

met the course learning outcomes or how well they've met them. So when we think about grading, we want to grade for consistency and transparency, that should be the goal.

So in order to do that, we should really explain the purpose of the assessment. This is really important for students to understand why they're, why do we have to do this, right? I'm sure you've probably heard it a few times. Just so that students understand.

So what's the rationale? And again, making sure it aligns with the course learning outcomes.

We recommend using a rubric if you don't want to use a rubric or it's too much work, at least put out a set of criteria that you're looking for. So these are the things I will be looking for. These are the things your grade will be based on. And whatever you decide to use as your grading tool, whether it's a rubric or a list of criteria, making that available to students so that they know how they will be graded. And then if you're working with TAs or markers, or if you're a TA and you're working with a professor, It's really important to stay in touch and initially, especially if you're sharing grading, to compare, you know, do a couple of papers each and then meet up before continuing along just to make sure that, you know, your A is the same as your TA's A or your Marker's A and your B is the same as their B, et cetera, right? Just to make sure that things are aligned. And so I do recommend when you're building your assignments to use something like this. So this is a template that I use for my assignments. And I can tell you that I get a lot fewer questions about assignments after I started using this. But essentially breaking it down and this way students have all the information. So right due date, what's the deliverable? What exactly are they handing in? what are the specifications, how will they submit it, the rationale, so what's the purpose, what course learning objectives are we connected to, what are these specific instructions, maybe they have to relate it to certain course materials or maybe there's something else that they have to do, and then finally what's the criteria.

So something like this would really help with that transparency to let students know exactly what's expected of them and how they'll be graded.

So you're probably familiar with bell curving. It's a popular type of grading technique that's used and it's promoted in many departments, in many institutions, right, in many universities.

It's a widely used practice. And this is a good way of distinguishing the exceptional students from the, we'll say, average students, if you will.

There's another approach to grading, which is a criterion reference grading system where, you know, as I've been mentioning, we set out a list of criteria that we expect for students, and we grade them based on this criteria.

And that's not to say that we can't distinguish the exceptional students from the, you know, from the average or good performers, but this way provides a little bit more transparency to students about why they received the grade that they do and a little bit more consistency from term to term.

So in a typical bell-curved class, we might see that the two top performers might not be at a similar level in in subsequent terms or previous terms.

So we can still use this kind of a system to rank students but they're not competing let's say for a certain number of A's that we can give in a class. And as I mentioned it really is about transparency so having a criteria will reduce the number, in theory, the number of queries you might get about grades or requests for

grade changes.

requests for grade changes. I'm sure some of you have probably already received requests for grade changes or asked for a justification on your grades. So when we use criteria or rubrics, very often it really reduces those kinds of requests that we get from students. So a rubric, in case you're not familiar with a rubric,