

In his *Inside Higher Ed* article, Joe Feldman (2020) wrote:

As colleges and universities become more committed to enrolling and retaining historically underserved students, they rarely recognize how traditional approaches to grading frequently result in perpetuating achievement disparities - advantaging higher-income and privileged students with inflated grades, while lowering grades for underserved students and painting a misleading picture of performance.

Research supports that women are less likely to ask for extensions for projects with adjustable deadlines but just as likely to ask for extensions as men when there are set policies on asking for extensions (Grabmeier, 2024).

First-generation students do not ask for extensions as much as their peers (Hasinoff, 2022).

Hasinoff (2022) wrote, "If we want students to genuinely understand the stakes of missing deadlines in a professional setting, we need to target that outcome specifically. Rather than hoping that late penalties will somehow enable students to internalize professional norms, consider inviting a practitioner to talk to the class or assigning a reading on the topic."

Hasinoff (2022) wrote, "Research shows that people who procrastinate aren't, as many believe, lazy or lacking self-control. Instead, they need better skills for managing negative emotions. If that's the case, the threat of a late penalty might be counterproductive."

We know there are varying ideas about late policies / zero grades on our campus. Here are some questions to consider as you reflect on your policies and create your syllabus for next semester.

1. How did you come to your policy for accepting late work / giving zero grades? Does it align with current research? Are your stated policies different from what you do in practice when students do ask for extensions (University of Nebraska Center for Transformational Teaching, 2024)?
2. What are the reasons (e.g., work, family caretaking responsibilities, assignment characteristics, mental or physical health, etc.) your students may not be submitting their work on time? Have you asked your students what may enable them to submit assignments on the deadline? Are there actions (e.g., making clearer assignments) that you can take to make late submissions a bit more infrequent (Santelli et al., 2020)?
3. What do you see as the difference between assessing students and grading students? Have you thought about mastery grading or contract grading? How might those practices help you in your assessment? *[There are experts on campus for both types of practices. The Studio can connect you.]* How would altering your late work or zero policy allow students to show you their best work? (Santelli, Robertson, Larson, and Humphrey, 2020).
4. Are there opportunities to scaffold late work policies / zero policies as students progress through your major? *[There are departments on campus who have put scaffolded policies into place so that as students progress up through the major the penalties become stricter because students are closer to working in professional spaces. The Studio can connect you.]*
5. Should a classroom have different expectations than a professional workplace? How do the professional spaces in which your students work handle extensions and deadline changes (Malette, 2024)? Can a conversation with Career Services or a relevant alumnus help convey this message effectively?
6. How does your late work policy serve you as an instructor? Building in a grace period or not having a late policy may save you time and energy by avoiding case-by-case decisions.
7. Are there certain assignments or weeks of the semester where your priorities for late work may be different? Would you be okay with late work up to a certain point in the semester? At what point in the course would a flexible deadline impact the amount of feedback you could provide (Hasinoff, 2022)? Is less robust feedback on an assignment an acceptable consequence for late work? Have you considered Castle's Decision Tree: Student Request for Flexibility? *[It's the second QR code from the top on the left-hand side of this document.]*



Feldman's (2020) article



Castle's Decision Tree: Student Request for Flexibility



Hasinoff's (2022) article about eliminating late penalties



Santelli et al.'s (2020) article about procrastination and late assignment submissions



University of Nebraska Center for Transformational Teaching's resources



Malette's (2024) piece on New York Institute of Technology's website