

# Grading for Equity

## CHAPTER 9: PRACTICES THAT VALUE KNOWLEDGE, NOT ENVIRONMENT OR BEHAVIOR

### KEY IDEAS

\*Grades based on the required content of the course, not extra credit.

\*Grades based on student work, not the timing of the work

\*Alternative (non-grade) consequences for cheating

\*Excluding "participation" and "effort"

We encourage you to prepare for engaging in the discussions by completing and reflecting on the assigned chapter(s) in advance, perhaps by marking the text for moments that stood out to you.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

#### PRE-READING

- How do you use EXTRA CREDIT in your current grading practices? What sorts of activities earn extra credit? Think about the students in your class, do some groups of students take advantage of extra credit more than others? What might account for this?
- Describe your current LATE WORK policy. Do you take points off when students submit something after the due date? What is your rationale behind your late point policy (i.e. to teach responsibility)?
- If you have experienced students cheating in your class, why do you think they do it? Look at your class, school, or district's policy for CHEATING. What is the penalty? How is the penalty related to the reason behind why students might cheat?
- Describe how you currently assess student PARTICIPATION AND EFFORT. In what ways is it objective or subjective?

### PILLAR 2

**DRIVING PRINCIPLE:** "Grades should be based on valid evidence of a student's content knowledge, and not based on evidence that is likely to be corrupted by a teacher's implicit bias or that reflects a student's environment" (109).

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

#### DURING READING

- Feldman argues that "we dignify our students when we tell them the truth" (112). How does the grading system you currently use tell students (and caregivers) the truth about what a student knows and can do?
- In discussing extra credit, Feldman explains that: "without us realizing it, extra credit not only devalues a teacher's curriculum but actually increases the achievement gap" (114). If there are activities you routinely offer extra credit for, why haven't you made them part of your official curriculum?
- With regard to late point penalties, Feldman claims, "when we don't penalize for late work, we send the message that learning has a more flexible timeline and pace, and it's better to produce high-quality learning after the deadline than to cut learning short" (116). What are your thoughts about the timeline for learning?
- Should students who cheat "get out of learning" (119)?
- Respond to the following quotation: "Rewarding certain behaviors is meant to support student learning but it forces students to fit within a set of behaviors anchored to the teacher's subjective, implicitly biased idea of what a successful student is" (122).