What would you be worried about if you let your students decide how to determine their own grade in your class?

Grades and by extension GPA created a gap that both faculty and students struggle to accommodate

1. Cause students to focus on the grade and not on learning
2. Do a poor job of motivating students to learn and take intellectual risk
3. Create a transactional relationships between students and faculty that result in course gamification
4. Are the leading cause of stress and anxiety for college students

Instructor Takeaways

- The instructor and TA both felt the overall quality and quality of engagement was improved for the ungraded students.
- The group projects and presentations were more interesting and creative. One group is still working on their project.
- End of course evaluations improved for the ungraded students. Overall feelings of inclusiveness, respect for students, and stimulating interest were boosted.
- Performance on exams were comparable between graded and ungraded students. The instructor and TA spent less time grading!

Required student conferences
1. Student identify learning goals and propose new activities (or use those from the graded course)
2. Student determine how they will assess progress
   a. How will they grade?
   b. Require growth
3. Students specify grade
   a. Submit supporting evidence
   b. Instructor reserves veto rights

Ungraded student activities

- Activities in common with the graded course
  ○ 94% included class participation and exams
  ○ 97% completed a final group project
  ○ 87% submitted homework
  ○ 28% completed online (Perusall) readings
  ○ 25% created a wiki page

- Unique to the ungraded course
  ○ 25% reviewed a modern physics article
  ○ 12% of students created physics videos
  ○ One student taught a class
  ○ One student created a learning portfolio
  ○ One student completed mini projects

How did ungraded students assign final course grades?

- 52% of students chose a unique standards based grading approach
- 48% of students chose a traditional points based approach (10 or 15 point scale)
- 100% of students factored in some form of Mastery grading into their assessment plan

Grades are roughly shifted up 114% increase in “A” grades. Grades are mostly shifted up one lettergrade One student did not participate.

Ungraded: Two students did not participate in the course and did not withdraw. One student withdrew before midterms.

Graded: Two students did not participate in the course and did not withdraw. Two students asked for a regrade on exams or homeworks.