

The Voices of the New Majority of Professors: The Adjuncts Speak

Author 1 ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8035-6530>

Author 1 Affiliation: B. C. Johnson, EdD, Southern New Hampshire University

Author 2 ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5131-235X>

Author 2 Affiliation: Lucia Pollino, EdD, Gwynedd Mercy University

SC Classification Genre: Education

Creative Commons Attribution



Citation: Johnson, B. C., & Pollino, L. (2021). The voices of the new majority of professors: The adjuncts speak. *Scholar Chatter*, 2(2), 1 – 11. <http://doi.org/10.47036/SC.2.2.1-11.2021>

© The Authors. 2021. This is an open access publication through Scholar Chatter LLC.

Abstract

The results of this phenomenological study reveal the attitudes of adjunct college and university professors in the U.S. toward grade inflation. The 23 participants encompassed a range of ages, experience levels, geographic areas, education levels, and races. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions are used to explore 23 adjunct's lived experiences with grade inflation. Three research questions directed the study: What *experiences* have adjunct faculty members working in a four-year college or university had with grade inflation? How do adjunct faculty members working in a four-year college or university *perceive* grade inflation? How do adjunct faculty members working a four-year college or university *interpret* their experiences with grade inflation? Findings substantiated that adjuncts have definite ideas about how to curb grade inflation, including increased training, increased resources, and use of rubrics. We concluded these results are useful for aiding college administrators in determining what *the new majority*, or adjuncts, believe should change in the area of grade inflation and future researchers should do further qualitative and quantitative research on grade inflation and adjuncts.

Key words: *Adjunct, grades, grade inflation, higher education, new majority*

Introduction

Results from many statistical surveys indicated that the grade point averages of students in the U.S. have been climbing for several decades in a continuous increase commonly called *grade inflation* (Wongsurawat, 2009). The phenomenon of grade inflation has been decried by researchers as a *scandal*, a *threat* to higher education, and a serious problem that may cause universities to lose credibility (Ayyappann et al., 2017; Caruth & Caruth, 2013; Sabatini, 2019).

In the past few decades, the paradigm of the academic workforce has changed dramatically. Replacing the full-time tenure-track model, the latest model repositioned the adjunct at the forefront and situated the adjuncts as the majority among faculty members (Hurlburt & McGarrah, 2016). Tenure-track faculty have transitioned from 80% of the instructional faculty in higher education 45 years ago to approximately 30% today with adjunct faculty have largely taken their place (Kezar et al., 2016). Adjuncts, according to current research, make up approximately 73% of the instructional faculty in U.S. colleges and universities (American Association of University Professors, 2018). The part-time faculty “population increased by 422.1 percent between 1970 and 2003, compared to an increase of only 70.7 percent among all full-time faculty” (Kezar & Maxey, 2014, p. 5).

We conducted this qualitative phenomenological study to uncover the essence and meaning of the experiences, attitudes, and interpretations of adjunct instructors related to the phenomenon of grade inflation. We sought to understand the perceptions of grade inflation by adjunct instructors, to describe the meaning they attach to these experiences, and to discover how these meanings inform and influence the practice of the adjunct instructors in the classroom. Grade inflation has been generally defined for this research as lenient grading done without an objective reason, such as academic improvement, to support it (Ali et al., 2016).

The research findings helped address a gap in the research that existed regarding adjunct instructors’ perceptions of grade inflation. While the observations of full-time faculty towards grade inflation have been investigated by some researchers, adjunct faculty perceptions have not been researched to the same extent (Mantzoukas, 2008.) This disparity was noted in research not only in information from adjuncts, but also from college and university professors in general (McCabe & Powell, 2004). This gap in the research is even more puzzling in relation to part-time faculty members since the ideas of these adjuncts, the *new majority* of the professoriate, have been overlooked, discounted, or simply not examined to an extent greater than those of full-time faculty (Johnson, 2021).

Review of the Literature

History of Grade Inflation

Grade inflation cannot be classed as a new problem whose origin lies in recent memory. This phenomenon occurred as far back as the early 20th century (Young, 1997). Many well-known 19th century writers refer to grade inflation (King, 2005). Although decried by some as the singular and outstanding imperfection of the present generation, the fact remains that most generations criticize the next one as lenient (Stanley & Baines, 2004). The phenomenon surged again during the 1960s and again during the mid-1980s (Kostal et al., 2016).

Consequences of Grade Inflation

One salient question for researchers was what makes grade inflation such a serious problem (Finefter-Rosenbluh & Levinson, 2015). This is a significant question in determining why many academics and researchers are alarmed over this phenomenon. It has been noted that, on a basic level, grade inflation is dishonest and, therefore, a form of lying. Grades are intended to communicate the level a student exhibits understanding of course materials and are presumed accurate. However, communication is greatly damaged, if not destroyed, when inflated grades are reported (Collins, 2020).

Grade inflation can negatively affect potential employers by communicating to them that the students have certain abilities which they may not possess, thus resulting in losing usefulness for grades in the hiring process. Grade inflation can result in the dilution of the value of educational attainment (Chowdhury, 2018). During time, grade inflation will produce applicants with less knowledge and ability (Kostal et al., 2016). Because of the foregoing, grade inflation can harm the university's collective reputation (Yang & Yip, 2003). Further, graduate schools are choosing students from undergraduate programs with lenient grading standards. This move affects both the students and the quality of the graduate program (Moore et al., 2010).

A disturbing consequence of grade inflation is that it exacerbates inequalities in a society because students who can afford to attend schools that award higher grades are provided advantages in college and graduate school admissions (Chowdhury, 2018). This might cause a decline in minority enrollment and a resultant waning in institutional diversity (Wongsurawat, 2009). Research suggests that instructors may be more willing to inflate the grades of "higher-performing, higher-income students in an effort to appease their pushy parents" (Gershenson, 2018, p. 8).

Giving easy grades prompts students to do less work (Babcock, 2010). Grade inflation hurts the student and makes them less inclined to put in the time and effort to gain good grades in classes where such is required. The awarding of inflated grades can give the student the idea that going to a university is no more difficult than attending high school (Smith & Fleisher, 2011). Grade inflation also punishes excellent students who make only grades marginally better than students who are average or below average (Klafter, 2019). Grade inflation can harm lower achieving students causing them to overestimate their abilities (French, 2017).

Rubrics and Grade Inflation

Research suggests that rubrics increase consistency of grading across programs and classes. When the criteria are carefully constructed, using rubrics also increases students' grades because they are more than likely to be meticulous in addressing each part of the assignment criteria and they are certain of what is expected of them on each assignment (Oluwatoyin, 2020). These carefully constructed rubrics were detailed (White & Heitzler, 2018). Because the persons grading must be able to validate the grade and justify their choices, rubrics made grade inflation less likely to occur (Rouai, 2020).

Methodology

We approximated the sample size to require data from between 20 and 25 participants (Malterud et al., 2016). To guarantee a sample size with more accuracy, we determined an a priori sample size (Turner-Bowker et al., 2018). When we obtained 23 participants, we considered it reasonably certain that saturation had been accomplished because no additional themes had appeared in the interviews since the nineteenth interview (Nascimento et al., 2018).

This study used a phenomenological method. Participants were adjunct educators from various regions of the U.S. There were three research questions we sought to answer:

RQ 1: What *experiences* have adjunct faculty members working in a four-year college or university had with grade inflation?

RQ 2: How do adjunct faculty members working in a four-year college or university *perceive* grade inflation?

RQ 3: How do adjunct faculty members working in a four-year college or university *interpret* their experiences with grade inflation?

The exigencies of the COVID-19 pandemic made interviewing by phone a necessity. We recruited participants from Facebook, used one-on-one interviews, and conducted the recorded interviews using a web-based virtual meeting software program. We asked the participants eight open-ended questions used in a dissertation, *Not Me, Not Here, Not Bad: A Phenomenological Study of the Experiences, Feelings, and Interpretations of Grade Inflation by Adjunct Instructors at U.S. Colleges and Universities* (Johnson, 2021) and validated through subject matter expert field testing.

We followed the seven steps of the process outlined by Colaizzi (1978) and combined them with phases for establishing trustworthiness (Nowell et al., 2017). First, we familiarized ourselves with the data by reading the transcripts several times. Initial coding began with the transcription of the interviews. The replies were analyzed to classify themes and research questions developing from the data. Data compiled from the interviews were classified as to which research question it helped to answer, as discussed further in the findings.

Findings

Demographics

Of the 23 participants, six were men, and 17 were women. Twelve of the 23 participants have taught or were teaching in a K-12 school. Several participants served in full-time positions in primary, elementary, or secondary schools as teachers, principals, guidance counselors, or paraprofessionals. Not all the participants served in other jobs because some were employed at several institutions of higher learning. Some participants taught at five separate institutions simultaneously.

The participants were almost evenly divided between educators who served at the K-12 level and educators who had not done so. Participant ages ranged from 25 to 67 years. The oldest

and youngest groups were the most poorly represented age categories. Two age groups, 34 to 44 (eight participants) and the 45 to 54 (six participants), were the largest groups, and together represented a majority of the total respondents. There were no respondents under the age of 25 years.

The number of years of adjunct employment experience ranged from over 20 years to less than one year. The two extremes in terms of years of experience were the least represented with only four participants falling into these outlying categories. The group of adjuncts who had served between 11 and 20 years comprised nearly as many as the two outlying groups combined. The participants who had functioned as adjuncts between one and 10 years comprised the largest block of adjuncts representing approximately 15 of the participants in the research.

Thirteen participants possessed a master's degree. The majority of the participants held doctorates; either a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD, 6) or a Doctor of Education (EdD, 2). Two participants only acquired their bachelor's degrees, and could only teach lower-level classes, such as non-transferrable remedial-level courses or college introduction courses.

Participants comprised 20 White/Caucasian and three African American/Black adjunct educators. The number of White/Caucasian participants was overwhelmingly larger than that of African American/Black participants. This discrepancy is in accord with the extremely low number of African American/Black adjuncts serving in higher education. There were no additional ethnicities or races represented in the current research.

Participants served as adjuncts in every region of the U.S. Every state was not represented in the sample; participants had worked or were working as adjunct instructors in only 20 states. Nineteen participants are from the Southern U.S., the region with the most states. The Northeast and the West regions were together represented by approximately the same number of participants as the Midwest region, 6, 4, 9, respectively. The number of states in which adjuncts served is greater than the number of participants because many worked in several states.

Data analysis revealed three major findings, each providing ways that the adjunct majority believed the problem of grade inflation could be eliminated or at least reduced. The findings did not emerge from specific questions, but from a collation of answers from several questions. The three emerging themes were: Increased training, resources, and use of rubrics.

Increased Training

In answer to the first research question concerning participant experiences with grade inflation, all participants mentioned a complete lack of any type of training that specifically addressed grading or grade inflation. The response about training regarding grade inflation was unanimous. Of the adjuncts who directly addressed this question in their interview, all expressed that they had received no type of training whatsoever concerning grade inflation and that it was not specifically mentioned before being hired, while being onboarded, or since being employed. One adjunct who teaches at three universities noted having never heard the term "grade inflation."

Use of Resources

Research Question 2 offered the participants an opportunity to reflect about some factors they found that could reduce grade inflation. Using non-classroom resources was cited as one method for reducing this phenomenon. According to participants, constant use of out-of-classroom resources that institutions provide to their students can reduce the instance of grade inflation substantially. These resources include tutors, writing centers, success coaches, librarians, and advisors. Some verbalized the conviction that not guiding students to the resources they require to thrive in college is unethical. Participants noted that an adjunct instructor should build on the foundation of the services offered by the institution to aid the students in becoming successful. One participant mentioned taking the time to walk a student to the support center to find help.

Use of Rubrics

As a part of the interpretations regarding grade inflation (RQ 3), the participants noted that using well-constructed grading rubrics was a factor influencing grade inflation. This issue was cited by nine participants and most believed it decreased the prevalence of grade inflation. The participants who felt rubrics are barriers to grade inflation provided reasons for their beliefs, including acting as a contract between instructor and student, creating a baseline for grading, and eliminating subjectivity. The adjuncts believed good rubrics that spelled out the requirements clearly and specified what the instructor would pay attention to were deemed effective at eliminating grade inflation. Conversely, using loose, vague, and non-specific rubrics was cited as a prime motivator and perpetuator of grade inflation. Of the participants who advocated the use of rubrics as a tool to assuage the flood of grade inflation, seven of the nine were female participants and six of the nine had taught at the K-12 level. Six of these participants had also denied the existence of grade inflation in their schools or classrooms.

Discussion

The responses from the adjuncts surveyed were enlightening. They offered insights into what this new majority adjunct faculty thinks about grade inflation. Comments from participants also provided ideas regarding how to stop grade inflation in education.

Increased Training

No participants recalled any training specifically aimed at grade inflation prevention or grading in general. There was no training before hiring, during onboarding, or since being hired. The absence of training was a surprising finding. Well-trained agents must be well-schooled in the products, prices, and practices of their business; training that directly addresses a problem area is requisite. The findings suggest otherwise in this case.

The nonexistence of upfront training at orientation was viewed as a problem among the respondents in this study. Similarly, researchers found that grading was one duty that most of the adjuncts felt they had received insufficient training (Forbes et al., 2010). Approximately half of the 27 participants in one study favored instituting a training program for instructors because they believed such would help in abating grade inflation (Blum, 2017).

This finding regarding the lack of training is incongruous with the idea that grade inflation is viewed by college leadership as a scandal and threat to the American higher education system (Ayyappan et al., 2017; Sabatini, 2019). One cannot help wonder if the consequences of grade inflation are taken seriously by the administration of such institutions. Notwithstanding the frequent, vehement protestations to the contrary, the leadership in higher education as represented by the participants in this study have fostered the perception that grade inflation is not an important problem (Murray, 2019). This idea is conveyed because no training has been provided in this area.

Another possible explanation of this lack of training lies in the convergence of interest between the institutions and their agents (adjuncts). Both parties receive benefit from ignoring grade inflation to a degree. The self-interests of the adjuncts and institutions does not conflict; instead, it converges with the institutional self-interest. Despite the suggested negative outcomes, adjuncts, and principals receive sufficient benefits to continue in blissful ignorance about the subject of grade inflation. Negatives, such as damage to reputation, lack of equity, and loss of credibility for grades and degrees possibly do not offset the rapid rewards of increased Student Evaluation of Teacher scores, happy students and administrators, and peace in not having to deal with the disgruntled members of either group.

Use of Resources

Twenty-six participants cited resources beyond the classroom as an important way to deter grade inflation expressed this sentiment in a very strong and unqualified manner. These participants left no doubt as to their feelings about the positive role that resources, such as writing tutors, advisors, peer counselors, and librarians, could have in helping students to obtain good grades and discourage the quest for inflated grades. The individuals indicated that they see themselves as a part of a team that works toward the same goal and that they will be successful only if the other members of the team performed their duties. All the participants who mentioned resources as a factor in grade inflation were female with one exception, and all of them had 10 or fewer years of experience as an adjunct. Their age, level of education and experience in K-12 schools made little to no difference in whether they believed these resources are important in stopping grade inflation.

Use of Rubrics

Using rubrics as tools to reduce grade inflation is consistent with research related to using detailed rubrics, as opposed to the *skewed* or *loose* rubrics (White & Heitzler, 2018). Participants noted that rubrics with greater specificity made the objectives for the assignment clearer, plainly outlined expectations, allowed faculty to provide feedback based on objective criteria, and offered standardized criteria for the student and faculty (Rouai, 2020). One researcher shared similar findings in his study concerning using rubrics to combat grade inflation because they guaranteed identical criteria would be used to grade each student and would, therefore, aid in eliminating grade inflation (Oluwatoyin, 2020).

Research suggests several benefits of using rubrics in relation to grade inflation. Rubrics define how the student's work should appear and make grading quicker and easier; thus, reducing the burden on instructors to enforce higher standards of learning. Using rubrics helps

reduce the subjectivity of grading and, create more equitable grades. Finally, rubrics offer some protection for the instructor from student criticism of the assigned grades (Hodges, 2014). Rubrics relieve some of the pressure on instructors caused by students questioning the reason they receive certain grades (Blum, 2017). These points were echoed by the participants in this study who cited rubrics as an aid in the lessening of grade inflation.

Implications and Suggestions for Practice

The findings from this study should inspire researchers to reexamine their conclusions about the causes of grade inflation. One suggestion from the study participants is that ignorance created by an absence of training has contributed to the phenomenon. Another idea highlighted in the study is the need to reassess student evaluation of teachers as a cause of grade inflation. The findings of this study call that into question, at least among adjuncts. This examination of grade inflation and the experience of adjunct faculty with this phenomenon will provide a foundation for additional research. It also may galvanize other researchers to investigate the subject in quantitative or mixed methods studies to obtain additional understanding of the issue.

Results from this study should also encourage practitioners disinclined to make use of rubrics to reevaluate their reasons and to reconsider doing so to avoid grade inflation. The practitioner, and institutions, might be motivated to work on a written definition of grade inflation so they will not have to rely on knowing it when they see it. This redefinition would best occur within a collaborative environment in which colleagues and administrators openly discuss their experiences, feelings, and interpretations of grade inflation.

Leaders of higher education institutions need to consider how the resources they provide for students (writing centers, advisors, etc.) can be emphasized. If these resources prevent (to any extent) grade inflation, the administrator would be prudent to consider making the resources more accessible and increasing the number and scope of these resources. This idea is probably one of the more expensive to implement and may, for that reason, be one that will be the least attempted.

Funding

The research for this article was funded solely by the authors.

References

- Ali, H., Ullah, S., Kashif, N. U., & Hussain, B. (2016). Analysis of grade inflation at secondary school level: Case study of Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Multan. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 36(2), 1011-1022. Retrieved from <https://www.bzu.edu.pk/PJSS/Vol36No22016/PJSS-Vol36-No2-35.pdf>
- American Association of University Professors. (2018). *Data snapshot: Contingent faculty in U.S. higher ed*. Retrieved from <https://www.aaup.org/file/10112018%20Data%20Snapshot%20Tenure.pdf>

- Ayyappann, J. P., Raj. K. M., & Thomas, J. F. (2017, November-December). Grade inflation: An inquiry into the cause. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, 2(1), 31-36. <https://doi.org/10.31142/ijtsrd5844>
- Babcock, P. (2010). Real costs of nominal grade inflation? New evidence from student course evaluations. *Economic Inquiry*, 48(4), 983-996. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-7295.2009.00245.x>
- Blum, D. (2017). Nine potential solutions to abate grade inflation at regionally accredited online U.S. universities: An intrinsic case study. *The Qualitative Report*, 22(9), 2288-2311. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2017.2914>
- Caruth, D. L., & Caruth, G. D. (2013). Grade inflation: An issue for higher education? *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 14(1), 102-110. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1006251.pdf>
- Chowdhury, F. (2018). Grade inflation: Causes, consequences and cure. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 7(6), 86-92. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v7n6p86>
- Colaizzi, P. F. (1978). Psychological research as a phenomenologist views it. In R. S. Valle & M. King (Eds.), *Existential-phenomenological alternatives for psychology* (pp. 48-71). Oxford University Press, USA.
- Collins, D. (2020). The other academic dishonesty: Why grade inflation is ethically wrong. *The Canadian Society for Study of Practical Ethics / Société Canadienne Pour L'étude De L'éthique Appliquée—SCEEA*, 4, 1-24. Retrieved from <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1021&context=csspe>
- Finefter-Rosenbluh, I., & Levinson, M. (2015). What is wrong with grade inflation (if anything)? *Philosophical Inquiry in Education*, 23(1), 3-21. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1070362ar>
- Forbes, M. O., Hickey, M. T., & White, J. (2010). Adjunct faculty development: Reported needs and innovative solutions. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 26(2), 116-124. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2009.08.001>
- French, J. (2017, February 27). Observers mixed on grade inflation. *Calgary Herald*, p. A4. www.calgaryherald.com
- Gershenson, S. (2018). *Grade inflation in high schools (2005–2016)*. Thomas B. Fordham Institute. https://fordhaminstitute.org/sites/default/files/20180919-grade-inflation-high-schools-2005-2016_0
- Hodges, L. C. (2014). Demystify learning expectations to address grade inflation. *College Teaching*, 62(2), 45-46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2013.825573>
- Hurlburt, S., & McGarrah, M. (2016). *The shifting academic workforce: Where are the contingent faculty?* Retrieved from TIAA Institute website: https://www.tiaainstitute.org/sites/default/files/presentations/2017-02/shifting_academic_workforce.pdf

- Johnson, B. C. (2021). *Not me, not here, not bad: A phenomenological study of the experiences, feelings, and interpretations of grade inflation by adjunct instructors at U.S. colleges and universities* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Gwynedd Mercy University.
- Kezar, A., Holcombe, E., & Maxey, D. (2016). Rethinking faculty models/roles: An emerging consensus about future directions for the professoriate. TIAA Institute.
https://www.tiaainstitute.org/sites/default/files/presentations/2017-02/rethinking_faculty_models_roles.pdf
- Kezar, A., & Maxey, D. (2014). *Student outcomes assessment among the new non-tenure-track faculty majority* (Occasional Paper #21). Retrieved from National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment website:
<https://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/OP21.pdf>
- King, M. (2005, Winter). Voluntary conscription: Enlisting the children of Lake Wobegone in the battle against grade inflation. *College Literature*, 32(1), 127-145.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/lit.2005.0009>
- Klafter, C. E. (2019). Good grieve! America's grade inflation culture. *Academic Questions*, 32(3), 328-333. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12129-019-09810-8>
- Kostal, J. W., Kuncel, N. R., & Sackett, P. R. (2016, Spring). Grade inflation marches on: Grade increases from the 1990s to 2000s. *Educational Measurement Issues and Practice*, 35(1), 11-20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/emip.12077>
- Malterud, K., Siersma, V. D., & Guassora, A. D. (2016). Sample size in qualitative interview studies: Guided by information power. *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1753-1760.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732315617444>
- Mantzoukas, S. (2008). Facilitating research students in formulating qualitative research questions. *Nurse Education Today*, 28, 371-377.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2007.06.012>
- McCabe, J., & Powell, B. (2004). "In my class? No." Professors' accounts of grade inflation. In W. E. Becker & M. L. Andrews (Eds.), *The scholarship of teaching and learning in higher education: Contributions of research universities* (pp. 193-219). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Moore, D. A., Swift, S. A., Sharek, Z. S., & Gino, F. (2010). Correspondence bias in performance evaluation: Why grade inflation works. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36(6), 843-852. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167210371316>
- Murray, D. S. (2019). The precarious new faculty majority: Communication and instruction research and contingent labor in higher education. *Communication Education*, 68(2), 235-245. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2019.1568512>
- Nascimento, L. D., Souza, T. V., Oliveira, I. C., Moraes, J. R., Aguiar, R. C., & Silva, L. F. (2018). Theoretical saturation in qualitative research: An experience report in interview with schoolchildren. *Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem*, 71(1), 228-233.
<https://doi.org/10.1590/0034-7167-2016-0616>

- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>
- Oluwatoyin, A. A. (2020). A graduate education programs look at grading. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 15(3), 104-114. <https://doi.org/10.5897/ERR2019.3782>
- Rouai, G. (2020). *Teachers' beliefs and views on grade inflation in the Algerian universities* [Master's thesis]. <http://e-biblio.univ-mosta.dz/bitstream/handle/123456789/17276/ROUAI-Ghezala-2020-Didactics.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Sabatini, N. (2019, April 4). Grade inflation: the scandal we shouldn't ignore. *Willamette Collegian*. Retrieved from <http://willamettecollegian.com/main/contact-us/>
- Smith, D. E., & Fleisher, S. (2011, March). The implications of grade inflation: Faculty integrity versus the pressure to succeed. *Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching*, 4(1), 32-38. Retrieved from <https://assets.nu.edu/assets/resources/pageresources/journal-of-research-in-innovative-teaching-volume-4.pdf#page=41>
- Stanley, G., & Baines, L. (2004, March/April). No more shopping for grades at b-mart: Re-establishing grades as indicators of academic performance. *The Clearing House*, 74(4), 227-230. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098650409601237>
- Turner-Bowker, D. M., Lamoureux, R. E., Stokes, J., Litcher-Kelly, L., Galipeau, N., Yaworsky, A., Solomon, J., & Shields, A. L. (2018). Informing a priori sample size estimation in qualitative concept elicitation interview studies for clinical outcome assessment instrument development. *Value in Health*, 21(7), 839-842. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jval.2017.11.014>
- White, K. A., & Heitzler, E. T. (2018). Effect of increased evaluation objectivity on grade inflation. *Nurse Educator*, 43(2), 73-77. <https://doi.org/10.1097/nne.0000000000000420>
- Wongsurawat, W. (2009, December). Does grade inflation affect the credibility of grades? Evidence from U.S. law school admissions. *Education Economics*, 17(4), 523-534. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09645290802470061>
- Yang, H., & Yip, C. S. (2003). *An economic theory of grade inflation*. Retrieved from ResearchGate website: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Huanxing_Yang/publication/242244547_An_Economic_Theory_of_Grade_Inflation/links/0deec5385eff56f228000000/An-Economic-Theory-of-Grade-Inflation.pdf
- Young, J. W. (1997, November). [An alternative to traditional GPA for evaluating student performance]: Comment: Grade inflation, a pervasive problem--A commentary on Johnson's Achievement Index. *Statistical Science*, 12(4), 271-272. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2246212>