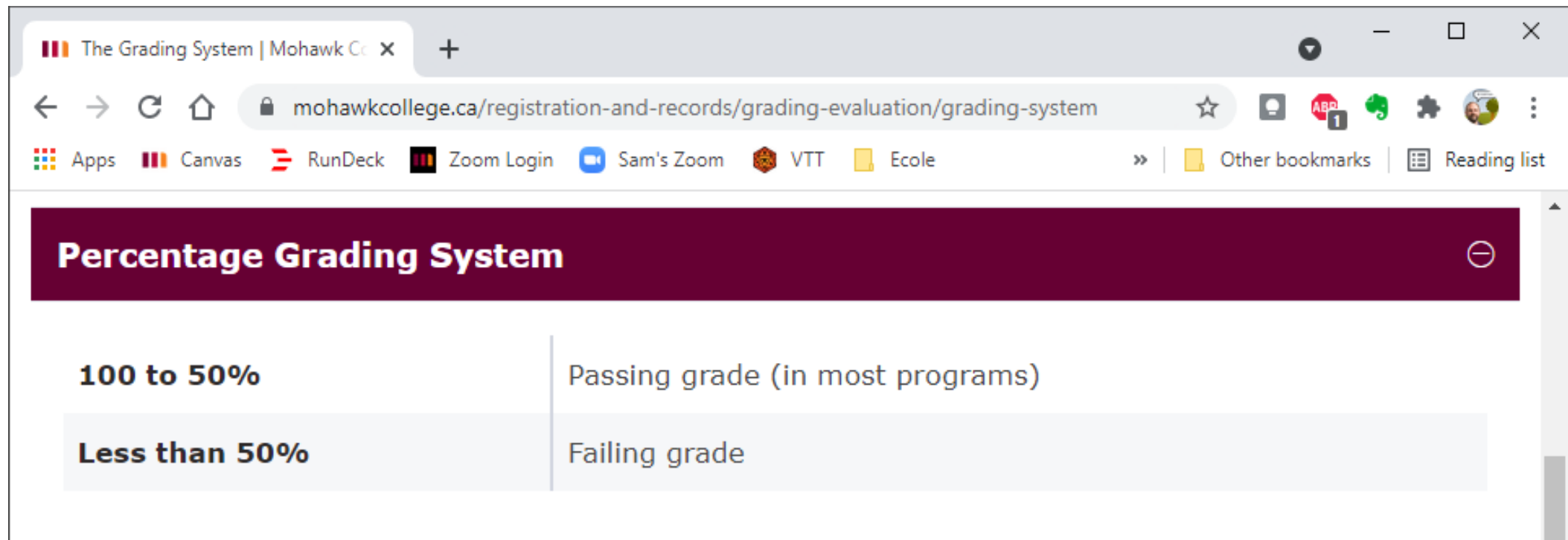
Flexible Deadlines: The Argument from Student Success, EDI, and UDL

	Impact of Flexible Deadlines
Student Success	Helps to level an unlevel playing field. Brings down student stress.
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion	May reduce the impact of oppression and privilege.
Universal Design for Learning	Everyone gets the accommodation.

Flexible Deadlines: The Argument from Outcome-Based Education

Some Questions	The Outcome-Based Response
What do Grades Mean?	A grade is a statement about the student's level of achievement of the learning outcomes of the course.
What is the impact of the Received System?	Pollutes the meaning of the grades. May discourage the achievement of learning outcomes.
What is the impact of Flexible Deadlines?	Encourages a more self-paced achievement of learning outcomes. Grades may be more accurate.

An Aside: Our Grading System



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title "The Grading System | Mohawk College". The address bar displays the URL "mohawkcollege.ca/registration-and-records/grading-evaluation/grading-system". The browser's bookmark bar includes links for "Apps", "Canvas", "RunDeck", "Zoom Login", "Sam's Zoom", "VTT", and "Ecole".

The main content area features a dark purple header with the text "Percentage Grading System" and a minus icon. Below this, a table defines the grading scale:

100 to 50%	Passing grade (in most programs)
Less than 50%	Failing grade

An Aside: Our Grading System

The Issue	Why it's a problem
No meaning attached to grades beyond pass/fail.	Consistency. Nothing to anchor us when we assign grades. Much harder to compare grades.
No link to achievement of learning outcomes.	Grades don't have to be about achievement. Licenses the use of grades as punishments.

The Received System Pushes Back I

The Complaint	My Response
<p>But we also teach Essential Employability Skills (EES)</p>	<p>EES 10 and 11 are vague: managing resources, taking responsibility for one's actions.</p> <p>Flexible deadlines are consistent with the development of these skills.</p> <p>Should we include EES achievement in grades? Maybe, but if so this would be the only way in which we do it.</p>

The Received System Pushes Back II

The Complaint	My Response
<p>I can't take things up in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Taking things up in detail is often a waste of class time. Feedback should be given individually.</p> <p>If your notes to the class help a student, what's the big deal?</p>

The Received System Pushes Back III

The Complaint	My Response
<p>It leads to appeals due to being inequitable</p>	<p>One student wanted more flexibility because of a unique personal situation. The other was a student struggling with child-care issues.</p> <p>In neither case does it seem that flexibility was the issue. It seems like what they needed was more flexibility.</p> <p>Hard to imagine how flexibility will lead to <i>more</i> appeals of this kind.</p>

In Conclusion

Outline of Presentation	Summary
1. The “Late Days” System vs.	I use “Late Days” for flexible deadlines with no grade penalties for late work, in contrast to the Received System.
2. The Received System	
3. Student Success, EDI, and UDL ✓	Flexible Deadlines level the playing field, blunt the impact of oppression and privilege, work with UDL, help grades reflect actual achievement.
4. Outcome-Based Education ✓	
5. Pushback	Pushback has not been too difficult to respond to... so far.