1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:02,320

And I'm gonna share my screen real quick

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00:00:02,560 --> 00:00:07,270

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: and introduce everything, and then we'll get rolling

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00:00:08,740 --> 00:00:14,510

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: alright. Can everybody see the screen perfect?

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00:00:14,600 --> 00:00:27,309

All right. So Hello, everyone. Welcome to our student panel on assessment and socio-emotional wellness as part of the reimagining assessment practicum. Just a few housekeeping things to get through first.

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00:00:27,310 --> 00:00:50,400

Just a reminder that we'd love for you to give us feedback on the feedback and insights boards for the practicum which you can access through the canvas site. Our colleagues leading the practicum are, gonna use these thoughts to address your needs, make timely adjustments in practicum structure and delivery as needed. So give us any thoughts at all on this session. We'd love to hear them on the feedback board.

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00:00:50,400 --> 00:01:13,250

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: And I just wanna remind everybody, too, about the opportunities for the practicum to to sign up for consultations with one of our learning experts on how to implement any kind of alternative assessment practice you'd like into your class any questions you might have just anything at all. These are one on one 30 minute sessions that are an amazing resource as part of the practicum. So don't forget about them.

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00:01:13,280 --> 00:01:20,829

And let's go ahead, and I guess just dive in. So my name is Meaghan Fritz and I teach in the writing program.

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00:01:21,000 --> 00:01:49,270

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: I just wanna give everyone a little bit of context around how this panel came to be before we get started. So way back during the beginning of the pandemic in spring of 2020, some of you may remember that for the first quarter of the pandemic northwestern switched to a past no pass grading system for that quarter, and at first I was really aggravated about it, because I thought in order for a student to pass a class, they only had to earn like 65% or something. And it's like, what was even the point. Students aren't gonna care about this.

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00:01:49,270 --> 00:02:19,260

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: But I paused and I realized that the reason why, with Northwestern was switching to the system for the spring of 2020 right was to lessen the academic stress and pressure during this unprecedented least scary and terrible time. So I dove in reassign my class let students choose which assignments of the course they wanted to work on, and I mean all the grades in the class. This kind of pass no pass for each assignment, and if students for some reason got a not pass, I didn't feel like they did enough work on it. They could revise it again until they got the pass

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00:02:19,350 --> 00:02:41,019

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: and honestly, the system just transformed my teaching that quarter. So all the students weren't quibbling with me about pluses and minuses. They were actually reading my feedback and implementing it into revisions. They were working together on group assignments generously and collaboratively. And I just found that removing grades entirely for that quarter changed the culture of the classroom.

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00:02:41,020 --> 00:02:57,469

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: So in the summer of 2020, I knew that I was never going to go back to traditional grades based assessment and a colleague of mine in the writing program, Lisa del Torto, felt the same way, and we worked together that summer to completely redesign our first year seminars for the fall quarter, when Northwestern would return to grades.

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00:02:57,470 --> 00:03:10,140

and as we did so we researched alternative methods of assessment really intensely, and ended up producing this equitable writing assessment module for Weinberg College seminar instructors which I'm happy to share after the session on our canvas site.

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00:03:10,140 --> 00:03:35,040

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: and after our first year of adopting these alternative assessment practices into our classrooms, we decided we wanted to study the results, and we applied for IRB approval for this longitudinal study of our students experiences, and we now have 3 years worth of interviews with students and course data for our study, which is really, really exciting. So to bring all this back to our panel today over the summer, while I was in meetings planning the the reimagine assessment practice

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00:03:35,040 --> 00:03:58,649

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: with the Content committee. At some point somebody brought up the idea of having a student panel where students could express their feelings around grades and alternative assessment practices. And I thought, Hey, I know some students who might know a thing or two about that. And here we are today. So there's a lot that we could talk about regarding grades and alternative assessment and students experiences. But we're gonna focus our conversation today on assessment

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00:03:58,900 --> 00:04:01,820

and the socio-emotional wellness of students.

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00:04:02,100 --> 00:04:17,549

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: So what does that mean? It's not a secret that our students, students in general right have been struggling with mental health and anxiety at unprecedented rates since, even before the pandemic. And it was this crisis that then the pandemic made painfully clear to a lot of instructors.

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00:04:17,550 --> 00:04:40,649

And according to there's a national survey of 74,000 college students in 2019, undertaken by the American College Health Association, they found that 88.1% of students reported feeling overwhelmed by everything that they had to do in the year before the study, 64% reported feeling overwhelming anxiety, and 42.9% felt so depressed that it was difficult to function.

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00:04:40,650 --> 00:05:05,599

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: There was another study in the 2019 annual Report at the Center for Collegiate Mental Health, which reported with like 83,000 students, similar things, 62.7% of that study reported experiencing anxiety and depression. So these findings correlate specific data regarding the classroom, so that 2019 American College Health Association Survey found that 87% of students

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00:05:05,720 --> 00:05:17,119

reported feeling overwhelmed by academics at some point during the school year and 85% reported feeling mentally exhausted, which is kind of a really stark number to process.

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00:05:17,350 --> 00:05:46,299

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: In a study reported by the Pew Research Center. From 2018 they were examining students 13 to 17 years of age. But just, you know, just prior to college entry, they discovered that academics were by far the largest stress that students experienced with 61%, reporting that the pressure to get good grades caused the most stress, whereas other pressures that we might think of teens dealing with like looking good and fitting in socially right, those fell well beyond the academic stress. That students were experiencing.

21

00:05:46,300 --> 00:06:09,520

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: And finally, there's this 2019 article from the Journal of Adolescence and Youth, it found that academic pressure is directly associated with anxiety, depression, and overall impaired health, well being, and depersonalization of students. In their study, two thirds of students reported feeling stressed about grades, 59% reported test anxiety and 37% reported feeling tense when studying.

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00:06:09,520 --> 00:06:19,069

So there's a lot of emerging evidence to support that academic pressure and the pressure of grades in particular, is a major source of the stress and anxiety overall that is experienced by students.

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00:06:19,110 --> 00:06:33,270

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: And in addition to students', physical and mental, well-being, academic stress and assessment can also impact students social wellness with other students and with their instructor. So there's this social aspect to this stress that can be detrimental as well.

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00:06:33,360 --> 00:06:57,849

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: So learning psychologist Alfie Kohn and assessment Scholar Jesse Stommell , a lot of my students will recognize these names. They both write at length about how traditional grades based assessment can harm the relationships between students and teachers, especially when teachers are kind of seen as the gatekeepers of the success that students need to achieve their goals right, whether that be getting into graduate school or a future career,

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00:06:57,850 --> 00:07:21,629

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: and and that that that relationship can be damaged when students are are really out for that grade, right? And with with with students as well. Right. So grades create this kind of competitive environment. In the classroom, especially when students are graded comparatively or via a curve, and it creates this competitive atmosphere rather than a supportive and collaborative environment. So grades can actually hurt

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00:07:21,630 --> 00:07:28,300

the social relationships that students can form in a class both among each other and among themselves and their professors.

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00:07:28,390 --> 00:07:45,259

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: But that's enough for our our scholars, for today we are gonna talk to students about what they think about all of this. So here's how my vision for how this is going to work. So

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00:07:46,550 --> 00:08:08,210

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: I've invited several of my former students and several of Lisa's and my former research assistants who are studying their alternative assessment project with us right to answer questions for you today. I prepared, like half a dozen or so questions students students have chosen which ones they'd like to speak to. So I'm gonna ask the questions and kind of call on them, as I call on them for the first time. They'll introduce themselves.

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00:08:08,210 --> 00:08:19,260

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: We'll try to get through as many of the questions as we can, and leave some time for questions from faculty here with the panel as well. Does that sound good? Everybody feels ready.

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00:08:19,850 --> 00:08:40,420

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Okay? Awesome. Well, then, students, let's dive in. Sorry, I have like 900 tabs open as always. Alright. So our first question is, how would you describe the culture around grades at Northwestern? And I'm just gonna read from the list. If that's okay with all of you. So, Maya, you you're wrote down first. Do you want to take the first stab?

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00:08:40,919 --> 00:08:53,669

Maya Vuchic: Sure. Yeah, thank you, Professor Fritz. So Hi, everyone. My name is Maya. She/her pronouns. Are we doing anything more than that for Intros.

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00:08:53,790 --> 00:08:54,860

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Just like major, year? Keep it simple.

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00:08:55,050 --> 00:09:14,710

Maya Vuchic: Yeah, I'm a third year studying human development in context and sociology. And when I first got to Northwestern of course, a lot of us are coming out of really competitive high schools. That was definitely the case for me. And when I got here I thought, Okay, you know what like

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00:09:14,710 --> 00:09:26,770

Maya Vuchic: my grades in college are going to be so much like it's gonna be feel so much less pressure than high school, because in high school you're constantly working towards like your college applications.

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00:09:26,990 --> 00:09:36,940

Maya Vuchic: But when I got here everyone was like, Okay, now you need to worry about your Gpa. And your Gpa is made up of your grades, and like all the classes that you take and things like that.

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00:09:37,140 --> 00:09:55,439

Maya Vuchic: And I've noticed that Northwestern, you know, is similar to other colleges in that sense where it's just. You know, you're still working for that grade to get that job in the future. It feels very, very much like the continuation of a seemingly never ending process.

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00:09:58,970 --> 00:10:04,460

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Yeah, thank you, Maya. I think a lot of our students can relate to that. Autumn? Do you want to chime in?

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00:10:04,590 --> 00:10:16,689

Autumn Grieb (she/her): Yeah, I'm autumn. I'm a second year studying cognitive science at Weinberg. And I definitely agree with Maya. It depends on what like class you're in. But a lot of classes

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00:10:16,760 --> 00:10:31,850

Autumn Grieb (she/her): actually like show you grade distributions like including like, I just took an exam where I could see where I fell on the distribution. Who was the high who was or not? Who, but what was the high, what was the low, and what was the mean? And so, even though

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00:10:32,010 --> 00:10:40,220

Autumn Grieb (she/her): in my personal life. I try to center myself around people who don't have a toxic attitude around grades it still

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00:10:40,720 --> 00:10:52,229

Autumn Grieb (she/her): an overwhelming part of the culture, because you're constantly being shown where you fall. And so it's hard to ignore that competitive side of it. If you're seeing exactly

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00:10:52,260 --> 00:10:53,859

Autumn Grieb (she/her): where you're

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00:10:53,910 --> 00:11:03,109

Autumn Grieb (she/her): comparing to other students. So yeah, that that competitive part, even though I try to ignore it and want to ignore it, it's hard to ignore.

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00:11:04,960 --> 00:11:05,088

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Yeah, thank you so much. Emma, where do you fall in this question?

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00:11:08,184 --> 00:11:16,244

Paige Usry: Yeah, Hi, I'm Paige. I'm also a second year. I'm studying psychology and LOC. Learning and organizational change.

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00:11:16,294 --> 00:11:33,263

Paige Usry: I definitely agree with, like the point about like comparison, and that that's a very strong culture here. I think, like specifically like with like distro classes that we take. I think there's like a lot of focus on how like you should take, like the easy A, like, distros.

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00:11:33,264 --> 00:11:56,833

Paige Usry: And that was like during kind of freshman year, because, like actually going through those classes, it was like, none of these are like easy A's that like people talk about and so then, that like leads to a lot of comparison, because it's like, Oh, like, I feel like, I'm not working as hard as other people or like, I'm like, just not as smart as other people, because it's not easy for me to get like these, A's

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00:11:57,404 --> 00:12:02,354

Paige Usry: And then I also think that like being in a non stem major like psychology.

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00:12:02,604 --> 00:12:31,383

Paige Usry: there's kind of the assumption that, like things are a lot easier, and that you should be striving to get all A's because you can, because you're in the field that's like non stem. Whereas like in if people hear that you're in a stem field, it's kind of like, you know, assumed that's a really hard field and so it's more like acceptable. If you're like not getting A's. Obviously like, I'm not in a stem field, so I don't know, but at least from my perspective, it's just that like since I'm doing like a less hard

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00:12:31,384 --> 00:12:36,914

Paige Usry: major. It's like I should be able to get all A's like, that's kind of my, take on that.

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00:12:39,154 --> 00:12:47,393

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Yeah, thank you also much. That's such an interesting point that students try to take classes that they think they can get As in rather than maybe something that might interest

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00:12:47,514 --> 00:12:52,843

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: you a little bit more. That's that's yeah, that's interesting. Thank you.

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00:12:53,024 --> 00:13:16,623

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Let's move to our second question. So we've got, we've kind of understanding this culture a little bit differently. Now, how do you think that this culture of grades impacts your learning, your well-being, your relationships with other students, your relationships with your professors, any of the above. And I have, Charlotte, you're the first one on this list.

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00:13:17,784 --> 00:13:34,474

Charlotte Admokom: Okay, Hi, I'm Charlotte. I'm a third year studying global health studies and RTVF, and yeah, I feel like it impacts me because most of my friends are stem majors, and so I do have the issue of kind of like I feel like

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00:13:34,564 --> 00:13:58,463

Charlotte Admokom: Like my complaints about my classes aren't warranted like they're not valued or like. They're just not like there's like it doesn't compare to theirs so often times I feel like when I am struggling with the class like I have to kind of like. Keep it to myself, because I don't feel like Oh! Like like my challenges compared to theirs. And it's not even that they make me feel that way. I just feel like others around, like, just as a Northwestern community like makes

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00:13:58,464 --> 00:14:12,374

Charlotte Admokom: people who are non stem majors feel as if, like their issues are just not as important. So I feel like that's one of the big issues. And then also, in terms of like professors, I feel like.

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00:14:12,374 --> 00:14:34,773

Charlotte Admokom: I've found that I have a lot of professors actually, who like also adopt, like the ungrading. And so like, it's like kind of comparing relationships I have with them versus the classes without ungrading is, I feel like there's a lot more of a distance, because with the ungrading policy, a lot of times, you're getting such like in depth, feedback and stuff and so like with the classes where it's like more like grades. I feel like

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00:14:34,774 --> 00:14:50,703

Charlotte Admokom: I am just like stressing my grade. But I also like, don't even want to contact my professor, because it's almost like I don't want them to know that like this is me, and associate me with the grade that they have for me. And so sometimes like that can be a challenge is like reaching out

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00:14:50,704 --> 00:15:15,353

Charlotte Admokom: especially like with the grade distributions when they're like public like that also, like, I feel like, can impact your relationships with students. Cause like, then no one wants to talk about like, oh, what questions did you get wrong or like, where do you? Where do you need help and cause you're like, Oh, well, fine! Like this. Many people are able to get 100 like I've had friends who've said that, and some of their classes like not only will it like, show the grade distribution, but the Professor will like show how many people

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00:15:15,354 --> 00:15:30,323

Charlotte Admokom: got this score for each one. So then they can actually like see? Oh, like maybe more people were towards like the higher end. And not that many people were towards the lower end, and so like it kind of makes you feel alone and like not want to speak to others about where you're struggling. And yeah.

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00:15:33,294 --> 00:15:57,473

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: it's interesting, this idea that I feel like this transparency. I can see that from a professor's standpoint, like maybe they're trying to show the transparency of like who missed what, and where the class as a whole is struggling. But it sounds like a lot of students are taking that to heart is where they individually fall, and comparing all around, which maybe isn't necessarily what the professor intended, and not the the best outcome for students. It sounds like, yeah.

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00:15:57,784 --> 00:16:01,304

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Maria, what about you on this topic?

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00:16:02,584 --> 00:16:12,723

Maria Katsogridakis: Hi, I'm Maria. I'm a third year studying RTVF and psychology. And I basically agree with everything that Charlotte said.

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00:16:13,374 --> 00:16:17,114

Maria Katsogridakis: especially like being in RTVF, I

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00:16:17,564 --> 00:16:42,624

Maria Katsogridakis: I will. I have roommates that are STEM. I have a lot of my teammates that are STEM. And whenever we're talking about like oh, we have so much work to do. If I bring up that I have to write like a script they're like, Oh, but that sounds so fun. And I'm like, it's absolutely fun. But it's also still homework, and it's still stressful. But I feel like I can't complain about that, because they have a test coming up where they have like math homework. That's harder. Quote.

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00:16:42,734 --> 00:16:45,704

Maria Katsogridakis: and it makes it really hard to like talk about.

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00:16:45,804 --> 00:16:50,074

Maria Katsogridakis: If I am stressed out about something because I should be having fun

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00:16:50,274 --> 00:16:53,424

Maria Katsogridakis: even though it is still a hard class.

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00:16:53,544 --> 00:17:01,713

Maria Katsogridakis: And as for my relationship with professors, again echoing what Charlotte said, I have had some psych professors

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00:17:02,044 --> 00:17:19,583

Maria Katsogridakis: that will list out like the exact number of students that got A's the exact number that got B's. How many got hundreds, what the highest grade was, what the lowest grade was, and that has made it really hard for me to want to go like to office hours and to improve, because I want to find a way to be like

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00:17:19,584 --> 00:17:45,104

Maria Katsogridakis: I need help here without it being about like this, was my grade. How can I fix it like specifically, right now, I'm in a psych class, and we have to do these like short answer responses. And I got some points off on one, and I was confused, and I wanted to go ask the TA about it. But she started talking about my grade right away, and how like we can't change the grade once it's done, and I was like. I don't want to change the grade. I wanted to know what I could do better next time.

72

00:17:45,614 --> 00:17:49,154

And having that grade looming over it made that conversation more difficult.

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00:17:53,374 --> 00:18:21,043

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Yeah, I think that's one of the the tricky things about grades too that I found is that they don't often communicate much information to the students. It's just a letter, but it doesn't really communicate what you did wrong or what you need to change, right. And I think that from an instructor standpoint. Students are vicious that Northwestern about their grades like we're constantly getting yelled at about but from students about like, why, what this should be an issue, this this kind of quibbling over grades right? But

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00:18:21,044 --> 00:18:29,693

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: if that's the point where it's like, you can't even talk about what's going wrong. It's the breaking down the conversation that's a that's that's really interesting. Yeah, I'm also really interested in this

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00:18:30,614 --> 00:18:42,003

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: in this kind of disconnect in student experiences between stem and humanity students. That might be something we might want to talk a little bit more about, too.

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00:18:42,074 --> 00:18:57,193

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: I see Cherry just popped into the chat that it sounds like the shadow of grades soured the possible discussion you could have had with the TA. Yeah, that is interesting. Thank you. Okay. Who else wanted to dig into this question? Emma.

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00:18:58,474 --> 00:18:58,533

Emma Scally: yeah. So I totally agree with everything that has been said about the comparisons that people who study, stem make with people who study humanities, and I think it's horrible like to

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00:18:59,135 --> 00:19:23,465

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Amelia, hi! Amelia came in a little bit late, I think, from class we're on the second question, Amelia. So thinking about the culture of learning or grades at Northwestern. How does that culture impact your learning, your well being, your relationship with other students with your professors, things like that. And then, since it's your first time you just kinda introduce yourself and say, Hi.

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00:19:23,565 --> 00:19:29,174

Amelia Hurley: I am a sophomore studying learning and organizational change in SESP and English

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00:19:29,415 --> 00:19:35,085

Amelia Hurley: And I, let me I'm just gonna read the question again, sorry

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00:19:35,305 --> 00:19:42,774

Amelia Hurley: I think I think like Emma touched on a lot of the things. Actually.

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00:19:43,105 --> 00:19:46,145

Amelia Hurley: it impacts learning, though, and well, being

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00:19:46,615 --> 00:19:47,605

Amelia Hurley: you know.

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00:19:49,505 --> 00:20:03,595

Amelia Hurley: so like, if I compare classes where I have experienced ungrading, which I'm very fortunate that, like I have had quite a few classes like once one a quarter that have been ungrading.

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00:20:03,995 --> 00:20:09,515

Amelia Hurley: I noticed that like I, it's like this. I both

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00:20:09,635 --> 00:20:20,934

Amelia Hurley: really want to do well in those classes, because I care about the material like that is, there's this intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic motivation of like reward and punishment.

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00:20:21,045 --> 00:20:23,235

Amelia Hurley: I also kind of like.

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00:20:24,015 --> 00:20:33,335

Amelia Hurley: morally, politically want like to prove that I'm grading works. I'm also trying to do a little bit more in those classes just to be like, look.

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00:20:33,355 --> 00:20:37,485

Amelia Hurley: I can motivate myself because I do really believe in those environments. But also

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00:20:37,935 --> 00:20:59,995

Amelia Hurley: I'm working like hard in those classes like I'll still be staying up late to finish something or checking my citations over and over again, or really digging into things. But what I find is, I actually get to be a little bit more experimental with the work I do in those classes, and end up most of the time, if not every single time, coming away with a product that I

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00:21:00,095 --> 00:21:07,425

Amelia Hurley: am more proud of than the products I make in classes where I'm worrying about. Will it hit all of the things on the rubric. Will it

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00:21:07,565 --> 00:21:17,585

Amelia Hurley: get me the most points possible cause? Then you're playing a points game. You're not really like engaging with the learning cause you're too busy making sure that you've answered every question exactly how it was worded.

93

00:21:17,935 --> 00:21:37,084

Amelia Hurley: getting really over thinking about those, whereas, like in my, some of my ungraded classes. Things I've done I have. One of my final projects was like writing a fan fiction based on scholarly works to transform the Time Machine, by HG Wells and a villain from Doctor Hill.

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00:21:37,345 --> 00:21:53,394

Amelia Hurley: and it ended up with something that was like 15 pages long. It was based in research, I explained the research and how it informs what I did. And it was talking about like how we assign humanity to things, into characters in media or in another class. I wrote a really long, short story.

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00:21:53,875 --> 00:21:59,175

Amelia Hurley: that was like one of the best pieces of writing I ever did, and I had like that freedom to do that.

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00:22:00,065 --> 00:22:18,985

Amelia Hurley: And I think it takes away. And so I'm doing that. I'm doing that experimental. I'm doing that hard work, and I'm doing it without, like a lot of fear and anxiety like, I'm not sobbing over those classes, and I feel like that should be a really important factor in in that we consider when talking about how to organize learning environments.

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00:22:20,665 --> 00:22:40,765

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Thank you, Amelia, lovely. Let's I feel like this. I wish we had like 3 hours to have this conversation, and I'm gonna move us to the next question, just so we can keep kind of moving along here. So how do you all think professors could help mitigate some of the academic stress and pressure that students feel about grades.

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00:22:40,815 --> 00:22:43,224

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Maya I have you first on this one?

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00:22:44,315 --> 00:22:47,414

Maya Vuchic: Yeah. I think that.

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00:22:48,075 --> 00:22:58,994

Maya Vuchic: like professors, especially like all of the professors that I've interacted with, or a lot of them. They want to be a support to you.

101

00:22:59,055 --> 00:23:00,814

Maya Vuchic: I think, though.

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00:23:00,825 --> 00:23:15,965

Maya Vuchic: that a lot of the burden is placed on the student to seek out the support from their professors to kind of get that assistance that they feel like they need and I think that

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00:23:16,165 --> 00:23:35,485

Maya Vuchic: that's a little bit unfair, and I think that there should be a lot of proactivity on both sides. To ensure that, you know, if a professor notices that a student, you know, maybe they wrote an assignment and it didn't really make sense, and they could reach out to the student and say, Hey.

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00:23:35,605 --> 00:23:54,414

Maya Vuchic: I read your paper. It seems like there was a little bit of confusion here. Would you like to meet with me? Here are my office hours, or we could schedule whenever you're free cause I think. Even though self advocacy is an essential skill, and I'm not trying to

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00:23:54,475 --> 00:24:14,675

Maya Vuchic: say that it isn't I do believe that the student-professor relationship can be a lot more reciprocal in that sense. In my class. I took class with Professor del Torto and she was very much. We will meet at least once a quarter

106

00:24:14,755 --> 00:24:37,955

Maya Vuchic: to discuss how you're feeling about the class, the material you're writing. It was a constant like feedback process, and that was what made me come out of the class feeling a lot better equipped with the skills to enter college. So I think that that emphasis on reciprocal relationships is really important.

107

00:24:40,325 --> 00:24:44,895

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Yeah, thank you. That's a great point. Hana-Lei. Welcome.

108

00:24:45,865 --> 00:25:10,475

Hana-Lei Ji: Hi, can you hear me? Okay, so sorry I'm in library. Okay. Sounds good. I know I need to introduce myself first. My name's Hana-Lei, I use she/her pronouns. I was involved with Professor Delfritz, Professor Ffitz and Professor del Torto research project in this last year, and going into the summer. So kind of in addressing this question also, just like from my own experiences as a student at my question. I have

109

00:25:10,475 --> 00:25:21,595

Hana-Lei Ji: very similar thoughts as Maya, actually, and that I think it's really important establishing that relationship in the classroom. I'm a very big like

110

00:25:21,635 --> 00:25:27,944

Hana-Lei Ji: proponent, I guess, of bidirectional learning. Oh, hi! Vanessa! And I think

111

00:25:27,955 --> 00:25:54,965

Hana-Lei Ji: kind of throughout all of our lives that we are continuously learning, and I think a lot of professors and teachers like at Northwestern do know that it's just establishing that in the classroom, so maintaining that like cycle of feedback, and not just for the students, but also for professors and saying, maybe just even saying in the beginning or throughout the course. And that you know, our professors are constantly learning from our students as well.

112

00:25:55,155 --> 00:26:10,075

Hana-Lei Ji: So establishing more so, I guess this bi-directional type of learning, and that everyone in this space is learning and is able to take something from everyone. I think, that can help mitigate some of like the academic pressure and stress that just comes from being at a college campus in the first place.

113

00:26:14,125 --> 00:26:15,425

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Thank you. Amelia?

114

00:26:15,475 --> 00:26:21,415

Amelia Hurley: Hi,

115

00:26:21,435 --> 00:26:29,474

Amelia Hurley: So I think I'm gonna connect actually to something that we were talking about in a class that, like the class, is the reason why I was late to this.

116

00:26:30,005 --> 00:26:40,565

Amelia Hurley: so there's just like there was this Russian psychologist named Lev Vygotsky who talked about how development and learning

117

00:26:41,205 --> 00:26:45,104

Amelia Hurley: are connected in the sense that, like you go from.

118

00:26:45,345 --> 00:26:59,974

Amelia Hurley: learning through assistance. It's a social interaction. That mediates your learning until that you can learn how to do that on your own. But also there is like an extra layer of what if, instead of conceptualizing learning as

119

00:27:00,005 --> 00:27:13,805

Amelia Hurley: you go from, you know the teacher tells you, if there's that mediation. Or maybe you work in a group project, and then you're expected to still be graded and understood and evaluated individualistically like, we have this very individualist

120

00:27:13,855 --> 00:27:33,575

Amelia Hurley: mindset that we need to see how smart you are, what you can do in a vacuum where you don't have access to resources or help, or the teacher or experts like. Let's see what you can do on your own disconnected from that which isn't really accurate to how we do learning outside of school settings. It's very artificial. It's

121

00:27:33,575 --> 00:27:43,985

Amelia Hurley: not accurate in a lot of senses to what we can do in the, like, workforce? And so what if, instead of seeing learning is, as like, Okay, you go from assisted to

122

00:27:44,385 --> 00:28:04,255

Amelia Hurley: to individual. What if, instead, it's more like you? Look, it's this continual social process, where you're learning with the professor, where they're really invested in like sitting down with you trying to see what your thought process on something is, and then telling you where you went well with that, and where you were misguided

123

00:28:04,615 --> 00:28:16,875

Amelia Hurley: And it's this process of like continually getting more and more complex, and that. But you never really lose that more collective and that more social aspect of the learning like it doesn't. I

124

00:28:16,995 --> 00:28:27,335

Amelia Hurley: basically like, why does it need to be this ranking system. Instead, it could just be this space, this community, I feel like. And I'll also look what was already said, like that bi-directional, that

125

00:28:27,775 --> 00:28:28,695

Amelia Hurley: kind of

126

00:28:28,915 --> 00:28:51,334

Amelia Hurley: mutually beneficial relationship that can happen between a professor and a student like yes, the Professor knows more about the content that they're teaching. But maybe the student has another way of looking at it that could influence how the teacher sees that relationship and sees how they understood, and they can learn something new rather than a teacher, just being like an arbiter of. I give you the challenge. I give you the readings. Let's see what you can do

127

00:28:54,335 --> 00:29:13,515

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: I love this theme of collaboration that I think all of you are kind of hitting on right this idea, that communication between students and teachers is, it is a 2 way kind of street that requires both both parties to to dig in and and talk more. I love that that's lovely. Let's move to the next question,

128

00:29:13,685 --> 00:29:22,505

how do you think academic stress and anxiety manifests itself in students' wellbeing as learners and as humans.

129

00:29:22,575 --> 00:29:23,419

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Jameson, if you don't mind, I'm gonna put you on the spot first for this one.

130

00:29:23,670 --> 00:29:25,449

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: how about Autumn?

131

00:29:28,030 --> 00:29:51,650

Autumn Grieb (she/her): Yeah, so definitely, I agree with what Jameson said. But also, I just feel like academic anxiety spills over until every part of my life, and what I've noticed all my peers. Even though, like I consider myself as someone with experiences, high levels of anxiety. I've realized a lot of my peers experience similar levels of anxiety.

132

00:29:51,750 --> 00:30:14,719

Autumn Grieb (she/her): But it's just hard to separate the different components of your life. So if I am upset with a grade or upset with a class, I feel overwhelmed by class. It's really difficult to relax in a social situation, or just relax in general. And it's also just hard to adopt like an improvement mindset

133

00:30:14,809 --> 00:30:25,900

Autumn Grieb (she/her): when I'm anxious as well. I think I'm very much more worried than focused on improving, which I think defeats the purpose of maybe not getting the grade you want.

134

00:30:25,980 --> 00:30:28,019

Autumn Grieb (she/her): Like

135

00:30:28,190 --> 00:30:41,980

Autumn Grieb (she/her): an example would be like. I had an exam last week that I didn't feel that happy about, and I was anxious to attend the class that I took that exam in, even though I really should be trying to

136

00:30:42,120 --> 00:30:51,429

Autumn Grieb (she/her): improve my grade in that class, pay more attention in that class. I was so anxious to even attend, because I was embarrassed and worried about my grade.

137

00:30:54,960 --> 00:30:56,000

Autumn Grieb (she/her): Yeah.

138

00:30:56,270 --> 00:30:59,569

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: thank you, Filip. What about you? Welcome?

139

00:31:22,894 --> 00:31:34,483

Charlotte Admokom: Yeah, so I don't know if Professor Fritz will remember this, but I remember, like our last meeting. When I came to her I told her how it like being in the ungrading class, made me like

140

00:31:34,544 --> 00:31:57,333

Charlotte Admokom: Like it kind of triggered my perfectionism even more. But I have come here to say that it actually has changed like, I think it was the shock of having a class like that for the first year, because I've had probably now, like 4 or 5 classes that have ungrading. And I'd say those classes by far like I have the least amount of stress with. So I definitely feel like it was like initial kind of like

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00:31:57,334 --> 00:32:16,713

Charlotte Admokom: transition process. Because I just I come from like grading and everything. And then to that, especially like having one class that's ungrading. And then 3 classes that aren't. It's really hard sometimes, because it's like in one space, you're, like, head is completely different, like you're like, I was genuinely working on the feedback, like, I really liked

142

00:32:16,714 --> 00:32:42,143

Charlotte Admokom: getting like thorough feedback. It felt like one that I was actually being heard. I feel like I've turned papers here where, like, I've written 10 pages, and I get like 2 sentences. And I'm like, did you even read my paper like, so I feel like it definitely changes your mindset going into other classes, especially like writing like classes like, you're like, okay, like, I did all this work, and just the sentence, like the grade, no longer is like fulfilling if that makes sense.

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00:32:42,164 --> 00:33:04,973

Charlotte Admokom: And so that's kind of been my experience like currently. Right now, I have 2 classes that practice ungrading, and then 2 that don't and definitely the ones that come with grades. I'm a little bit more stressed about and I find that I've had a bunch of classes. That, and with ungrading, that emphasize mental health like one of mine. She gives mental health days that like

144

00:33:04,974 --> 00:33:29,354

Charlotte Admokom: she's like, you don't need to explain what's going on like you just get the day off to like work on your assignments and kind of like, catch up and not have to stress about your classes, which obviously, we're on the quarter system. Not every professor is gonna be able to give that but that like I find that that's emphasized more. And then the classes with grading will have like a little blurb about mental health. And they're like, talk about caps. And I'm like, Okay, if you know the school, you know that resource is just not helpful.

145

00:33:29,354 --> 00:33:33,684

Charlotte Admokom: And it almost feels like a slap to the face sometimes when like they mentioned those resources.

146

00:33:33,684 --> 00:33:54,614

Charlotte Admokom: And they say that they like care about your mental health, and then it's like, but then you have these grading rubrics where it's like you're telling me like an A is going above and beyond, and that already is going to trigger something within the students, because it's like, Oh, just me showing up and doing my best isn't enough. I have to actually do better than what you're expecting of me. And so I feel like that's

147

00:33:54,614 --> 00:34:03,844

Charlotte Admokom: kind of going between the 2 worlds like. That's the biggest difficulty, like, if only, like all my classes could just do ungrading. I feel like then I would have a lot less stress.

148

00:34:03,874 --> 00:34:07,193

Charlotte Admokom: But yeah, that's been my experience so far

149

00:34:09,364 --> 00:34:29,819

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: I love hearing the follow through Charlotte. I remember that conversation dearly. Lots of students in my in my first fall quarter, seminars are doubters at first about ungrading, and whether it can work and it it they fall on different levels of it as we get to the end of the quarter. But that's so cool to hear the progression between now that you've had it multiple times in a different classes. I love that that's awesome. Thank you.

150

00:34:46,653 --> 00:35:04,443

based on the interviews that you've conducted the course data you've read right? What are the big topics, around stress and wellness and grading that you all see emerging from our data. This is again 3 years worth, of course, data and interviews that you all have done. What do you see? Emerging in in terms of wellness in

151

00:35:05,073 --> 00:35:06,043

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: students?

152

00:35:09,563 --> 00:35:12,952

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Sorry who was first? Maybe. Hana-Lei, you want to go first.

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00:35:17,683 --> 00:35:43,472

Hana-Lei Ji: Yeah, I can. I think a lot of people have already kind of touched on it on some of the takeaways, but also like as research assistants we pulled from interviews or just from the data itself, I think, in addition to some of the themes of like mental health motivation, like intrinsic and extrinsic and then also just like themes of collaboration and community within that, my own takeaways that I kind of.

154

00:35:43,913 --> 00:35:54,583

Hana-Lei Ji: I guess I was really reflecting on a bit more was how a lot of students, even within like ungrading class, had this expectation for what grades meant, and

155

00:35:54,583 --> 00:36:18,562

Hana-Lei Ji: especially like at like a prestigious or high ranking university, and kind of this, maybe expectation that it's meant to be hard, that it's meant to be like very taxing. It's meant to be stressful, and it's meant to give you a hard time, whereas when. But then, going into ungrading classes, having that shift to be more on like collaboration and community and seeing like students, have so many takeaways from that was really powerful

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00:36:18,843 --> 00:36:21,063

Hana-Lei Ji: cause, I think in the end, like

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00:36:21,673 --> 00:36:45,782

Hana-Lei Ji: when, like, I'm in like the library right now, and I feel like that community forms around like having a lot of work to do, and just like the academic rigor right? Whereas I'm kind of hoping and like wish to more so see communities that form around like learning and just seeking to learn, whereas I think, like. There are like ways that those interact with one another. But I think without grades, and just like this pressure to perform well, it would be amazing to instead, see

158

00:36:45,783 --> 00:36:59,163

Hana-Lei Ji: these communities that form around like these these discussions and support for one another, and like the topics that they're learning the course content. So just like overall, like a collaboration and community, I think, really stood out to me throughout all of the data. And

159

00:36:59,163 --> 00:37:07,872

Hana-Lei Ji: either like how we form communities around stress with grades. But then how it can shift to community of learning and learning with one another.

160

00:37:10,093 --> 00:37:14,803

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Thank you. Hana-Lei. Maya, you want to follow up real quick. And then we've got some questions coming in.

161

00:37:14,853 --> 00:37:16,473

Maya Vuchic: Yeah, for sure.

162

00:37:16,743 --> 00:37:26,892

Maya Vuchic: Absolutely agree with the collaboration aspect. I think that instead of that competition that a lot of us were talking about earlier. We definitely

163

00:37:27,183 --> 00:37:49,243

Maya Vuchic: saw a lot of that theme of collaboration and working together throughout the interviews a lot of the students who I got to talk to as well. They emphasized specifically like the lower stress levels. But the maintenance of high standards. So a lot of students go into these ungraded classes thinking

164

00:37:49,273 --> 00:38:04,122

Maya Vuchic: I'm at Northwestern like, aren't I supposed to be, you know, like staying up till 2am. Every morning struggling to get an A in that class, or like, bring my grade up by like half a percent or something.

165

00:38:04,163 --> 00:38:14,523

Maya Vuchic: but it kind of opened eyes to the fact that high standards don't have to be paired necessarily. With that.

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00:38:14,583 --> 00:38:22,672

Maya Vuchic: with that kind of stamp of approval, you can maintain your own high standards, and that internal motivation was really, really

167

00:38:22,683 --> 00:38:24,213

Maya Vuchic: it came through a lot.

168

00:38:26,373 --> 00:38:55,912

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Alright, thank you all so much. We had a question from Elena who had to leave. But I wanna ask you all opinion so that I can send her your answers. Okay? So her question was, I've been thinking about setting up a mandatory. She has any quotes mandatory 10 min meeting with my students mid quarter, just to ask them how they're doing in the course. Give general feedback, etc. Do you all think that making it mandatory is a good idea, or that it should be optional? She says she's afraid that if she makes it optional most students won't come.

169

00:38:56,583 --> 00:39:01,812

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: But is it more stressful to have a mandatory thing versus a non-mandatory thing. Let's do Filip and then we'll do Amelia.

170

00:39:04,501 --> 00:39:27,281

Amelia Hurley: I want to preface with I'm a person who does like going to office hours and does really appreciate that that opportunity. So like, I can't really speak for someone who is just absolutely terrified of going to office hours like I don't want. So keep in mind, as I say my piece, but I pretty much agreed, like I think, that it should be mandatory.

171

00:39:27,461 --> 00:39:42,980

Amelia Hurley: Because I think that it informs your grading how you act in those mandatory meetings like I think it's a good opportunity to have that check in. I think it's a lot like the reflections that we had to do in your class like

172

00:39:43,311 --> 00:39:51,831

Amelia Hurley: it's a different form, but like that was also a mandatory thing. But it's a mandatory thing that was very ingrained and very much based in

173

00:39:52,021 --> 00:39:59,631

Amelia Hurley: improvement. This isn't about. You need to do a performance you need to, and you're going to be graded on exactly how you behave. This is

174

00:39:59,691 --> 00:40:21,180

Amelia Hurley: a way to reflect. It is like we had mandatory meetings at the end of our class. And those weren't things to be like scared of. And I also think that if these are mandatory in these classes. In these environments, especially, these classes are ungraded. And or giving you feedback with this. First of all, that feedback is just going to be so invaluable. And it's also going to potentially

175

00:40:21,181 --> 00:40:47,770

Amelia Hurley: make going to office hours a lot more comfortable like. I feel like I had a lot of classes where there was some kind of mandatory meetings with teachers early on in my Northwestern career, and that kind of broke that ice because going to professor's office hours is just a really good resource for students to have, and having already done it a couple of times in a safe environment is gonna be and, well then like that's being told you need to do this versus you need to take the initial initiative

176

00:40:47,771 --> 00:40:52,500

Amelia Hurley: to figure out how to do that. I think that that is a great way to teach that skill.

177

00:40:52,891 --> 00:41:14,360

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Yeah, I love that. Thank you, Amelia. Alright. We have a message, John messaged me a minute or two ago asking about. We'll take this question. He'd like to hear your perspective on how you all distinguish, how students in general distinguish kind of corrective feedback from negative feedback, especially if maybe a student isn't doing so great in a class.

178

00:41:20,801 --> 00:41:21,921

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Yeah, Maria.

179

00:41:23,701 --> 00:41:30,610

Maria Katsogridakis: I think for me it definitely depends on how the grade reflects it.

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00:41:30,641 --> 00:41:40,601

Maria Katsogridakis: for example, I have this one psychology professor whom I absolutely love because she makes it very clear that she

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00:41:40,621 --> 00:41:54,741

Maria Katsogridakis: she will give grades based on the like. She'll give you a rubric, and she'll make it very clear like this is where the grade is coming from, and then, no matter what my grade is, she'll still give me a lot of feedback, so that I know that, like

182

00:41:54,891 --> 00:42:17,351

Maria Katsogridakis: the feedback, doesn't have to do with the grade, and in kind of separating that I can see like like she might give an A because she can see where my thought process was, or like. I talk it through with her, and she's like, I see, that you put all of these pieces into it. That said, this is how you can make it better, and in separating the grade from the feedback, I can tell the difference between like

183

00:42:17,571 --> 00:42:18,981

Maria Katsogridakis: this is

184

00:42:19,981 --> 00:42:30,191

Maria Katsogridakis: criticism about my work versus. This is like criticism about the effort that I put into the work versus this is how I can help you improve in the future.

185

00:42:31,691 --> 00:42:34,720

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Yeah, thank you. I think that's that's useful.

186

00:42:36,621 --> 00:42:40,680

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Anybody else wanna chime in on that one. Yeah.

187

00:42:40,751 --> 00:43:02,871

Paige Usry: it's just about like how we receive and feel about feedback in general. I think that like feedback historically for me, has been like very just like emotionally charged like I take feedback, like very like to the heart and like, especially from like my professors like I'll like, look at it and like, take it like

188

00:43:03,041 --> 00:43:05,731

Paige Usry: like I'll think about it a lot. And so it's like.

189

00:43:05,961 --> 00:43:27,580

Paige Usry: I think, knowing it's helpful for professors to know that, like their words like, have a lot of like power like in our lives. One time, I think, like freshman year, I was talking to like my professor, about a paper I'd received, and like she had given like like a sentence of feedback. But I'd like thought about it for a long time, because it was pretty. She was like, Oh, you need to really work on this or whatever. And I just was like.

190

00:43:28,001 --> 00:43:41,311

Paige Usry: kind of like a little emotional about it, and it seemed like she didn't really understand like why I would like have like emotional response. So I think there was kind of like a gap of understanding there.

191

00:43:42,701 --> 00:43:44,861

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Thank you. Go ahead, Maria. Yeah.

192

00:43:45,091 --> 00:43:55,080

Maria Katsogridakis: I also just want to add really quickly, to kinda echo what Paige said about taking it really, personally, I think it goes a long way when professors add even just like one or two

193

00:43:55,151 --> 00:44:03,091

Maria Katsogridakis: Good comments like positive like this sentence worked, or this over here worked really well. Because then I can see that you're not.

194

00:44:03,201 --> 00:44:13,891

Maria Katsogridakis: It's not only the negative, it's also positive, too. So it tells me that you really did read the whole thing, that I'm not doing everything wrong. And then because I also take feedback very personally. So it's not that. It's like.

195

00:44:14,071 --> 00:44:19,291

Maria Katsogridakis: Oh, I failed at this part. But it's also like, Okay, I did good over here. I just need to improve here.

196

00:44:31,141 --> 00:44:55,630

Charlotte Admokom: Like, yeah, I agree with Maria like adding in some positive remarks, but also just like being like, really conscious of like phrasing of like words and stuff. Just cause like I feel like sometimes when it's just like, Don't do this, or like this could have been better like this, like those kinds of words are actually like impactful. And they don't. Really. I mean, sometimes they motivate me to do better because I don't wanna see those kinds of things. But like it's also like

197

00:44:55,911 --> 00:45:16,730

Charlotte Admokom: like we were talking about earlier. It's like, that's also can be emotionally draining, because it's like you start thinking about this like. Oh, my gosh! Like they think I'm a terrible writer, or whatever it may be like, you oftentimes kind of like, give it more weight than like the professor meant for it to. And so again, just like being more conscious about how things are phrased, and then also like

198

00:45:16,731 --> 00:45:42,860

Charlotte Admokom: not harping on every single detail like some things like you don't like. Maybe there was a slight grammar issue like, just let it slide like focusing more on like the bigger issues that actually need to be improved. I think, can go a long way, because when it's like you read your paper and you just see that there's a bunch of like red marks on it. You're like, Oh, my God! Like, what did I do wrong? And if you had more like, Oh, like, these are 3 areas I feel like we you could improve on and like also

199

00:45:42,961 --> 00:46:02,590

Charlotte Admokom: being like, if you wanna meet like I can help you out with that kind of stuff like that. So it's not just like you gave them feedback. And then it's that's it, like, I would love professors more often would do multiple drafts of assignments. I feel like that would be really helpful, because sometimes it feels like you put in all this work, and then sometimes you do get feedback, but then it goes nowhere. And it's like.

200

00:46:02,591 --> 00:46:25,591

Charlotte Admokom: Okay, how am I supposed to improve? If this is like a very specific paper, where not every single thing that you're telling me I can apply to the next paper or the next assignment. So if that could be incorporated to. I feel like that would show to students that professors actually do care about their work and about them improving. And obviously I'm aware that it like being a professor here and like grading students, is like

201

00:46:25,591 --> 00:46:37,690

Charlotte Admokom: super stressful. But I feel like sometimes that can get lost where, like, they don't realize how important their words are like how there are students who want to genuinely improve their work. It's just they don't have the opportunity to

202

00:46:38,771 --> 00:47:00,660

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: thank you so much, Charlotte, and everybody. Yeah, thank you. Eun as well. We're doing a whole session on feedback now, in a couple of weeks for the practicum. So stay tuned for that, and thank you so much, students, for coming and talking with us today. It's been so lovely to see you. I appreciate your time, and if anybody has any questions, feel free to reach out to me.

203

00:47:00,771 --> 00:47:04,000

Meaghan Morrissa Fritz: Yay, good work, everybody.

204

00:47:04,061 --> 00:47:09,931

Paige Usry: Thank you. Good to see you. Thank you all.