

The Hidden Inequities In Labor Based Contract Grading: Current Arguments In Focus

In recent years, labor-based contract grading (LBCG) has gained popularity as a method of assessing student work in construction education. LBCG is based on the concept of paying students for their work on a project, rather than grading them on their final product. This approach is said to promote equity and inclusion by providing all students with an equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of their background or experience.

However, there are also concerns about the hidden inequities that may exist within LBCG. Some critics argue that LBCG can actually exacerbate existing inequalities by rewarding students who have access to more resources and opportunities. Others worry that LBCG can lead to a decrease in the quality of student work, as students focus more on completing tasks quickly and efficiently than on producing high-quality work.



The Hidden Inequities in Labor-Based Contract Grading (Current Arguments in Composition) by Ellen C. Carillo

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In this article, we will explore the arguments for and against LBCG, and we will identify some of the potential inequities that may exist within this approach. We will also offer some recommendations for how to mitigate these inequities and ensure that LBCG is used in a fair and equitable manner.

Arguments in Favor of Labor-Based Contract Grading

Proponents of LBCG argue that this approach promotes equity and inclusion by providing all students with an equal opportunity to succeed. Under LBCG, students are paid for their work on a project, regardless of their final product. This means that students who are struggling academically can still earn a passing grade by completing tasks to the best of their ability.

LBCG can also help to reduce the achievement gap between students from different backgrounds. Students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds often have less access to resources and opportunities, which can make it difficult for them to succeed in traditional grading systems. LBCG can level the playing field by providing all students with the same opportunity to earn a good grade.

In addition, LBCG can help to promote student engagement and motivation. When students are paid for their work, they are more likely to be invested in the project and to put forth their best effort. This can lead to higher levels of student achievement and satisfaction.

Arguments Against Labor-Based Contract Grading

Critics of LBCG argue that this approach can actually exacerbate existing inequalities by rewarding students who have access to more resources and opportunities. Students who come from wealthy families or who have attended private schools may have had more opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in LBCG. This can give them an unfair advantage over students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In addition, LBCG can lead to a decrease in the quality of student work. When students focus more on completing tasks quickly and efficiently than on producing high-quality work, the overall quality of their work may suffer. This can be especially problematic in construction education, where the quality of student work can have a significant impact on the safety and functionality of buildings and other structures.

Finally, LBCG can be difficult to implement and manage. Teachers need to carefully design projects and tasks, and they need to be able to track student progress and assess student work fairly. This can be a time-consuming and challenging process, which may not be feasible for all teachers.

Potential Inequities in Labor-Based Contract Grading

There are a number of potential inequities that may exist within LBCG. These inequities can be based on factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and disability.

1. **Race and ethnicity:** Students of color are more likely to come from disadvantaged backgrounds, which can give them less access to

resources and opportunities. This can make it difficult for them to succeed in LBCG, which is based on the concept of paying students for their work.

2. **Gender:** Girls are less likely to be enrolled in construction education programs, and they are less likely to have access to the same opportunities as boys. This can give boys an unfair advantage in LBCG, which is based on the concept of paying students for their work.
3. **Socioeconomic status:** Students from wealthy families are more likely to have access to resources and opportunities that can help them succeed in LBCG. This can give them an unfair advantage over students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
4. **Disability:** Students with disabilities may have difficulty completing tasks quickly and efficiently, which can make it difficult for them to succeed in LBCG. This can give students without disabilities an unfair advantage.

Recommendations for Mitigating Inequities in Labor-Based Contract Grading

There are a number of things that can be done to mitigate the potential inequities in LBCG. These include:

1. **Providing all students with equal access to resources and opportunities:** This means ensuring that all students have access to the same tools, materials, and support services. It also means providing all students with the same opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in LBCG.

2. **Using a variety of assessment methods:** In addition to LBCG, teachers should use a variety of assessment methods to evaluate student learning. This will help to ensure that all students have an opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a way that is fair and equitable.
3. **Providing students with feedback on their work:** Feedback is essential for helping students to improve their work. Teachers should provide students with regular feedback on their progress, and they should be specific about what students need to do to improve. This will help students to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and it will help them to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed.
4. **Working with parents and guardians:** Parents and guardians can play a vital role in supporting their children's education. Teachers should work with parents and guardians to ensure that they understand LBCG and that they are able to support their children's learning. This will help to create a supportive learning environment for all students.

LBCG is a promising approach to assessment that has the potential to promote equity and inclusion in construction education. However, there are also concerns about the hidden inequities that may exist within this approach. By understanding these inequities and by taking steps to mitigate them, we can ensure that LBCG is used in a fair and equitable manner.

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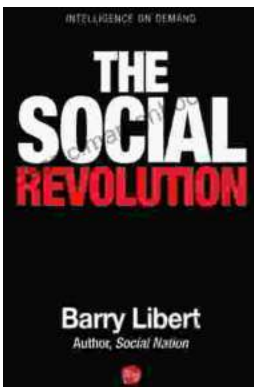


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