

Grade grievance and the lack of transparency in university grading systems

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Grade grievance queries result from a lack of transparency in a university's grading process. This includes not disclosing all raw scores or not allowing students to check corrected exam scripts, keeping them in the dark about what to expect until after grade submission. This leads to confusion and distress among students who end up with grades below their expectations with little to no justification.

At the end of every semester, like clockwork, university Facebook groups are flooded with posts regarding unjustified grades submitted by faculty members. Students post to ask fellow university goers how to deal with this situation and if it possible to make an appeal to take a look at their exam scripts.

Most university students have had to send grade grievance emails at some point or thought about sending one but gave up due to the slim prospects of actually getting a response. This norm of not responding to students' queries stems from a culture of lack of accountability.

This practice does not leave room for any mistakes made in the grading process to be rectified, denying students the information they are entitled to

know. When respective authorities do not mandate faculty members to be answerable for decisions that directly impact students, equity and integrity take a backseat.

Many faculty members are reluctant to allow students to check their scripts and raw scores after submission of grades as the act seems like their credibility and authority are being questioned, which hurts their ego. There have been cases in my university where professors claimed the student's

score might further be decreased upon rechecking as a way to discourage such appeals. Some went as far as stating that disclosing raw scores is prohibited, which is entirely false.

One of the key issues is professors being given unquestionable authority on creating their own grading policies. Course instructors are allowed to deduct marks based on excessively rigid policies such as penalties for every missed class.

Although flexibility in creating grading policies can be useful as the course instructors will best understand which

assessment method will be most effective for their respective courses, some standard policies can help reduce inconsistency in the process.

I was a victim of ill-thought-out grading last semester where the professor graded students based on how hard he thought we worked rather than basing it on a verifi-

able assessment method. The issue with this approach was that there was no way for him to be sure of how much effort each student put into the group projects. He had to ask the group members who they thought worked the hardest and inevitably ended up getting some biased or uninformed answers that resulted in unfair grading.

Although grading can be somewhat subjective depending on the course and assessment method, it should be justifiable, non-arbitrary, and transparent. Many students put a lot of effort into their academics and receiving an unexpectedly poor grade that permanently damages their CGPA can be very discouraging, and not to mention, an expensive setback.

Transparency in the grading process can be an easy solution to correcting honest mistakes and also discouraging grading based on biases and whims. This can also eliminate hassle on both sides as students do not have to reach out to their faculty members for an explanation and faculty members won't receive a plethora of emails on the same subject, making it a win-win situation.

Nuzhat zones out every ten minutes. Tell her to snap out of it at nuzhatchowdhury07@gmail.com



DESIGN: ABIR HOSSAIN

Why have we normalised verbal abuse?

It's time to talk about how we talk

AMRIN TASNIM RAFA

How do your parents talk to their employees? Their co-workers? Their office subordinates? And how do they talk to your chauffeur or house help? More likely than not, you've visualised the amount of respect in their tone and language, with their voice dropping.



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

We often complain about the gulf of class between people of different occupations in Bangladesh. We discuss, why in the wild west, you could do anything for money, while in Bangladesh you must factor in certain implications of class. Then we take a brief break from our discussions to demean the waiter's mother for the lack of adequate sugar in our tea.

We go back to our discussions, and no one bats an eye. After all, using language with derogatory and deeply offensive meanings is as normal in our society as eating rice for every meal.

Why are certain people considered to be and treated as less of a person than I am? What is the source of this hatred?

It could be certain historical and cultural factors, which by now, with advances in education and the economy, should have become irrelevant. Yet an imagined gulf of class has been perpetuated from generation to generation, largely through the language we use.

Parents do it in front of children. There are rarely any filters for the language and

curses they use to chastise the house help. During our formative years, by absorbing the behaviour of people we trust, we internalise a lack of respect and human decency.

Language holds a dominant role in shaping society. We nonchalantly curse people, and no one flinches because we do it often. By now, through our language, it has become an established fact that my house guard is less of a human being than I am.

Due to Bangladesh's large population and lack of preferable jobs to match, there is an overabundance of people willing to do gruelling work in exchange for trivial amounts of money. When they show up for this work that already has no security or benefits, no formal contract, and is menial and grotesquely underpaid, the least we can do is not wound their humanity further with our words.

Oftentimes, they routinely face incessant verbal abuse from their employers, whether it be from accusations of not do-

ing something according to their preferences, the employer being in a bad mood, or simply because they are habituated to talking to those they deem inferior with disrespect. Having to face this day after day with no option to quit because the only alternative is starvation and homelessness is a crippling and debilitating experience for a person.

Nowadays, there's a lot of discourse about the importance and de-stigmatisation of mental health. But why is it that only the mental well-being of certain more privileged individuals is accounted for? We respect their boundaries and don't insult things they can't control, and never cross the line to make inappropriate remarks about their family or background. And when we abuse those we deem inferior to us, it seems as if we just assume that they don't have minds.

Amrin's confusion is at its peak, she's been screaming internally for a while now. Send help at amrinrafa@gmail.com