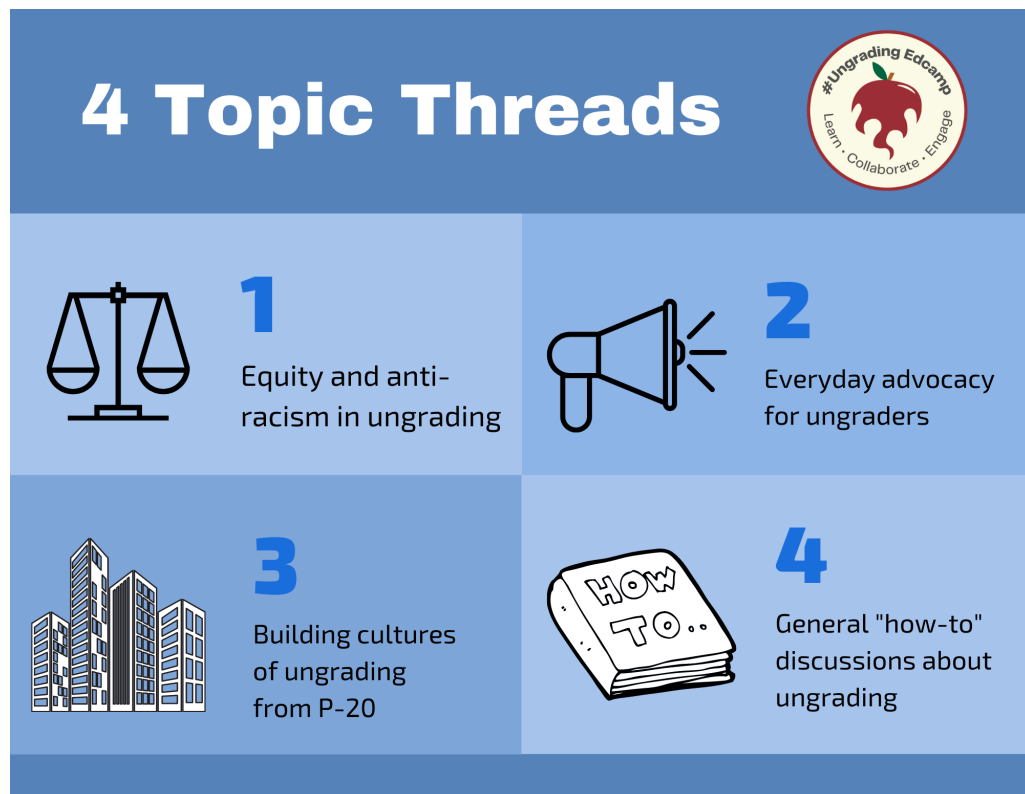


#Ungrading Edcamp Topic Threads

[Join the discussion at #Ungrading Edcamp, November 4-6, 2021.](#)

Those who registered for this free #Ungrading Edcamp completed a survey sharing what they would like to discuss with other educators, which fell into these four topics. These topics will be the basis of Zoom breakout room discussions and discussions in Discord. Browse the survey responses below that matched each of these topics, which may be used to generate discussion during the Edcamp.



Thread #1 -- Equity and anti-racism in ungrading

- Equitable assessment
- How ungrading improves student success.
- No grades as a path towards racial/class educational equity. And no grades as a tool for innovation.
- The anti-racism of ungrading; student agency for learning vs grade grubbing
- How to explain the "why" in the context of traditional grade/judgment methods of teaching (i.e. how to explain to those concerned about "rigor").

- The science behind ungrading: why traditional grades are discriminatory and biased
 - Democratizing the classroom through ungrading
 - Research that shows the ineffectiveness of grading
 - Why is this ungrading a valid option to consider in today's generation of students?
 - I'd like to see more discussion about why #ungrading can be a highly effective way to reduce day-to-day stress for faculty and minimize potential conflicts with students. Most public discourse about ungrading focuses on the benefits to students, which is totally cool of course, but I want more instructors to know WHY ungrading can make their teaching more fun, as well as more effective.
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Thread #2 -- "Everyday advocacy" for ungraders

- Getting governance boards to support no grades. What studies are out there?
- Communication with parents/stakeholders
- Ungrading at less prestigious universities where students are anxious to "move up" the latter
- Getting 'buy-in' from management, colleagues, etc. especially at a university. How to begin and set up upgrading in a new class, an existing class, midway through the semester, etc.
- How to challenge the systems that are in place in HE institutions to make the process possible
- The stress levels of faculty and students. I have noticed that my stress levels are lower with upgrading/flexible grading policies. Fewer requests from students for accommodations because they are built-in.
- The challenges of ungrading and the traditional course evaluation (for untenured professors)
- Impact on learning outcomes; departmental/institutional change; faculty engagement
- The challenges of ungrading and the traditional course evaluation (for untenured professors)
- Does data support the effectiveness of ungrading, are students more or less motivated to do work with this model, what are the implications of educators that do ungrading
- What accreditation and program evaluation issues have folks encountered in using #ungrading?
- The backlash against teachers using it?
- How can you ungrade under the radar, if necessary? How can you use ungrading effectively when you don't have support?
- Do you really mean this class is ungraded? How to deal with administrative requirements while avoiding confusion in an ungraded classroom
- How to validate that this process is valuable and does demonstrate learning.
- How folks have navigated grade conversations with admin, especially contingent faculty, while ungrading

- Getting around University and department policies, power structures, pushing back on standardized/high stakes testing proponents
 - Grading is an administrative, not pedagogical tool. How do we make a strong case for administrators to buy into Ungrading using evidence and outcome data (i.e. lower student stress, higher engagement, and retention)? Improved quality of student work
 - How can one teacher in one classroom in a school, in a district, in a state, who is one in a chain of graders from K - college implement ungrading and still make an impact, even when students' other classes present and future will be right back to A-F grades? How does the teacher justify this huge undertaking (both on their and the student's part) to various stakeholders (admin, district, parents) and encourage students to unlearn the only grading system they have known, when they're going to continue to be subject to it outside of a particular class, especially in high school (where their college admission is going to be evaluated on GPA, A-F grades, and test scores)?
 - How can I, as a career educator more naturally put ungrading practices in motion when I find myself knee-jerk reverting to what I was trained to do and what my school culture seems to support (but which I no longer believe in and support): require compliance, judge student work on a points basis, judge student learning by their answers on a quiz or test? Or does it just take time and practice?
 - Advocating for/supporting more vulnerable colleagues who want to practice ungrading—how best to use privilege when you have it?
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Thread #3 -- Building cultures of ungrading from P-20

- Moving from standards-based grading to ungrading, how to schedule and structure conferences with students, communication with families
- Incorporating contemplative pedagogy principles & techniques into the work of ungrading
- How to implement ungrading when the institution requires submission of grades on the 0-100 scale for dual enrollment students.
- How to do Ungrading in higher Ed, especially in larger classes and in the STEM fields.
- How do you make choices among the many different types of ungrading approaches? Which approaches play well together?
- Conferencing; converting no grade to a grade when required; most useful rubrics and/or reflection questions
- Very specific examples of syllabi and assignments. In reality, there are things students must learn to succeed in other classes. I teach research and writing, and if they don't have those skills to survive in the classes which require them, are we really doing them any favors? I worry about guiding them and ungrading at the same time. How is this done? Is it done? What about the students who are really not ready? I mean, really not ready.
- Student self-assessment methods; maintaining student motivation in an assessment-oriented academic culture; course logistics

- I would like to see more guidance available for high school educators. Ideas for transitioning to ungrading with younger students (9th graders) who have never experienced anything other than percentages and letter grades. Tips on maintaining order when students have more responsibility, but also more freedom, and are unfamiliar with how to conduct themselves.
- How can an instructor transition from "grading" to "ungrading" all at once? Or does it have to be a slow process? Or a process that progresses from one assignment or unit to a full quarter or semester over time? Once a teacher realizes how inequitable, ineffective, and demotivating grades are, it's hard to continue and NOT pivot to full-on "ungrading." Ideas, advice, tips are appreciated by novice educators and ungraders.
- This is my first year #Ungrading. I have some forms in place but I get overwhelmed thinking about tracking student learning. What if students do not keep track/provide evidence? Building routines and student buy-in. How to encourage/train students to complete reflections honestly and not just with what they think I want to hear? I am trying to start small, parts of units at a time, but keep getting drawn into having to do it all at once. What should I prioritize?
- Increasing student critical reflection, empowerment, and ownership as a result of clear success criteria, in elementary.
- How to alleviate student anxiety about not having a grade book to check on progress
- Inconsistency among teachers
- Student growth over mastery mindset
- How can we explain the effects of ungrading on students? How can we understand the differences between "content" learning (i.e. having a list of topics/facts that students need to learn) and deep learning (i.e. lifelong learning and the lessons students remember beyond the test)?
- Effects on learning; effects on student-teacher rapport and relationships.
- Ungrading and learning rather than teaching
- Debunking issue of lacking rigor, students acceptance, overall benefits
- Student voice in their own assessment of learning
- How is #ungrading compatible with a growth mindset and fostering/promoting intrinsic motivation?
- How ungrading improves learning by removing pressure (student well-being)
- How to make the process of ungrading as generative as possible for students
- Helping parents understand grading practices that are not what they experienced in school - valuing and understanding ungraded assessments.
- Lingering teacher-as-authority sentiments when students self-assess (and they're way off base)
- Creating continuums of success in elementary.
- Information about how ungrading increases student agency and student success.
- For high schools in BC, a letter grade and percent are still required, this seems to diminish some of the gradeless strategies used in the course. Any ideas?
- How do you create a grade behind ungrading practices so students aren't disadvantaged when wanting to apply for other degrees?

Thread #4 -- General "how-to" discussions about ungrading

- I'm mostly interested in this category. How does an ungrader use the LMS they're "forced" to use? What are the different ways Ts build Ungrading aspects into their courses? What do their process letters and reflections look like? What do their self-assessments ask? What's the wording in their syllabus? How do they get Ss on board with feedback - the giving and receiving? How do Ts explain all these activities (demos/process)?
- Samples of reflection sheets and scripts for conferences with students.
- To zero or not to zero in the grade book and alternatives.
- How to find time for the feedback, strategies for managing "record-keeping" end of this system
- Ungrading in AP classes
- How many self-assessments? the content of self-assessments? Do students always assign their own grades/grade themselves?
- Ungrading "math" — how different folks tabulate learning in an ungraded classroom
- Basics of upgrading, looking at examples from a variety of disciplines
- Using all feedback, no grades. Good feedback practices and how those can be scaled for large classes
- Working with a learning management system so that it can reflect #ungrading, reporting mastery and improvement rather than raw scores. Evaluating standards in a way that reflects their value/weight so that it supports #ungrading.
- Grade proposal formats, syllabus language/explainers for students
- Best practices, how to implement it in the classroom
- Ungrading in STEM and preparation for practice degrees like dentistry
- How to implement un-grading bit by bit into your classes; how to utilize some ungrading without going ungrading full monty.
- Creating feedback forms for content standards, how to give grades at the end
- How to measure growth [prepost; reflections by the students, teachers, profs, etc.
- How are people's assignments changing over time as they use ungrading?
- How to report grades when necessary - progress reports and report cards - that are accurate and helpful to students and parents, yet still under the umbrella of an #ungrading pedagogy.
- How to ungrade in large classes, with teaching assistants
- Communicating progress
- An introductory approach for what steps to take to begin ungrading