

Fifteen Fixes for Broken Grades

Fixes for Practices that Distort Achievement

Fix 1: Don't include student behaviors (effort, participation, adherence to class rules, etc) in grades; include only achievement

Fix 2: Don't reduce marks on "work" submitted late; provide support for the learner

Fix 3: Don't give points for extra credit or use bonus points; seek only evidence that more work has resulted in a higher level of achievement

Fix 4: Don't punish academic dishonesty with reduced grades; apply other consequences and reassess to determine actual level of achievement

Fix 5: Don't consider attendance in grade determination; report absences separately

Fix 6: Don't include group scores in grades; use only individual achievement evidence

Fixes for Low-Quality or Poorly Organized Evidence

Fix 7: Don't organize information in grading records by assessment methods or simply summarize into a single grade; organize and report evidence by standards/learning goals

Fix 8: Don't assign grades using inappropriate or unclear performance standards; provide clear descriptions of achievement expectations

Fix 9: Don't assign grades based on student's achievement compared to other students; compare each student's performance to preset standards

Fix 10: Don't rely on evidence gathered using assessments that fail to meet standards of quality; rely only on quality assessments

Fixes for Inappropriate Grade Calculation

Fix 11: Don't rely only on the mean; consider other measures of central tendency and use professional judgment

Fix 12: Don't include zeros in grade determination when evidence is missing or as punishment; use alternatives, such as reassessing to determine real achievement or use "I" for Incomplete or Insufficient Evidence

Fixes to Support Learning

Fix 13: Don't use information from formative assessments and practice to determine grades; use only summative evidence

Fix 14: Don't summarize evidence accumulated over time when learning is developmental and will grow with time and repeated opportunities; in those instances, emphasize more recent achievement

Fix 15: Don't leave students out of the grading process. Involve students; they can and should play key roles in assessment and grading and promote achievement