

Alternative Grading in Labs

Do you have questions for our final panel?
Join Slack and ask in [#higher-ed-conference](#) by 4:00 Eastern

Resources, schedule, Zoom: thegradingconference.com
Slack community: tinyurl.com/join-alt-grading

Recording and posting

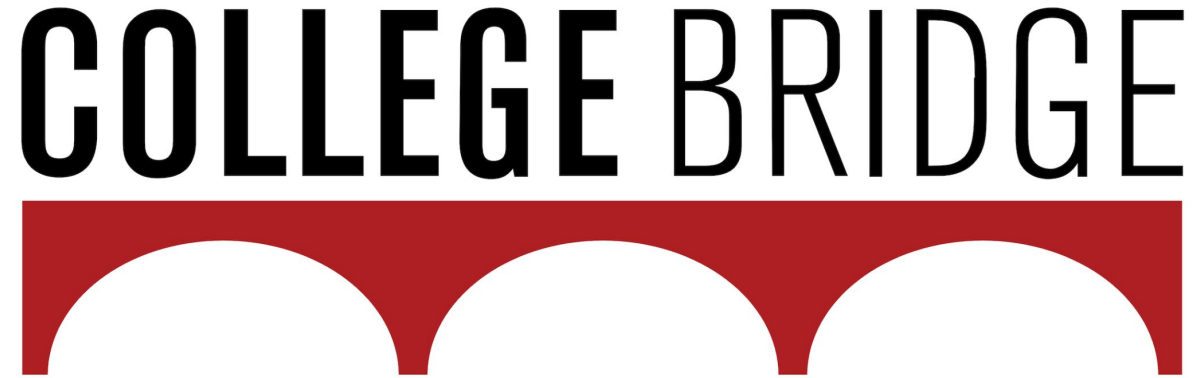
We are recording this session.

We plan to post recordings and slides so you can review them later.

We retain the right to rebroadcast and distribute the recording.

By participating, you are agreeing that your contributions become part of the recording. This includes video, audio, chat, and Q&A.

The Grading Conference is hosted by



college-bridge.org

Today: Time to start building

Now

Parallel sessions

Labs

I came, I learned, I tried (I wish I'd known)

Blending ideas

What could reassessments look like?

3:30 - 4:00

Coffee break (offline)

4:00 - 5:00

Keynote speaker: Robert Talbert

5:00 - 5:15

Tea break (offline)

5:15 - 6:15

Town Hall and Wrap Up

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Marney Pratt (she/her)

Senior Laboratory Instructor in Biology
Smith College in Northampton, MA

 @marney_pratt; Email: mcpratt@smith.edu



Context:

Small liberal arts college, Women's college

Intro Bio Lab (Bio 131 - Research in Biodiversity, Ecology, and Conservation)

2-4 sections of up to 16 students each per semester

Mix of majors and non-majors, Mostly first- and second-year undergraduates

How it works: ([overview of my SBG system](#))

SBG with ~12 skills-based standards each scored on 4 point scale

Students can revise and resubmit most things, Final scores are combined to give A/C/B/D/E grade at end of semester as required by the college

Courtney Sobers (she/her)

Assistant Teaching Professor, Chemistry
Rutgers University-Newark in Newark, NJ

 Twitter: @DrCJSobers; Email: cj.sobers@rutgers.edu



Context:

Institution - MSI (Hispanic & Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution) w/ programs for former inmates (NJ-STEP), first-generation students, etc.

Course - General Chemistry Lab 2 (part of two-semester sequence)

- Mostly first year undergraduates, some post-bacc or graduating undergraduates
- 300-350 students across 6 sections, 170mins/1x/wk, 15-30 Teaching Assistants (mostly first-year graduate students or second year undergraduates)
- Alternate b/w “design your own procedure” and cookbook practicals

Instructor - Black, queer, cis, female from PWI K-12+

Courtney Sobers (she/her)

Assistant Teaching Professor, Chemistry
Rutgers University-Newark in Newark, NJ

 Twitter: @DrCJSobers; Email: cj.sobers@rutgers.edu



My system: *Ungrading*

- Use Chem21Labs which requires the input of points but students are awarded full points for ANY submitted answer with feedback
- 2 grade proposals (midterm & final) with comment left via LMS (Canvas)
- One set of revision assignments for makeup or additional attempts
- One graded assignment (tech skills check) that is used for deciding border grades
- Can opt out into traditional grading approach by not submitting proposals OR by request

Jeffrey Markert (he/him)

Providence College (RI, USA) | BIOLOGY

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Context: Catholic and Dominican SLAC, ~5000 students | ~15% are STEM majors. 10% First Generation.

My lab: Introductory Biology Labs -

Fall - Molecular techniques, Micro Bio etc. (some Statistics)

Spring - Evolution, Behavior, Conservation, (more Statistics)

Mostly first year students

About 10 sections of 20 students each. Mostly STEM majors

Strong institutional acceptance - many STEM instructors are experimenting



Jeffrey Markert

My system: Standards Based Grading *initially*, morphing to hybrid *eventually* (last year was our first try - Thank you **Mark Grabiner**, **Emily Pollina**, and **Melissa Silvestrini** and last year's conference!)

How it works: Initially, **hands on skills** evaluated in class. Other skills evaluated with **quizlets** and few *brief* analysis based **writeups**. Multiple attempts possible for all these.

Streamlined for second semester - more 1 page **analytical writeups**. 3 attempts for these. Office hour meetings encouraged always, required before a third attempt.

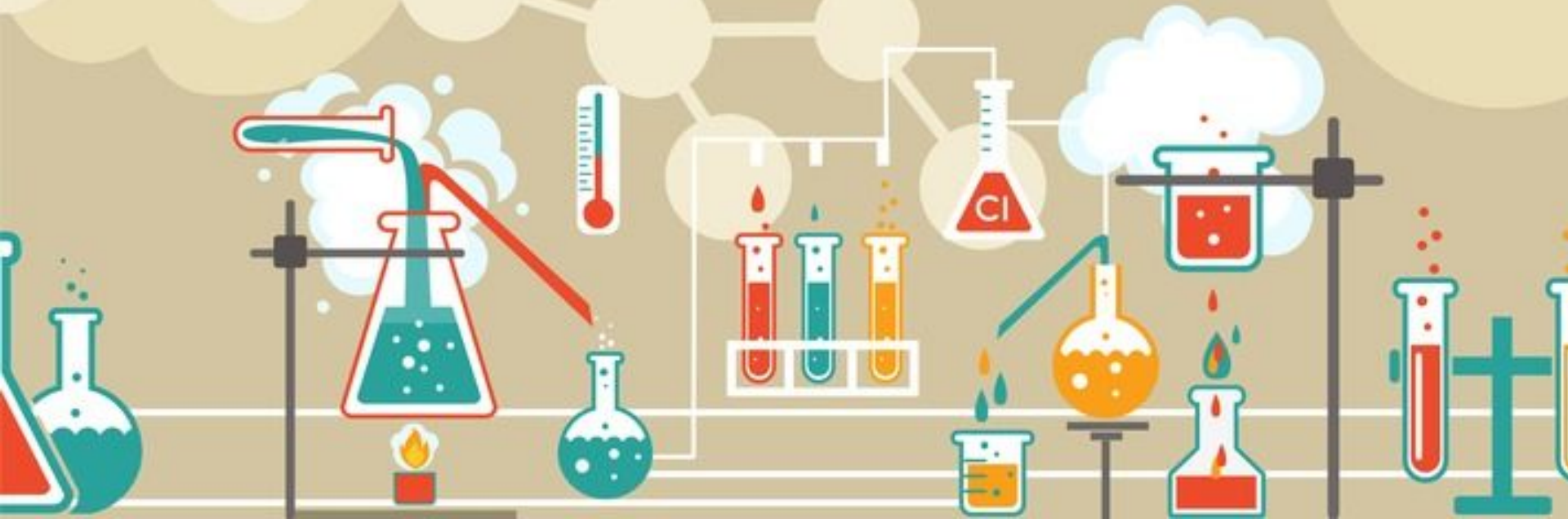
-**NO quizlets**

+**Biodiversity Writeup** - one attempt, but primed with a prewriting exercise

+**Traditional Midterm** and **Final** for lab content. One attempt for these



What is your best advice for trying alternative grading schemes in lab classes?



Did you have any
unexpected
difficulties & how
have you resolved
them?



What's next?

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