

The consistency of student self-grading and instructor grading of class participation
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Ungrading or alternative grading has grown in popularity. While implementation varies, ungrading generally involves collaboration between the student and instructor when assigning a grade (Blum, 2020). Anecdotally, instructors avoid ungrading/alternative grading practices due to concerns with students' inability to "accurately" grade themselves (Clark, 2022). Research has been mixed where some studies show high consistency between student and instructor grades while others show low consistency with students often overestimating their grade (for a review see Andrade, 2019).

The current study compared student self-grades to instructor assigned participation grades for in-class participation. Four sections (two sections of Introductory Psychology and two sections of Statistics in Psychology) taught by the same instructor during Spring 2022 were analyzed. A total of 109 students (64 Introductory Psychology, 45 Statistics in Psychology) were enrolled in the courses. In each class, students were put into teams at the beginning of the semester and worked in those teams on in-class activities designed to apply course content. The in-class activities were graded on a pass/fail basis and answers were reviewed in class. Their participation in these teams during class were part of their final grade (15% in Introductory Psychology, 10% in Statistics in Psychology). At the end of the semester, students completed a reflection where they indicated the grade they believe they earned for class participation. Based on overall attendance, teammate assessments, and observation by the course instructor, the instructor determined the final class participation grade.

A total of 10 (9.2%) did not submit a self-grade and were excluded from the following analyses. Self-grades were significantly positively correlated with instructor grade, $r(99)=.801$, $p<.001$. Self-grades and instructor grades were also significantly positively correlated with students' average exam grades. Of students who submitted a self-grade, 81.8% assigned themselves a participation grade within 5 percentage points of the instructor assigned grade, 10.1% assigned themselves a grade lower than the instructor assigned grade, and 8.1% assigned themselves a grade higher than the instructor assigned grade. There were no differences in the relationship between self vs. instructor assigned grades based on course type (Introductory vs. Statistics), $\chi^2(2)=.286$, $p=.867$.

These findings suggest that the majority of self-grades were consistent with the instructor grade (82%) while only a small proportion greatly overestimated their contributions to teamwork (8%). These findings highlight the ability of most students to accurately assess their contributions to in-class participation based on a brief rubric. While self-assessment research has identified flaws in student's ability to self-assess (especially among lower performers), these findings suggest that for labor-based assignments like participation, self-grading was consistent with instructor observations.

References

- Andrade, H. (2019). A critical review of research on student self-assessment. *Frontiers in Education, 4*.
- Blum, S. (2020). *Ungrading: Why rating students undermines learning (and what to do instead)*. West Virginia University Press.
- Clark, D. (2022, September 12). Mythbusters: Ungrading Edition. *Grading for Growth*.
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INTRODUCTION

Ungrading or alternative grading has grown in popularity. While implementation varies, ungrading generally involves collaboration between the student and instructor when assigning a grade (Blum, 2020). Anecdotally, instructors avoid ungrading/alternative grading practices due to concerns with students' inability to "accurately" grade themselves (Clark, 2022).

Research has been mixed where some studies show high consistency between student and instructor grades while others show low consistency with students often overestimating their grade (for a review see Andrade, 2019).

PRESENT STUDY

The current study compared student self-grades to instructor assigned participation grades for in-class participation to examine consistency in ratings.

METHOD

- Four sections (two sections of Introductory Psychology and two sections of Statistics in Psychology) taught by the same instructor during Spring 2022
- Teamwork constituted 10-15% of their final grade; in-class activities completed in teams were graded on a pass/fail basis
- 109 students (64 Introductory Psychology, 45 Statistics in Psychology)
- Completed final reflection where they indicated the grade they believe they earned for class participation
- Instructor determined the final class participation grade.

RESULTS

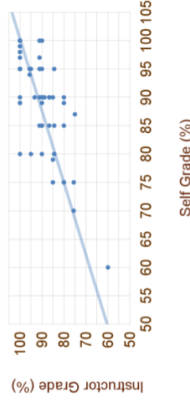
A total of 10 (9.2%) did not submit a self-grade and were excluded from the following analyses. Self-grades were significantly positively correlated with instructor grade, $r(99) = .801, p < .001, r^2 = .64$. Self-grades and instructor grades were also significantly positively correlated with students' average exam grades. Of students who submitted a self-grade, 81.8% assigned themselves a participation grade within 5 percentage points of the instructor assigned grade, 10.1% assigned themselves a grade lower than the instructor assigned grade, and 8.1% assigned themselves a grade higher than the instructor assigned grade. There were no differences in the relationship between self vs. instructor assigned grades based on course type (Introductory vs. Statistics), $\chi^2(2) = .286, p = .867$.

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations

| Variable | Mean (SD) | Range | 1 | 2 |
|------------------------|---------------|------------|-------|-------|
| 1. Self Grade | 93.78 (8.22) | 60-100 | — | |
| 2. Instructor Grade | 92.44 (8.08) | 60-100 | .801* | — |
| 3. Average Exam Grades | 82.26 (13.75) | 37.5-102.5 | .384* | .409* |

* $p < .001$

Self Grade vs. Instructor Grade



DISCUSSION

- Findings suggest that majority of self-grades were consistent with the instructor grade (82%) while only a small proportion greatly overestimated their contributions to teamwork (8%)
- Teamwork grades were also positive correlated with exam grades suggesting that participation is related to learning
- Findings highlight the ability of most students to accurately assess their contributions to in-class participation based on a brief rubric
- While self-assessment research has identified flaws in students' ability to self-assess (especially among lower performers), these findings suggest that for labor-based assignments like participation, self-grading was consistent with instructor observations

Google Form Rating for Self Grade

Describe your overall contribution to the Team Activities. Things to consider: Do you work on the problems/questions? Do you help other teammates when they have questions? Do you present and contribute to the majority of the team activities? Do you submit the assignment to canvas?

Your answer

Here are guidelines to help you determine your team grade.

A (90-100): Was present and made substantial contributions (e.g. completed whole problems) to the majority of the team activities (4-8 out of 10 activities). Was present and contributed to the majority of the team activities (4-8 out of 10 activities). Was present and attempted to contribute to most of the team activities (4-5 out of 10 activities). Missed several team activities and/or did not contribute to the completion of the activities (2-3 out of 10 activities). Missed most or all of the team activities and/or did not contribute to any work.

Based on your checklist and reflection, what grade would you give yourself right now on your participation in the Team Activities? Grade yourself on a scale from 0% to 100%.

Your answer