

Request #: 467 - PSY - Publication/Article

Shifting Student Attitudes While Grading Without Bias: Pedagogical Techniques and Considerations in a Multicultural Psychology Course

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Background

BACKGROUND: For those teaching courses on difficult (and often personal and/or political) topics, such as multicultural or gender psychology, the ability to grade students in an on-biased manner may be of concern. **OBJECTIVE:** This study examined this issue in a Multicultural Psychology course, by comparing course grades to shifts in the cultural competence domains of self-awareness, knowledge, and skills in online and on-campus courses in Multicultural Psychology. **METHOD:** A sample of 155 undergraduate students filled out a battery of self-report measures during the first week of the course and again during the last week of the course. **RESULTS:** Student's baseline levels of, and shifts in, the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy, the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale, the Personal Beliefs About Diversity Scale, the Multicultural Experiences Questionnaire, and the Discrimination Perceptions scale did not relate to their grades in the course. **CONCLUSION:** The lack of relationship between attitudes scores and grades suggests unbiased grading. **TEACHING IMPLICATIONS:** Pedagogical strategies aimed at preventing the influence of instructor cognitive biases such as blind grading to prevent halo bias and clear, structured rubrics to prevent confirmation bias, can assist instructors teaching particularly difficult or personal courses.

Sample

We collected data on student attitudes and student grades, $N = 155$

Hypothesis

we measured attitudes related to multicultural competence during the first week of the course and again during the last week of the course so that we could analyze our ability to shift students attitudes over time, and analyze the relationship between student's attitudes and their course grades. The purpose of this study was to examine the ability to grade students in a non-biased manner in a Multicultural Psychology course by employing the following strategies: blind/anonymous grading, structured grading rubrics, and collaborative grading. To analyze our ability to grade with minimal bias, we compared course grades to shifts in the cultural competence domains of self-awareness, knowledge, and skills in online and on-campus courses in Multicultural Psychology. We predicted that course grades would not be significantly correlated with attitudes.

Progress

We are in the revise and re-submit stage with the manuscript. One reviewer suggested a different analysis approach, and we wanted to get your thoughts.

Here is that reviewer's comment: "Another important issue that should be addressed is the use of change scores (or difference scores) for the attitude measures used in the correlations with grades. Edwards (1994) discusses problems with the use of difference scores in some depth. However, his points are well-taken. A more recent article (in a very different domain) illustrates the value of utilizing regression and including each component part of the difference score in the equation, rather than the change score itself (Meyer, Lerner,

de Los Reyes, Laird {&} Hajcak, 2017). I do not know if this method will result in different findings for the study or not, but I believe it is the appropriate way to analyze data based on change scores. The full cites for the articles are below: 1. Edwards, Jeffrey R.; Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, Vol 58(1), Apr, 1994 pp. 51-100. Publisher: Elsevier Science 2. Meyer, Alexandria; Lerner, Matthew D.; De Los Reyes, Andres; Laird, Robert D.; Hajcak, Greg; Psychophysiology, Vol 54(1), Jan, 2017 pp. 114-122. Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd.”

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Timeline

No specific deadline, but hoping to send it back out as soon as we can.