



# MAKING THE GRADE:

Reporting on a search experience  
with discovery tools in the  
University of Hawai'i Mānoa library system

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## Introduction

A mainstay duty of librarian's is to use the discovery tools at one's disposal to fulfill a particular information need as efficiently and thoroughly as possible. In order to accomplish this task, librarians must be knowledgeable of the various searching tools to which they have access. Not only do they need to be familiar with unique characteristics of many databases but they should also become comfortable with the platforms on which those databases are run. Too, a search-savvy librarian needs to be aware of the strengths and limitations of those discovery tools and use them with maximum efficiency. Finally, the librarian must be able to share the information found with the user in a timely manner. For this particular exercise, I set out to become familiar with and critique multiple discovery resources in the exploration of the concepts **grade inflation** and **education**.

## The Primo OneSearch Experience

According to the University of Hawai'i Primo OneSearch Mānoa Libguide, "[OneSearch Mānoa](#) is a discovery tool that searches the Voyager online book catalog, digital collections, e-resources, databases, and many other resources in one easy search. OneSearch also links to full-text content in our collections." As shown in Figures 1 to 3, OneSearch supports exact phrase searching with quotation marks, Boolean operators, the use of wildcard characters, and the use of parentheses to group search terms. The default search is set to search "everything" though one can narrow the scope of their search if one chooses (see Figure 3). Be warned however; the name




“OneSearch” and the default search scope for “everything” are deceptive. OneSearch does not, in fact, search all of the resources/databases that the University of Hawaii licenses (see Figure 4). Furthermore, OneSearch will retrieve records that are not part of the University’s holdings, which could be misleading and frustrating for a novice user (see Figure 5). These inconsistencies along with some of following observations will show that one should use OneSearch with skeptical caution.

**Search for a phrase**  
To search for a phrase, type quotation marks around the phrase. You can combine both words and phrases in your search.

**NOTE:** If you do not enclose the phrase with quotation marks, the system will find items that contain the individual words in the phrase, regardless of whether these words are located next to each other in the order specified.

For example, to search for global warming as one term, type the following in the search box:




The screenshot shows the OneSearch Mānoa search interface. The search box contains the text "global warming" enclosed in quotation marks. To the right of the search box is a dropdown menu set to "Everything" and a "Search" button.

**Search for any of your specified words or phrases**  
You can search for items that contain at least one of the words or phrases you type in the Search box. To do so, type **OR** between the words or phrases.

**NOTE:** If you search for words or phrases without specifying **OR** or **NOT**, OneSearch assumes that you are searching for all the specified words or phrases.

For example, to search for items with the word **Irish** or the word **Celtic**, type the following in the search box:



The screenshot shows the OneSearch Mānoa search interface. The search box contains the text "irish OR celtic". To the right of the search box is a dropdown menu set to "Everything" and a "Search" button.


**NOTE:** To use Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) within search phrases, you must enter them in uppercase letters. Otherwise, OneSearch will consider them as part of the query.

Figure 1: Description of phrase searching and use of the Boolean OR in OneSearch Mānoa

**Exclude words or phrases**  
You can exclude items that contain specific words or phrases. To do so, type **NOT** and then type the word or phrase to exclude.

**NOTE:** If you search for words or phrases without specifying **OR** or **NOT**, OneSearch assumes that you are searching for all the specified words or phrases.

For example, to search for items with the word **Celtic** and exclude any of these items with the word **Irish**, type the following in the search box:



The screenshot shows the OneSearch Mānoa search interface. The search box contains the text "celtic NOT irish". To the right of the search box is a dropdown menu set to "Everything" and a "Search" button.

Figure 2: Use of the Boolean NOT in OneSearch Mānoa.

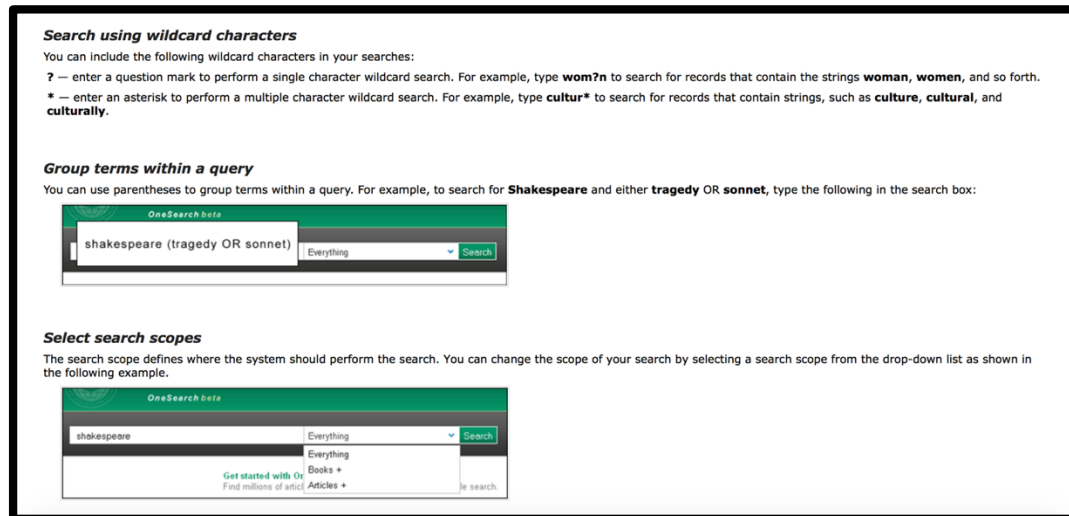


Figure 3: Wildcard, truncation, term grouping and narrowing scope of search in OneSearch Mānoa.

- **Are all of UH Manoa Library's full-text articles in Onesearch?**  
No. OneSearch does not search all of the library's databases. However, OneSearch is huge and will work well for many assignments. Visit the library's subject guides for more resources when necessary.

Figure 4: Information from the OneSearch LibGuide indicating that OneSearch is not a comprehensive discovery tool.

- **What if the book I want is not located at a UHM library?**  
NOTE: UH Manoa Library is working to resolve this display problem. In the meantime, please use the Voyager catalog to request an item not available at your home campus.

Figure 5: Information from the One Search LibGuide reveals that some books shown are not part of the University's collection.

Initially, I performed a basic search with OneSearch. My intent was to become familiar with the features of OneSearch and analyze whether or not its search engine functions as I expected it to. Immediately, I found that it did not.

Even though I narrowed the scope of my search to Articles +, the search engine retrieved 59 books on **grade inflation AND education** out of 1,867 results (See Figure 6). After narrowing those results to the time period requested (articles published in 2010 and after) the result set shrunk to 549 records (See Figure 7).

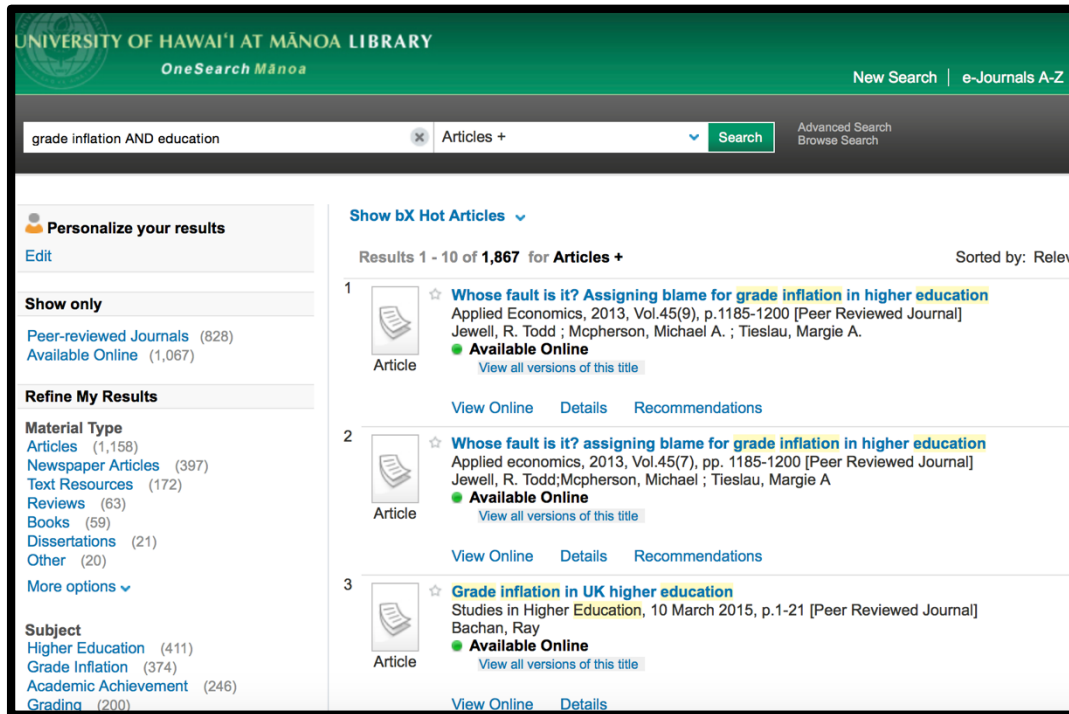


Figure 6: Initial search results in OneSearch Mānoa.

The screenshot shows the OneSearch interface with the search query 'grade inflation AND education' and a filter for 'Articles +'. The results are sorted by relevance and refined by 'creation date: 2010 To 2015'. Three articles are displayed:

- 1** ☆ **Whose fault is it? Assigning blame for grade inflation in higher education**  
Applied Economics, 2013, Vol.45(9), p.1185-1200 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
Jewell, R. Todd ; Mcpherson, Michael A. ; Tieslau, Margie A.  
● **Available Online**  
[View all versions of this title](#)
- 2** ☆ **Whose fault is it? assigning blame for grade inflation in higher education**  
Applied economics, 2013, Vol.45(7), pp. 1185-1200 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
Jewell, R. Todd;Mcperson, Michael ; Tieslau, Margie A.  
● **Available Online**  
[View all versions of this title](#)
- 3** ☆ **Grade inflation in UK higher education**  
Studies in Higher Education, 10 March 2015, p.1-21 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
Bachan, Ray  
● **Available Online**  
[View all versions of this title](#)

The left sidebar includes filters for 'Personalize your results', 'Show only' (Peer-reviewed Journals: 215, Available Online: 302), 'Refine My Results' (Material Type: Articles: 297, Newspaper Articles: 167, Text Resources: 41, Books: 20, Dissertations: 15, Reviews: 11, Conference Proceedings: 6), and 'Subject' (Grade Inflation: 88, Higher Education: 82, Academic Achievement: 63, Education: 56).

Figure 7: OneSearch Manoa results narrowed by publication date.

By expanding the subject facet, I was able to find some related terms to the concepts **grade inflation** and **education** (See Figure 8). I knew that these concepts could be valuable in refining my search string later.



Figure 8: Additional subject terms in OneSearch Mānoa subject facet.

I wanted to narrow my results further and decided to limit by material type. Here, I encountered another confusing behavior of OneSearch. When I used the material type limiter, OneSearch appeared to have 287 articles for grade inflation and education (See Figure 9). However, when the results page refreshed there were only 273 records displayed (see Figure 10). After some critical thought, I realized that this phenomenon might be explained by my choice to exclude material types rather than include material types. To explain further, a record might be considered both a review and an article, so by excluding all material types except for articles, the search engine would return a slightly smaller recall. This experience demonstrates the importance of using the include option rather than the exclude option in the facet limiter.

Refine Search		
Include	Exclude	Material Type
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Articles (287)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper Articles (167)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Text Resources (41)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Books (20)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dissertations (15)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reviews (11)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conference Proceedings (5)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reference Entries (4)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Audio Visual (1)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (1)

Figure 9: The Material Type facet claims that there are 287 articles related to the information need.

The screenshot shows a search interface with the following elements:

- Search Bar:** Contains the query "grade inflation AND education" and a dropdown menu set to "Articles +". A "Search" button is visible.
- Filters:** A "Refined by:" section shows "creation date: 2010 To 2015". Below it, a "material type:" section lists selected filters: Other, Audio Visual, Reference Entries, Conference Proceedings, Reviews, Dissertations, Books, Text Resources, and Newspaper Articles.
- Results Summary:** "Results 1 - 10 of 273 for Articles +". Sorted by: Relevance.
- Search Results:**
  - 1** [Whose fault is it? Assigning blame for grade inflation in higher education](#)  
Applied Economics, 2013, Vol.45(9), p.1185-1200 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
Jewell, R. Todd ; Mcpherson, Michael A. ; Tieslau, Margie A.  
Available Online  
[View all versions of this title](#)
  - 2** [Whose fault is it? assigning blame for grade inflation in higher education](#)  
Applied economics, 2013, Vol.45(7), pp. 1185-1200 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
Jewell, R. Todd; Mcpherson, Michael ; Tieslau, Margie A  
Available Online  
[View all versions of this title](#)
  - 3** [Grade inflation in UK higher education](#)  
Studies in Higher Education, 10 March 2015, p.1-21 [Peer Reviewed Journal]
- Left Sidebar:**
  - Personalize your results** (Edit)
  - Show only:** Peer-reviewed Journals (190), Available Online (202)
  - Refine My Results:**
    - Subject:** Grade Inflation (63), Higher Education (58), Academic Achievement (46), Grading (39), College Students (38), More options
    - Author:** Nicholson, Sandra (4), Yates, Janet (3), James, David (3), Owen, Richard (3), Carlifo, James (3)

Figure 10: However, only 273 records are retrieved.

I further limited the records by including only records written in English. This reduced my number of records to 264 (see Figure 11).

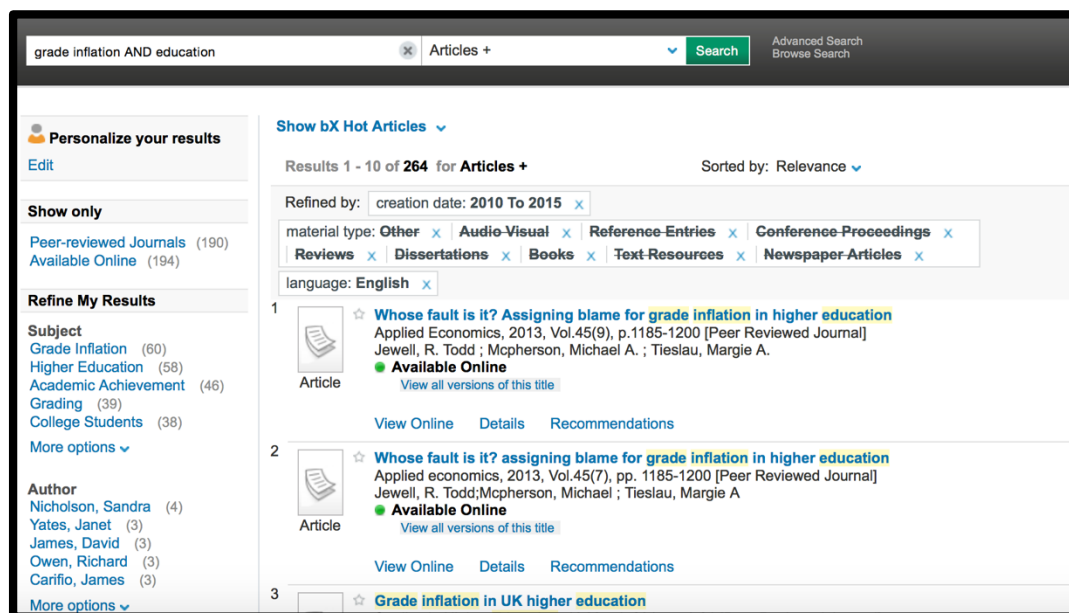


Figure 11: Results after limiting to records written in English.

Though this number of records is higher than ideal, OneSearch lacked other facets to narrow my search AT THIS POINT. I chose not to narrow by subject at this time because in this initial search, I was still trying to gather related terms and synonyms so I wanted to keep my number of records higher than normal.

Next, I turned a critical eye to the information that I was able to extract from each record, as provided by OneSearch. First, by expanding the Source Database facet, I was able to view some of the databases that were best suited for this particular topic search. As one can see in Figure 12, the databases that contained the most articles for **grade inflation AND education** include OneFile, ERIC, Taylor & Francis Online, Social Sciences Citation Index, and Informa.

Refine Search		
Include	Exclude	Source Database
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	OneFile (GALE) (119)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ERIC (U.S. Dept. of Education) (88)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taylor & Francis Online - Journals (68)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Informa - Taylor & Francis (CrossRef) (50)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MEDLINE/PubMed (NLM) (23)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ECONIS (ZBW) (20)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Reference Center Academic (Gale) (18)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SpringerLink (14)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SciVerse ScienceDirect (Elsevier) (12)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic Law Reviews (LexisNexis) (11)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SAGE Journals (8)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wiley Online Library (6)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) (5)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SwePub (National Library of Sweden) (3)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	University of Chicago Press Journals (3)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	BMJ Journals (BMJ Publishing Group) (3)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Literature Resource Center (Gale) (3)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Project MUSE (3)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	InfoSci-Journals (IGI Global) (2)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Symposium Journals (2)

Continue Cancel

Figure 12: Using the "Source Database" facet reveals the best databases for the information need.

Critiquing how OneSearch sorts by “relevancy,” it appears that the search engine follows the track record of previous assignments by using an algorithm for relevancy that does not make logical sense. In the search that I performed, Record #260 contained multiple search terms in the description whereas record #250 contained zero search terms (see Figures 13 and 14). These specific ranking numbers will not be accurate if the same search was performed today, but the relative position of the two articles would remain consistent, if confusing.



grade inflation AND education Articles + Search Advanced Search Browse Search

**Validity, Reliability, and Potential Bias of Short Forms of Students' Evaluation of Teaching: The Case of UAE University**  
 Educational Assessment, 2013, Vol.18(4), p.235-250 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
 Dodeen, Hamzeh  
 ● Available Online

[View Online](#) [Details](#)

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**Title:** Validity, Reliability, and Potential Bias of Short Forms of Students' Evaluation of Teaching: The Case of UAE University  
**Author:** Dodeen, Hamzeh  
**Publisher:** Taylor & Francis Group  
**Description:** Students' opinions continue to be a significant factor in the evaluation of teaching in higher education institutions. The purpose of this study was to psychometrically assess short students evaluation of teaching (SET) forms using the UAE University form as a model. The study evaluated the form validity, reliability, the overall question, and potential bias with respect to gender, college, grade point average, expected grade, and class size. A total of 3,661 students participated in this study in different random samples. Results indicated that the short SET form lacked content validity and could not identify key dimensions of evaluating teaching effectiveness. The form showed stability over time and acceptable internal reliability. Results indicated also that there was a potential bias due to college, expected grade, and class size, but there was no relationship between grade point average and students' ratings. It was concluded that short SET forms do not cover all domain content and unable to provide teachers with enough information for the improvement of teaching.  
**Is Part Of:** Educational Assessment, 2013, Vol.18(4), p.235-250 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
**Identifier:** ISSN: 1062-7197 ; E-ISSN: 1532-6977 ; DOI: 10.1080/10627197.2013.846670  
**Source:** Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group 

Figure 13: This record was given a lower relevancy ranking in OneSearch Manoa than the record below.

grade inflation AND education Articles + Search Advanced Search Browse Search

**Assessment: can it lead to a better course design?**  
 Journal of College Science Teaching, Sept-Oct, 2013, Vol.43(1), p.30 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
 Romeo, Peggy ; Posey, Frederick  
 ● No full-text online

[Get This Item](#) [Details](#)

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**Title:** Assessment: can it lead to a better course design?  
**Author:** Romeo, Peggy ; Posey, Frederick  
**Description:** Concerns about the misuse of assessment results in accountability-related efforts led our biology faculty to take the initiative to develop our own assessment tool for one of our introductory biology courses. Our goal was to evaluate student achievement in the course and detect methods for improving our course. We developed a pre/posttest, which we used for two semesters. Results from these two semesters showed a very small but significant increase from pre-to posttest scores. For the third semester of the study, we moved to a collegewide common final. By creating questions based on the learning outcomes of the course, we were able to compare scores for specific questions to learning outcomes. These comparisons provided insight into the difficulty of certain concepts in biology, along with the degree of uniformity of instruction across various sections of the course. These results led us to question the amount of information covered in the introductory course, the difficulty level of the course, and the vague nature of our learning outcomes. Presently, on the basis of the results, our biology faculty are in the process of reevaluating the content of the course and developing new, more detailed course learning outcomes.  
**Is Part Of:** Journal of College Science Teaching, Sept-Oct, 2013, Vol.43(1), p.30 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
**Identifier:** ISSN: 0047-231X  
**Language:** English  
**Source:** Cengage Learning, Inc.

Figure 14: This record was given a higher relevancy ranking although it contains none of the search terms.

Another inconsistency was the retrieval of a French language record, even though I limited to English language (see Figure 15). I considered that the article may have been published in two languages, as many Canadian articles are, but when I accessed the article online, I found that the article was only written in French.

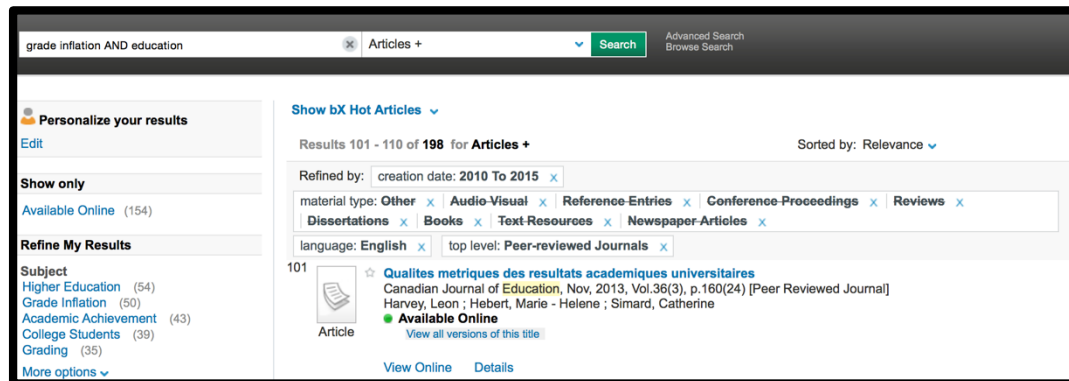


Figure 15: Even after excluding records written in languages other than English, this record appeared in my results set.

A closer look at journal titles revealed that alternate spellings of journal titles in OneSearch might lead one to believe that there are more articles for their informational need than there actually are. For example, including results for only the journal articles Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education and Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education revealed that instead of an expected 11 articles, there were, in fact, only 6 (see Figure 16 and 17).

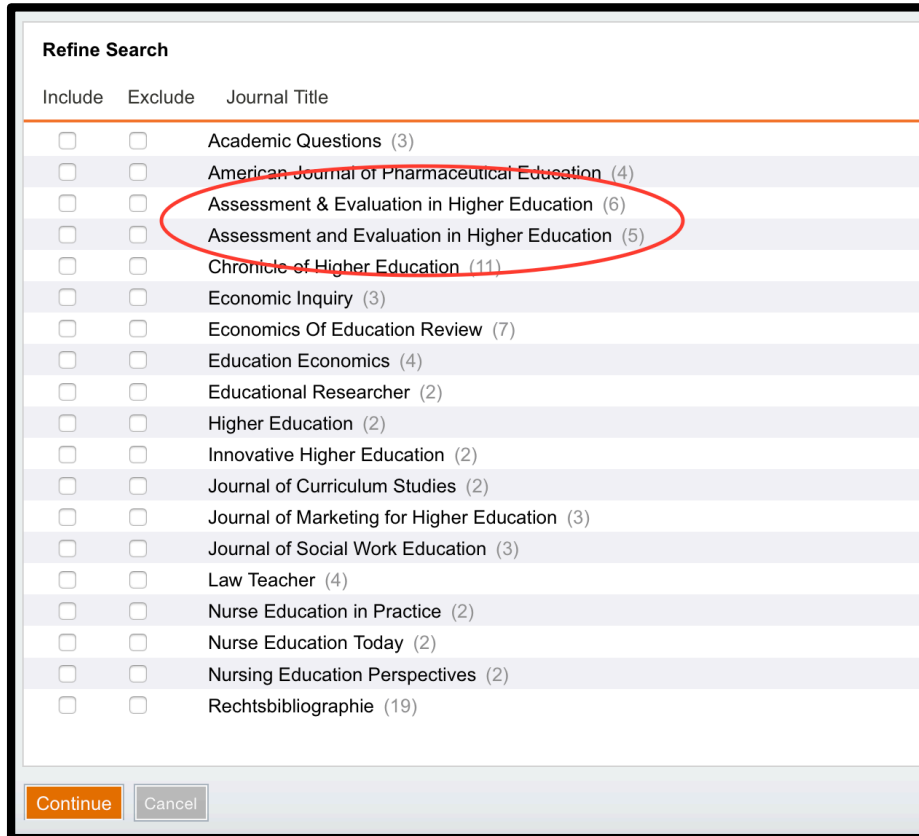


Figure 16: Various spellings of journal titles, leads one to believe recall is higher than it actually is.

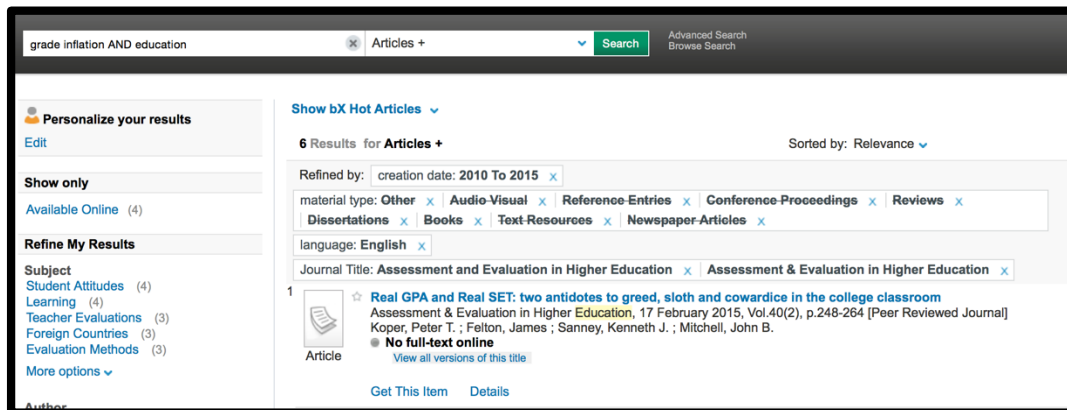
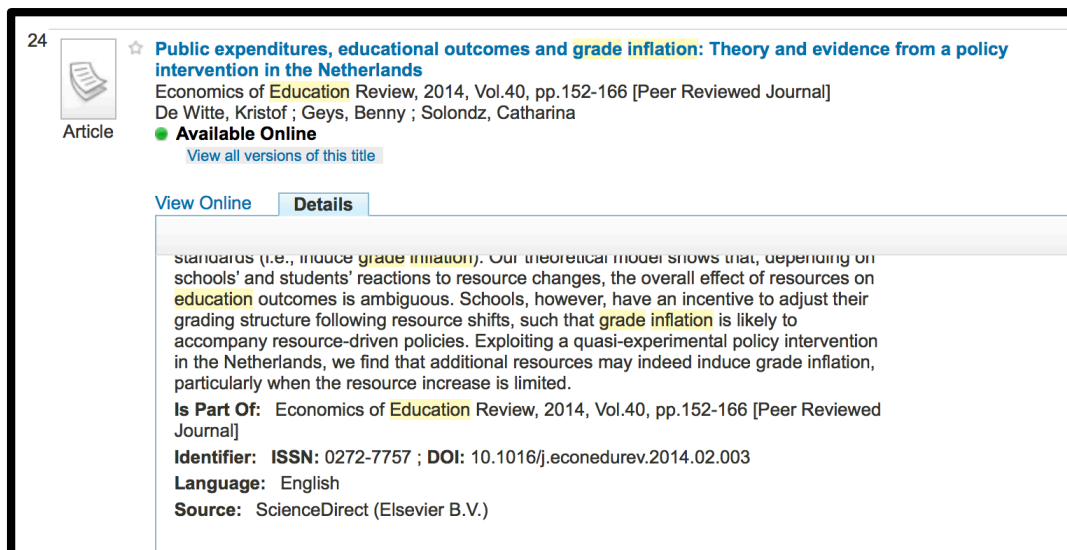



Figure 17: Result set from both spelling variations of "Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education" journal.

Other examples of duplicate records counts due to alternate spellings of journal titles include, *Applied Economics* versus *Applied economics* and *The Turkish Online Journal of*

*Distance Education* and *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*. Duplicate records can also occur in OneSearch when the same article is retrieved by two different database sources, as in the records below, which were retrieved from ScienceDirect and Cengage Learning, Inc., respectively (see Figures 18 and 19). Finally, duplicate records will also be retrieved when the same article is published in separate journals. Based on these discoveries, one should be skeptical of the total records counts one initially sees and expect the actual number of unique, relevant records to be significantly lower than the number shown.



24  Article

☆ **Public expenditures, educational outcomes and grade inflation: Theory and evidence from a policy intervention in the Netherlands**  
Economics of Education Review, 2014, Vol.40, pp.152-166 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
De Witte, Kristof ; Geys, Benny ; Solondz, Catharina

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standards (i.e., induce grade inflation). Our theoretical model shows that, depending on schools' and students' reactions to resource changes, the overall effect of resources on education outcomes is ambiguous. Schools, however, have an incentive to adjust their grading structure following resource shifts, such that grade inflation is likely to accompany resource-driven policies. Exploiting a quasi-experimental policy intervention in the Netherlands, we find that additional resources may indeed induce grade inflation, particularly when the resource increase is limited.


**Is Part Of:** Economics of Education Review, 2014, Vol.40, pp.152-166 [Peer Reviewed Journal]

**Identifier:** ISSN: 0272-7757 ; DOI: 10.1016/j.econedurev.2014.02.003

**Language:** English

**Source:** ScienceDirect (Elsevier B.V.)

Figure 18: One record retrieved from ScienceDirect database.

25  ☆ **Public expenditures, educational outcomes and grade inflation: Theory and evidence from a policy intervention in the Netherlands**  
 Economics of Education Review, June, 2014, Vol.40, p.152(15) [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
 De Witte, Kristof ; Geys, Benny ; Solondz, Catharina  
 ● Available Online

[View Online](#) [Details](#)

University, Kapoensstraat 2, 6200 MD Maastricht, The Netherlands (b) University of Leuven (KU Leuven), Naamsestraat 69, B-3000 Leuven, Belgium (c) Norwegian Business School (BI), Nydalsveien 37, N-0442 Oslo, Norway (d) Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Department of Applied Economics, Pleinlaan 2, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium (e) Technical University of Dresden, Chair of Economic Policy and Economic Research, D-01062 Dresden, Germany Article History: Received 11 April 2013; Revised 12 November 2013; Accepted 17 February 2014

**Is Part Of:** Economics of Education Review, June, 2014, Vol.40, p.152(15) [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
**Identifier:** ISSN: 0272-7757  
**Language:** English  
**Source:** Cengage Learning, Inc.

Figure 19: The same record retrieved from Cengage Learning, Inc. database.

Next, I explored the Advanced Search features of OneSearch. I searched for **grade inflation AND education** in the Subject field and set limits for publication date, material type, language, and search scope. The recall was 34 records (see Figure 20). Next, I expanded the subject facet to retrieve more possible related terms (see Figure 21). It is clear that limiting the terms to the subject index results in a much more manageable recall. However, one might also argue that a subject index search is too limiting and that a full text or “anywhere” search might be more appropriate, especially at the beginning of a search.

Limiting by subject terms becomes more efficient when one is certain that they are using appropriate, recognized terms (controlled vocabulary) for their information need. But finding “appropriate” subject terms becomes even more difficult when one realizes that OneSearch does not have a thesaurus or controlled vocabulary to consult. It seems that the best method for finding reliable terms in OneSearch, is to use the subject facet limiter, as was done here. Terms I felt might be successful in later searches included: **Higher Education, Grading, Academic**

**Achievement, Academic Standards, Student Evaluation, Grades (Scholastic) and Educational Change** (see Figure 21). From my basic search I found the terms: **Universities and Colleges and Assessment** (see Figure 8). In addition: brainstorming synonyms and related terms to the initial query produced the following terms to use later:

Grade, grades, grading, grad\*, mark(s), mark\*, evaluation, evaluat\*, assessment, assess\*

Inflation, inflate, inflat\*, increase, manipulate, raise, tweak, modify

Education, academia, university, higher education, college, collegiate

Reason, purpose, method, technique, process, research

I plan to check many of these terms against database thesauri and a sample of relevant records to come up with a working list of variant search terms and combinations.

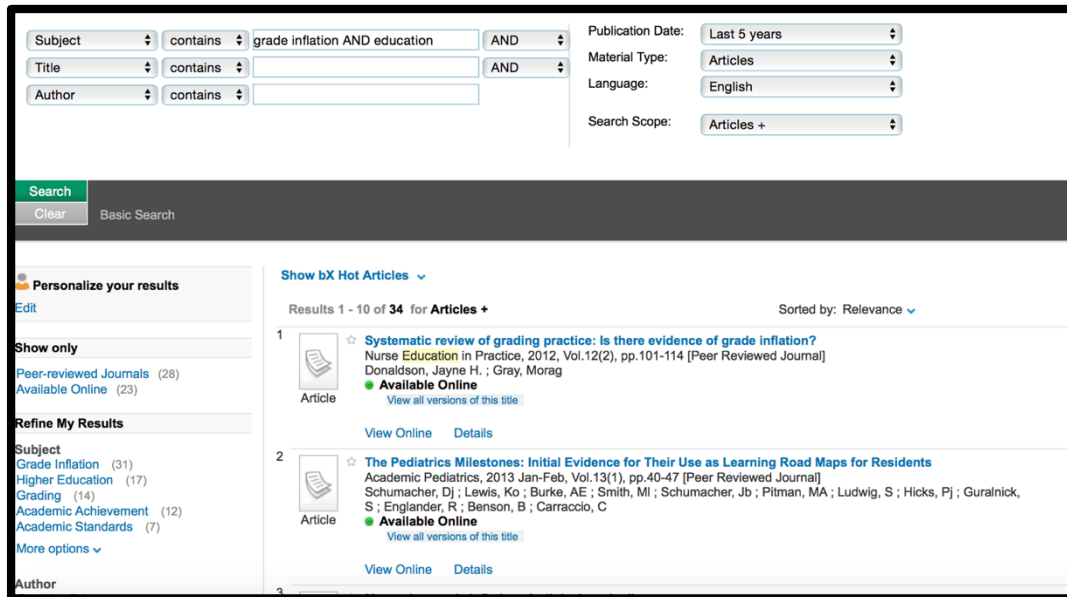


Figure 20: Result set from OneSearch Mānoa a advanced search, limiting terms to subject field.

Refine Search		
Include	Exclude	Subject
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Higher Education (15)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grading (14)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic Achievement (12)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foreign Countries (6)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic Standards (6)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Evaluation (5)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education (5)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational Change (5)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grades (Scholastic) (4)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Article (4)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outcomes Of Education (4)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade Point Average (4)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluation (3)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Economics (3)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clinical Evaluations (1)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice (1)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Surgery Clerkship (1)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	England (1)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nurse Education (1)

Figure 21: Additional possible subject terms from Subject facet.

## EBSCOhost

### Choosing search terms

My first, preliminary search in EBSCOhost returned 348 records (see Figure 22). Immediately, I consulted the Subject: Thesaurus Terms facet list to see which terms would be most useful for the information need. I found that the additional term **GRADING & marking (Students)** might be useful in later searches. (see Figure 23). Also, a quick consultation with the Database facet list revealed that Newspaper Source Plus, Academic Search Complete, ERIC, and MasterFILE Complete were the best sources to retrieve the most records about **grade inflation** and **education** (see Figure 24). I discarded Newspaper Source Plus as a potential database

because many of the records were short news blurbs from non-US news sources which did not fill the information need (see Figure 25). That made Academic Search Complete and ERIC the most likely databases to find information so those were the thesauri that I checked for additional variant search terms. Consulting the Academic Search Complete thesaurus directly, I found that **GRADING & marking (Students)** is a broader term for **Grade inflation** which could expand recall if necessary. A related term to **grade inflation** was **grade point average**. I also found **Higher Education** as a narrower term for **Education** as well as alternate terms for **Higher Education** (see Figure 26 and 27). Next, I consulted the ERIC thesaurus and found additional terms **Grades (Scholastic)**, **Grade Point Average**, **Academic Standards** and **Grading** (see Figure 28). My final technique for cultivating additional terms included close examination of a specific record that discussed grade inflation and education and included charts, tables and graphs. Those additional features were also a component of the information need and one that I honed in on later (see Figure 29). An author supplied term **university grade trends** from that record was a potential variant search term. However, one must be cautious about using author supplied terms since they may not be standardized or commonly used across the profession.



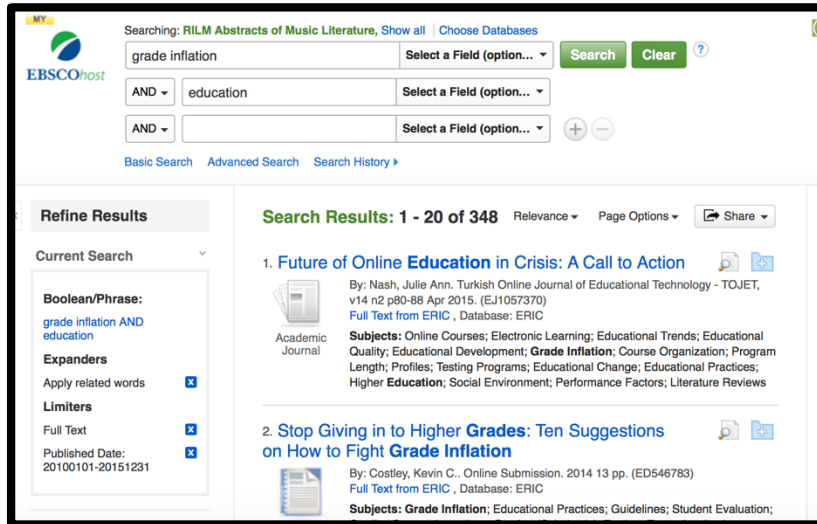


Figure 22: Initial search in EBSCOhost

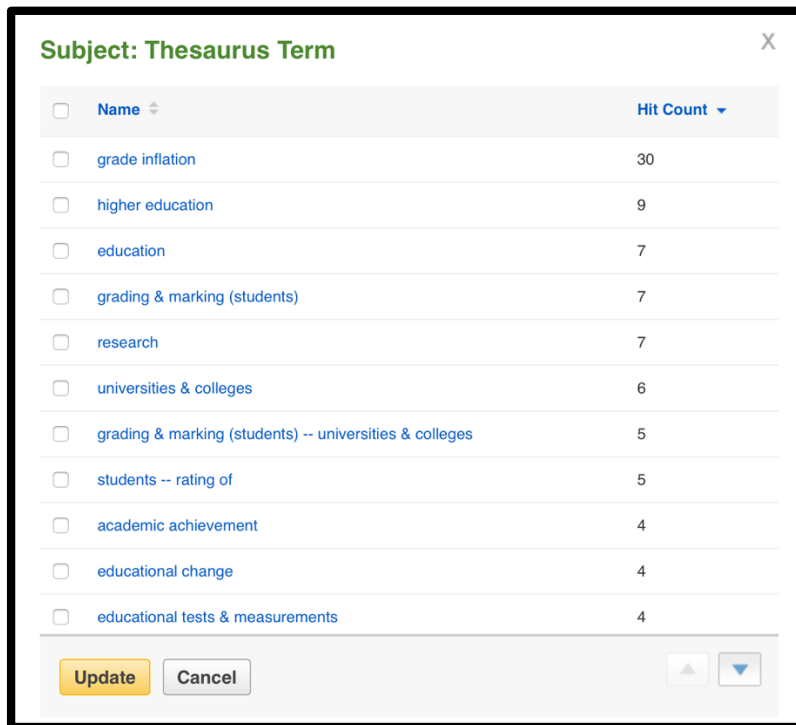


Figure 23: Consulting the Subject: Thesaurus Term facet list for possible variant terms.

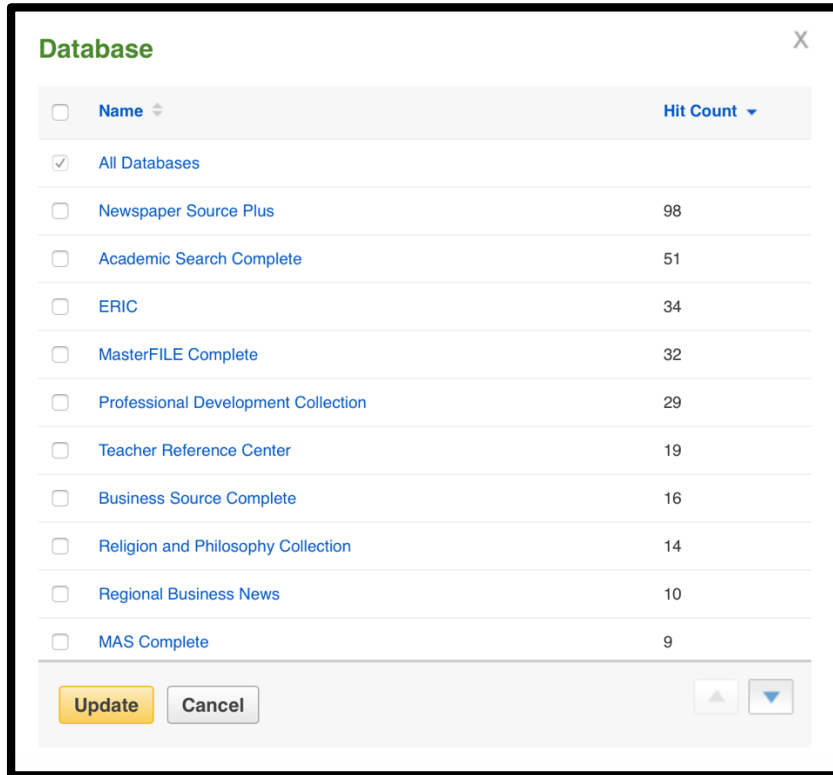


Figure 24: Consulting the Database facet list for the most useful databases for the information need.

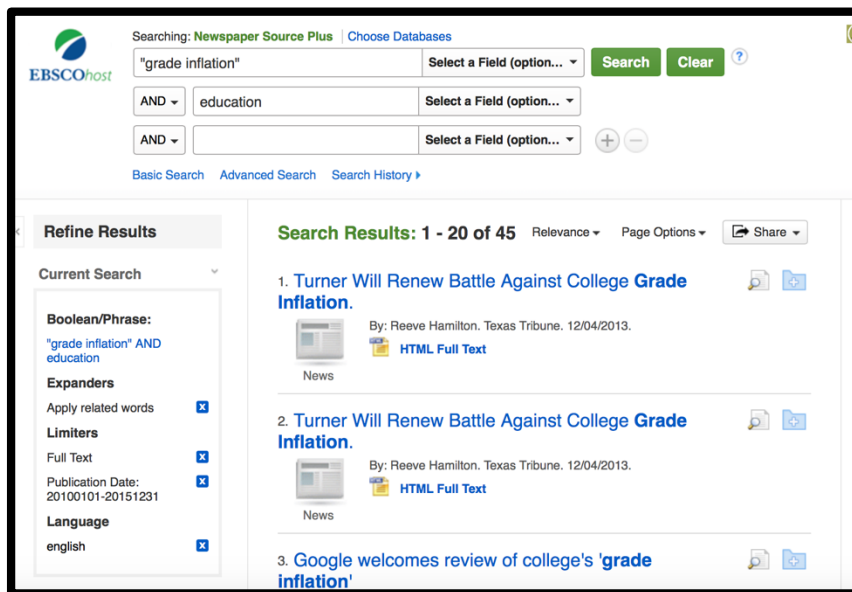


Figure 25: Newspaper Source Plus did not produce pertinent results.

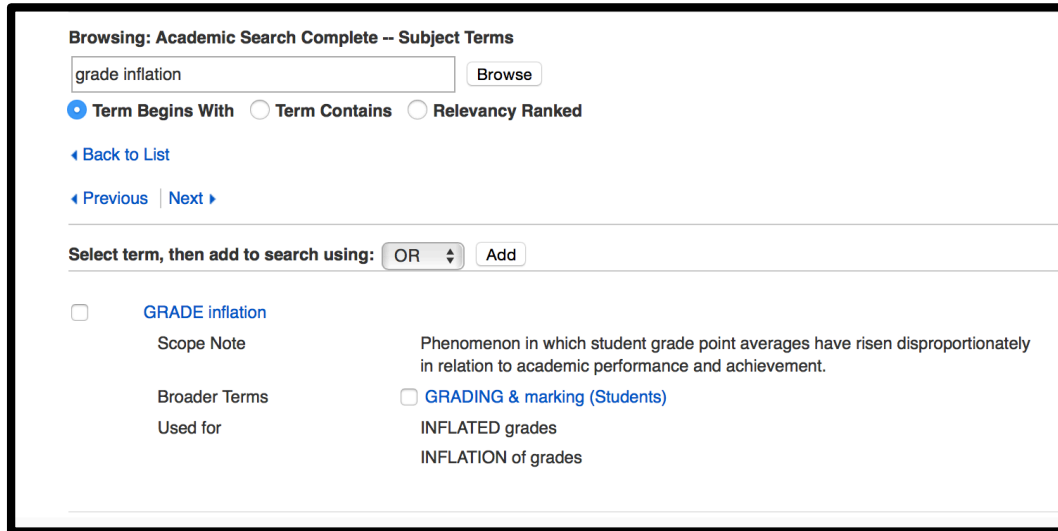


Figure 26: *Grading & marking (Students)* shown as a broader term of *Grade inflation* in Academic Search Complete thesaurus.

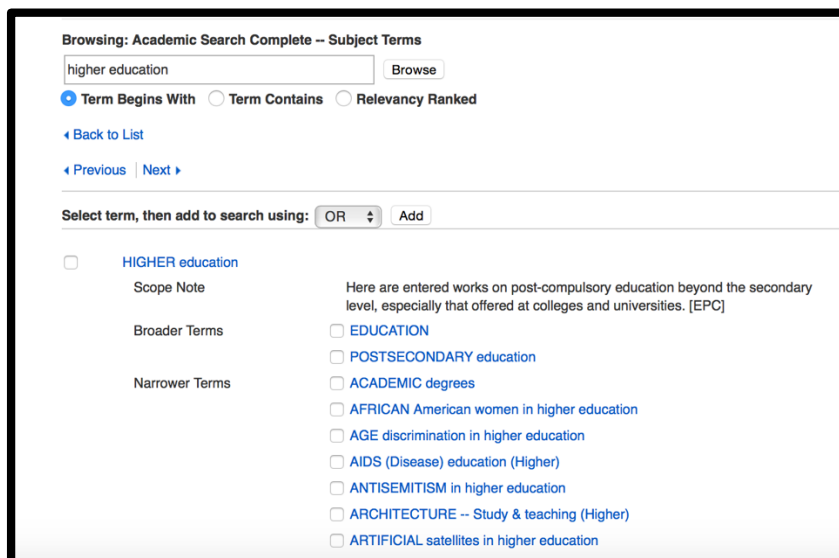


Figure 27: Extensive list of broader, narrower, and related terms for *higher education* in Academic Search Complete thesaurus (not all terms shown here).

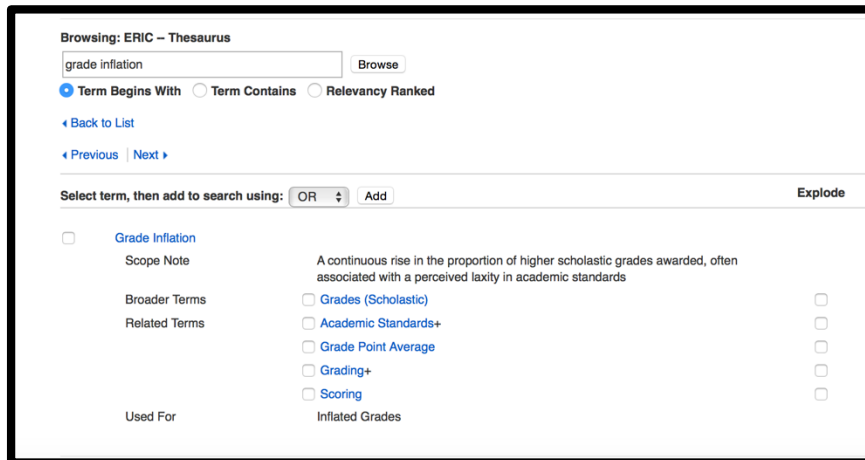


Figure 28: Variant terms for *Grade inflation* found in EBSCOhost ERIC thesaurus

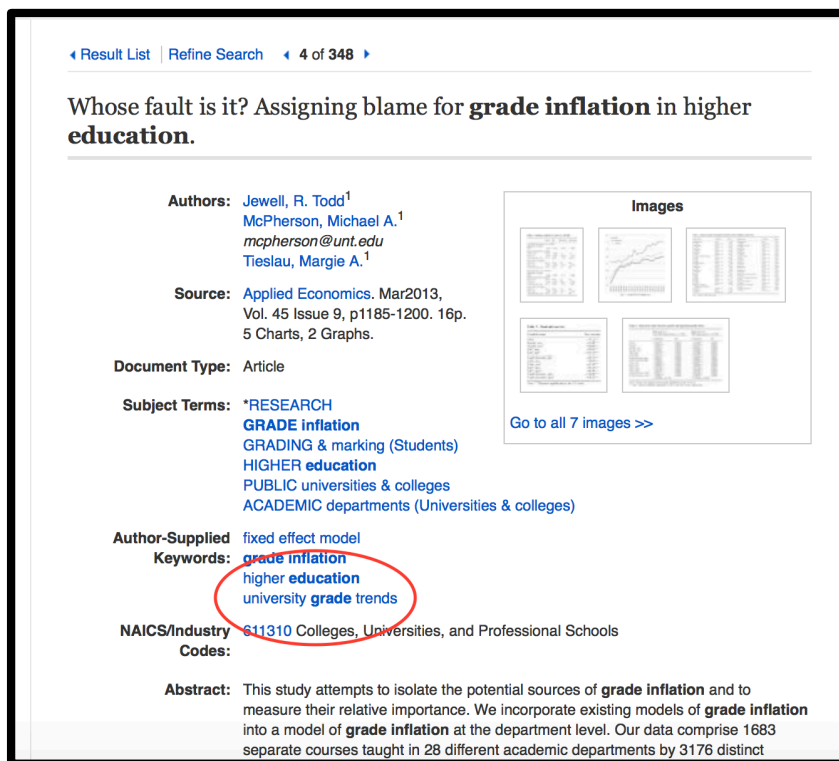


Figure 29: Exploring a record that matches information need to extract variant search terms.

A table showing the tentative list of variant search terms can be found in Appendix A. It does not include all of the terms from my initial brainstorming session but will hopefully prove fruitful.

## Search Variants

I began experimenting with alternate search terms that I had come up with on my own, as well as playing with truncation and searching in different indexing fields. Knowing that the British English use the term mark instead of grade, I tried to search for mark\*, hoping to get records with mark, marks, marking. This strategy was faulty because the recall included records that had to do with marketing (see Figure 30). Searches that attempted to truncate grade or grading to grad\* also included many records with graduate, gradual, graduating, and graduation, so I decided not to truncate that term either. In these earlier searches, I also limited searches to the subject field, as we did in OneSearch but found that strategy to be too limiting (see Figure 31).

The screenshot shows the EBSCOhost search interface. The search query is "grade inflation OR mark\*" with "SU Subject Terms" selected. The search results show 1 - 20 of 28 results. The first result is "1. Green Marketing: A Grey-based Rough Set Theory Analysis of Activities." by ZhiJun Xu; Xiaobing Liu; Chunguang Bai; Lijie Hu. The subjects listed are GREEN marketing; ROUGH sets; SUPPLY chain management; EDUCATION -- Research; MULTIPLE criteria decision making; All Other Miscellaneous Schools and Instruction; Educational Support Services; Administration of Education Programs. The result includes a PDF Full Text (2.5MB) and four charts.

Figure 30: Faulty truncation yields irrelevant recall in EBSCOhost.

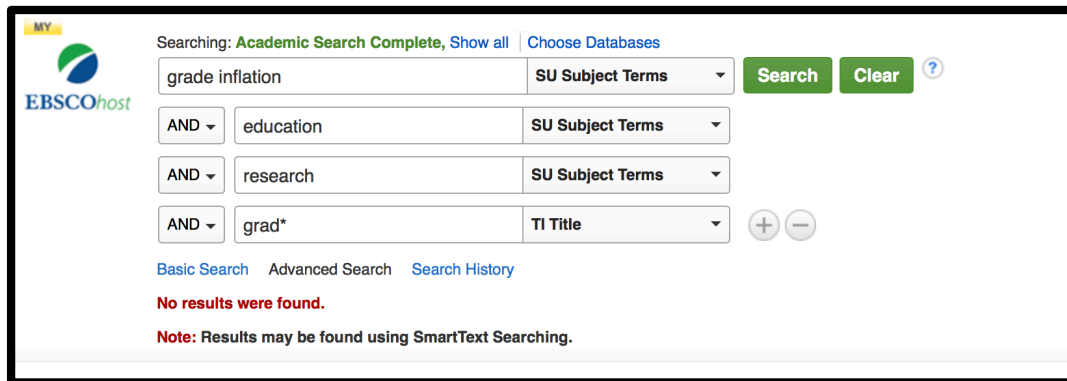


Figure 31: Recall too narrow.

Next, I decided to return to a more general search but focus on the aspect of the information request that included charts, graphs and tables. EBSCOhost allows one to include only records with image quick view. So, I performed a search of all databases for full text articles with **grade inflation** and **education** anywhere in the text, limited by the correct time frame, with image quick view of all types of images. The result set was very close to the desired 30 records (see Figure 32). However, closer inspection of the records revealed that EBSCOhost was guilty of the same flaw as OneSearch. Though the initial results page indicated a 37 record recall, some of those records were duplicated, so the actual recall was only 22 records (see Figure 33). I also noticed that many of the records contained only photos or graphics and not charts, tables or graphs. A second search excluded photos from the search and produced a recall of 16 records (see Figure 34). Several of these records were highly relevant and by browsing the titles and abstracts of the records, I was able to come up with another term, **Academic rigor (Education)**.

MY EBSCOhost Searching: Academic Search Complete, Show all Choose Databases

grade inflation Select a Field (option...) Search Clear ?

AND education Select a Field (option...)

AND Select a Field (option...) + -

Basic Search Advanced Search Search History ▶

**Refine Results**

Current Search

Boolean/Phrase:  
grade inflation AND education

Expanders  
Apply related words

Limiters  
Full Text   
Published Date: 20100101-20151231   
Image Quick View   
Image Quick View Types:

**Search Results: 1 - 20 of 37** Relevance Page Options Share

1. **Whose fault is it? Assigning blame for grade inflation in higher education.**

Academic Journal By: Jewell, R. Todd; McPherson, Michael A.; Tieslau, Margie A. *Applied Economics*. Mar2013, Vol. 45 Issue 9, p1185-1200. 16p. 5 Charts, 2 Graphs. DOI: 10.1080/00036846.2011.621884. , Database: Business Source Complete

**Subjects:** RESEARCH; Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools; **GRADE inflation**; GRADING & marking (Students); HIGHER education; PUBLIC universities & colleges; ACADEMIC departments (Universities & colleges)

Show all 7 images

PDF Full Text (309KB)

Figure 32: Recall appears to be 37 records.

MY EBSCOhost Searching: Academic Search Complete, Show all Choose Databases

grade inflation Select a Field (option...) Search Clear ?

AND education Select a Field (option...)

AND Select a Field (option...) + -

Basic Search Advanced Search Search History ▶

**Refine Results**

Current Search

Boolean/Phrase:  
grade inflation AND education

Expanders  
Apply related words

Limiters  
Full Text   
Published Date: 20100101-20151231   
Image Quick View   
Image Quick View Types:

**Search Results: 21 - 22 of 22** Relevance Page Options Share

Note: Exact duplicates removed from the results.

21. **Front and Back Covers, Volume 27, Number 1. February 2011.**

Academic Journal *Anthropology Today*. Feb2011, Vol. 27 Issue 1, pi-ii. 2p. 5 Color Photographs. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-8322.2011.027c1.x. , Database: Academic Search Complete

**Subjects:** ASIAN Games; HOSTING of sporting events; NATIONAL interest; KAEN; DEMONSTRATIONS (Collective behavior); UNIVERSITIES & colleges; PUBLIC spending; VIANGCHAN (Laos); LAOS; Public Finance Activities

Show all 5 images

PDF Full Text (6.2MB)

Figure 33: Second results page shows less recall when duplicate records are removed.

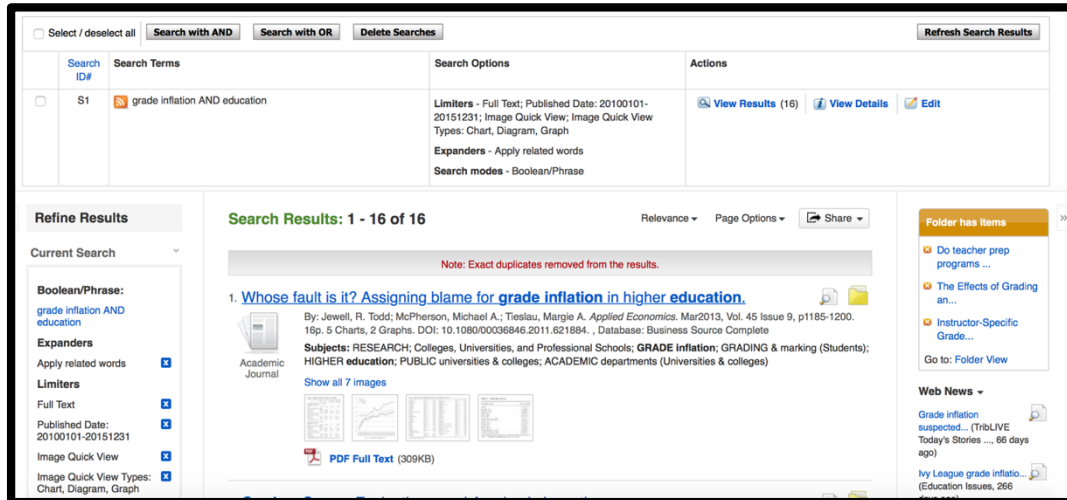


Figure 34: New search focusing on the graph and table component of information request.

As I looked closely at this smaller set of records, I also discovered that many of the records came from the Business Source Complete database, which was not one of databases that returned the highest number of records in my initial EBSCOhost search. I set out to explore if this database might also be appropriate for this information need. Looking in the Business Source Complete Thesaurus, I was unable to find entries for either **grade inflation** or **grades**, as the terms relate to education, and **universities and colleges** as an alternate term for **higher education** (see Figures 35 to 37).



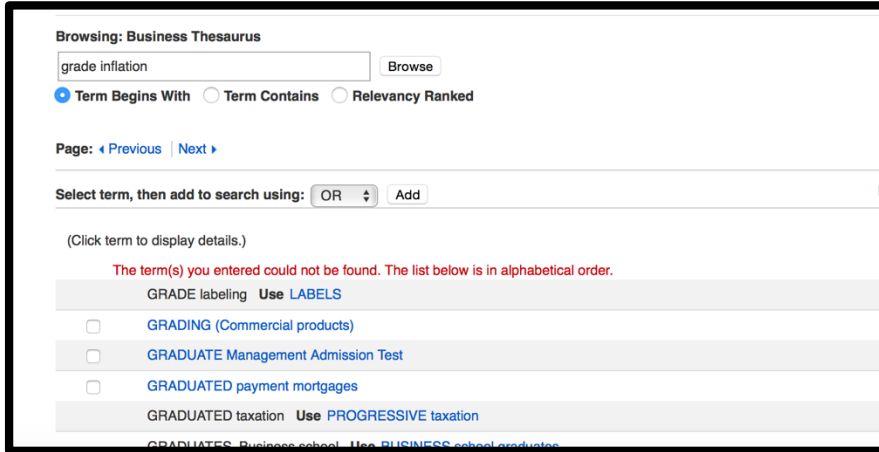


Figure 35: No matching terms for *grade inflation* in Business Source Complete thesaurus.

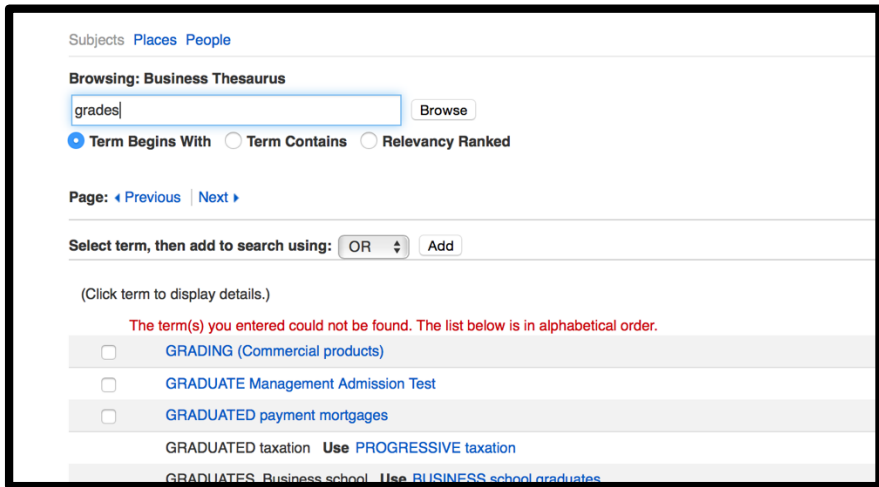


Figure 36: No matching terms for *grades* in Business Source Complete thesaurus.

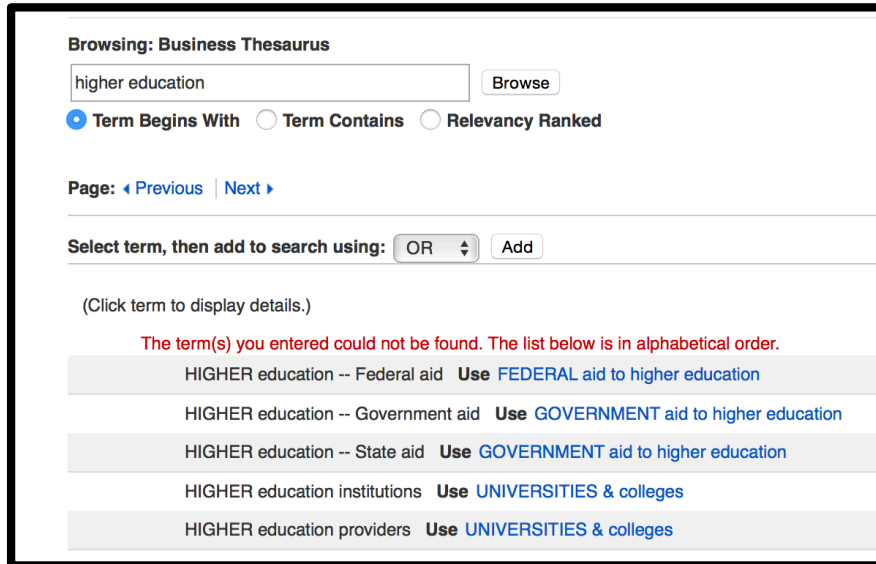


Figure 37: Variant terms for *higher education* in Business Source Complete thesaurus.

I conducted the following search in only Business Source Complete databases (see Figure 38). The recall was very close to the “ideal” 30 count and many of the records contained charts and graphs, even without having to filter by image quick view. Next, I modified the search, limiting to Title index only (see Figure 39). This produced only 9 records, only some of which were relevant (see Figure 40).

**Search History/Alerts**

[Print Search History](#) | [Retrieve Searches](#) | [Retrieve Alerts](#) | [Save Searches / Alerts](#)

Select / deselect all   **Search with AND**   **Search with OR**   **Delete Searches**

Search ID#	Search Terms	Search Options	Actions
S1	AB ( grade inflation OR grading OR academic achievement OR marking ) AND AB ( higher education OR universit* OR college ) AND ( standards OR evaluation OR assessment )	<b>Limiters</b> - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 <b>Expanders</b> - Apply related words <b>Search modes</b> - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results (45)</a> <a href="#">View Details</a>

---

**Refine Results**   **Search Results: 1 - 20 of 45**   Relevance ▾   Page Options ▾   Share ▾

**Current Search**

**Boolean/Phrase:**  
 AB ( grade inflation OR grading OR academic achievement OR markin...

**Expanders**  
 Apply related words

**Limiters**  
 Full Text   
 Published Date: 20100101-20151231

1. **The Effects of an Anti-Grade Inflation Policy at Wellesley College<sup>†</sup>**

Journal of Economic Perspectives. Summer2014, Vol. 28 Issue 3, p189-204. 16p. 4 Charts, 2 Graphs. DOI: 10.1257/jep.28.3.189.

**Subjects:** UNIVERSITIES & colleges; WELLESLEY College (Wellesley, Mass.); Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools; GRADE inflation; GRADING & marking (Students); COLLEGE teachers -- United States; STUDENTS -- Rating of; UNITED States; STUDENT evaluation of college teachers

Show all 6 images

Figure 38: Promising search in EBSCOhost Business Source Complete.

S24	TI ( grade inflation OR grading OR academic achievement OR marking ) AND TI ( education OR higher education OR universit* OR college )	<b>Limiters</b> - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 <b>Expanders</b> - Apply related words <b>Search modes</b> - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results (9)</a> <a href="#">View Details</a> <a href="#">Edit</a>
-----	--	--	--

Figure 39: Title search associated with Figure 39.

**Refine Results**   **Search Results: 1 - 9 of 9**   Relevance ▾   Page Options ▾   Share ▾

**Current Search**

**Boolean/Phrase:**  
 TI ( grade inflation OR grading OR academic achievement OR markin...

**Expanders**  
 Apply related words

**Limiters**  
 Full Text   
 Published Date: 20100101-20151231

**Limit To**

Full Text  
 References Available  
 Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

2010   Publication Date   2015

Show More

1. **Whose fault is it? Assigning blame for grade inflation in higher education.**

By: Jewell, R. Todd; McPherson, Michael A.; Tieslau, Margie A. Applied Economics. Mar2013, Vol. 45 Issue 9, p1185-1200. 16p. 5 Charts, 2 Graphs. DOI: 10.1080/00036846.2011.621884.

**Subjects:** RESEARCH; Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools; GRADE inflation; GRADING & marking (Students); HIGHER education; PUBLIC universities & colleges; ACADEMIC departments (Universities & colleges)

Show all 7 images

Cited References: (36)  
[PDF Full Text \(309KB\)](#)

2. **UNIVERSITY COMPETITION, GRADING STANDARDS, AND GRADE INFLATION.**

By: POPOV, SERGEY V.; BERNHARDT, DAN. Economic Inquiry. Jul2013, Vol. 51 Issue 3, p1764-1778. 15p. 1 Chart, 4 Graphs. DOI: 10.1111/j.1465-7295.2012.00491.x.

**Subjects:** UNIVERSITIES & colleges; MATHEMATICAL models; RESEARCH; COMPETITION (Economics); SKILLED labor; Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools; GRADING & marking (Students); GRADE inflation; ACADEMIC ability; STUDENTS -- Rating of; ECONOMIC aspects

Figure 40: Title search with variant terms yields too few results that are not all relevant.

By browsing thesauri, scanning records and combining terms, I felt I was ready to approach the index searching more systematically. I searched Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, and ERIC separately but with the same strategy, using terms that were likely to be shared by all. The results were “see-sawing” but some searches retrieved a number of records very close to the ideal 30 (see Appendix D).

What I learned from this task was that there are various factors that can impact one’s recall: the composition of the search string, the indexes searched, the size of the database, and the “appropriateness” of the database. Adding terms to the search string should increase recall if the terms are relevant. The amount of text in the index field searched is also related to recall. When an index field contains a lot of text like full text or abstract, one should expect a search in that field to get a higher recall than a search in index fields that contain less text, like the subject and title fields. It follows then, that the larger field of text one searches (i.e. full text or abstract), the fewer terms one needs in order to extract a manageable number of records to browse. Title or abstract searches might require a more complex search with multiple variant terms for each component of the information need in order to get sufficient recall. Even so, searching various indexes is useful because different searches can yield relevant records that are not found in the other indexes.

## Selecting Articles

From the index searches performed above, I chose articles by looking closely at the records and full text of documents that seemed to fit the information need. I used the title and

subject index searches since the recall was much lower than the larger index field searches. An article was chosen for further consideration if it had the terms **grade inflation** and **education**, synonyms of those terms, or related terms to those concepts in the title or the subject field. The focus of the study also needed to be a US institution of higher learning, as clarified by our class questions and discussions. There were several relevant records that needed to be eliminated because the university from which the data was collected was in Europe or Australia. Others were eliminated because the study was focused on the high school level rather than the university or college level. It was at this point that I also eliminated Academic Search Complete as potential database because the recall was too high for the full text and abstract searches and many of the records in the title and subject searches could also be found in ERIC or Business Source Complete. Between those ERIC and Business Source Complete, I was able to identify 13 records for additional inspection (see Appendix, Table 2).

## ProQuest

### Choosing search terms

As we learned in earlier assignments, ProQuest offers multiple thesauri and controlled vocabulary in which to find broader, narrower, and related subject terms for your search. We also learned that the terms found in ProQuest database thesauri do not necessarily match terms found in the same database thesauri on the EBSCO*host* platform. Therefore, I needed to browse the ProQuest thesauri to see if the variant search terms I used for EBSCO*host* would still be relevant. For this information need, I chose to search the general ProQuest thesaurus and the ERIC

thesaurus, which is an educational database. One can see the various terms discovered in browsing through the ProQuest thesaurus in Figures 41 through 49. Of particular interest might be: **academic achievement**, **academic grading**, **academic standards**, **higher education**, and **educational evaluation**.

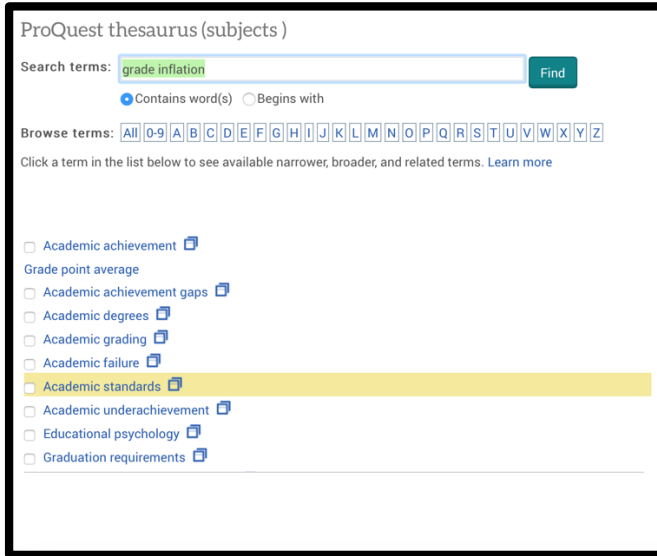


Figure 41: Search in ProQuest thesaurus for *grade inflation* yields additional terms *academic achievement*, *academic grading*, and *academic standards*.

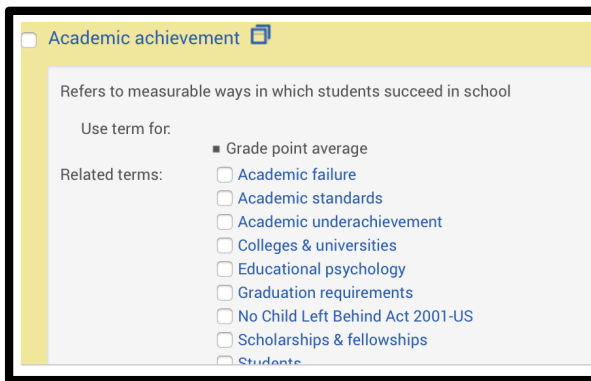


Figure 42: Related terms to *academic achievement* in ProQuest thesaurus.

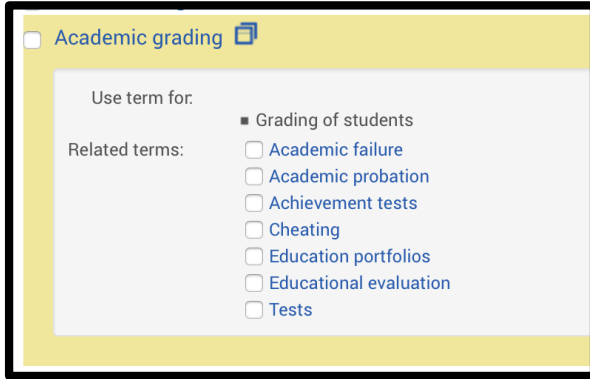


Figure 43: Related terms to *academic grading* in ProQuest thesaurus.

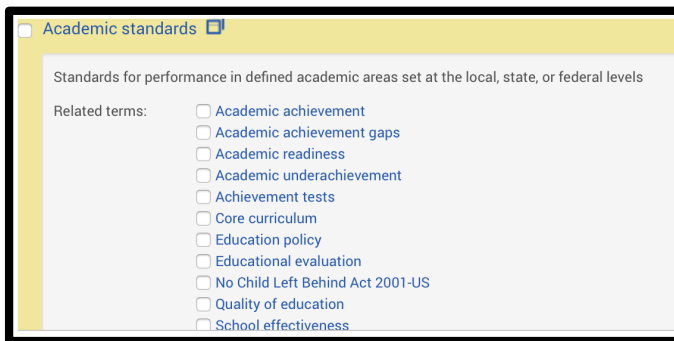


Figure 44: Related terms to *academic standards* in ProQuest thesaurus.

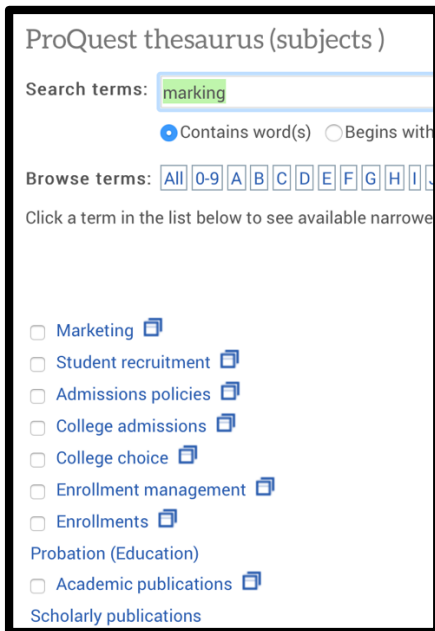


Figure 45: The term *marking* is also not recognized in the ProQuest thesaurus.

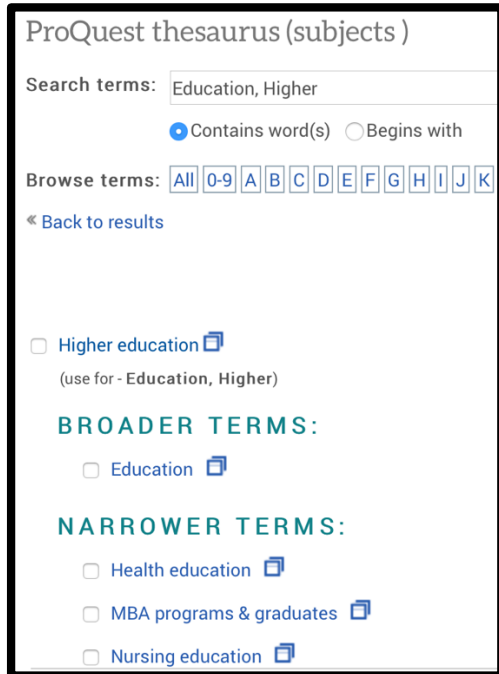


Figure 46: Broader and narrower terms for *higher education* in ProQuest thesaurus.

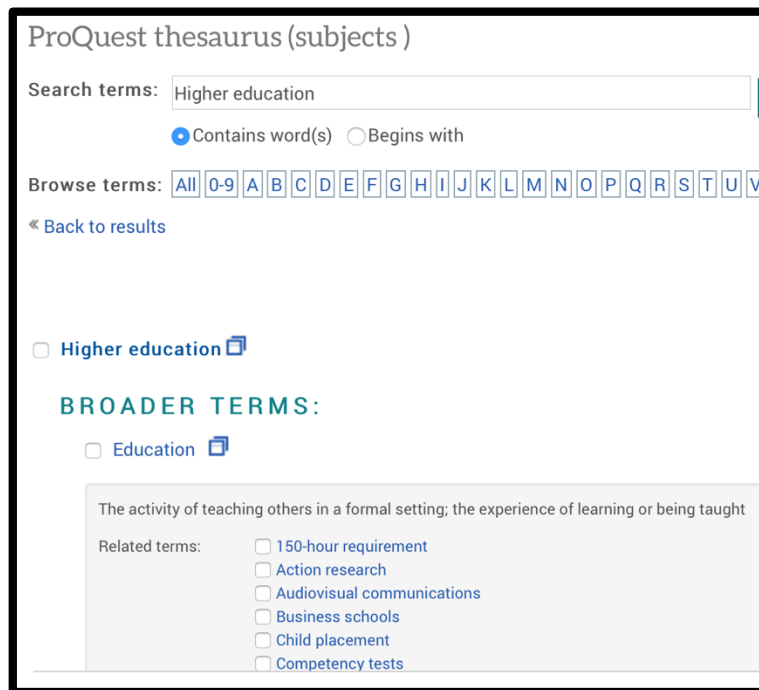


Figure 47: Related terms to *education* in ProQuest thesaurus (the term *educational evaluation* is not shown but may be relevant).



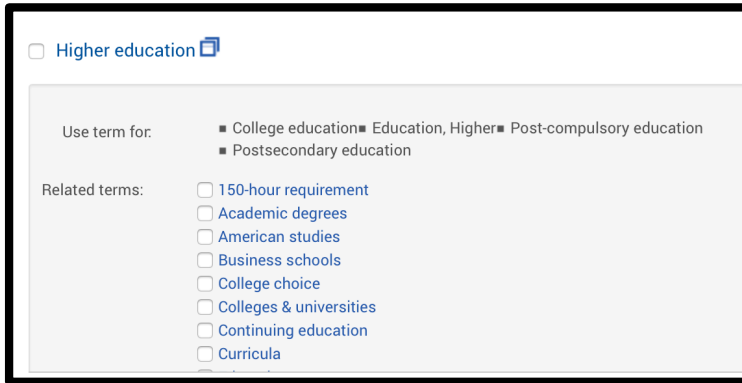


Figure 48: Related terms for *higher education* in ProQuest thesaurus (term *universities* is not shown, but relevant).

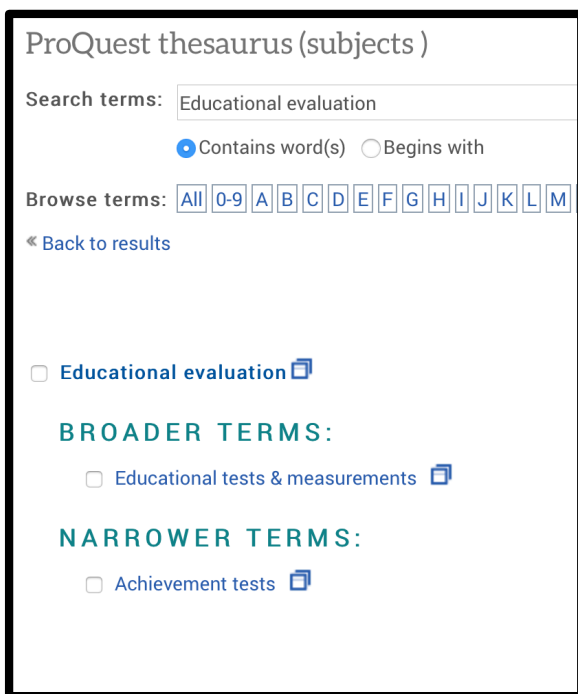


Figure 49: Broader and narrower terms for *educational evaluation* in ProQuest thesaurus.

Next, I browsed the ProQuest ERIC thesaurus, as seen in Figures 50 through 55. I didn't find any additional terms that I had not already considered relevant from my thesaurus browsing in EBSCOhost.

ERIC thesaurus (subjects)

Search terms:

Contains word(s)  Begins with

Browse terms:

Click a term in the list below to see available narrower



Grade Inflation 

Figure 50: *Grade inflation* is a recognized term in ProQuest ERIC thesaurus.

Grade Inflation 

Use term for:

- Inflated Grades

Related terms:

- Grade Point Average
- Scoring
- Grading
- Academic Standards

Figure 51: Related terms for *grade inflation* in ProQuest ERIC thesaurus.


ERIC thesaurus (subjects)

Search terms:

Contains word(s)  Begins with


Browse terms:

« Back to results

Grading 

(use for - Marking (Scholastic))

**BROADER TERMS:**

Achievement Rating 

**NARROWER TERMS:**



Pass Fail Grading 

Figure 52: The term **marking**, recognized in EBSCOhost, is not used in ProQuest ERIC thesaurus.

Grading 

Use term for:  Pass No Credit Grading  Pass No Record Grading  Marking (Scholastic)  Credit No Credit Grading (2004)  Contract Grading (2004)

Related terms:

- Grade Prediction
- Informal Assessment
- Summative Evaluation
- Grade Inflation
- Writing Evaluation
- Grades (Scholastic)
- Student Evaluation
- Educational Testing
- Teacher Student Relationship

Figure 53: Related terms for **grading** in ProQuest ERIC thesaurus.

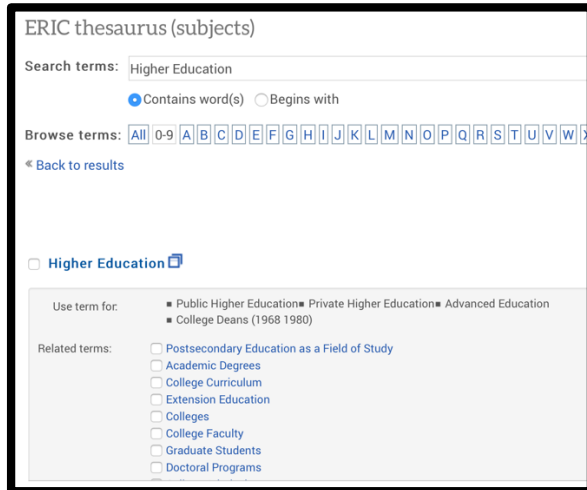


Figure 54: Related terms for *higher education* in ProQuest ERIC thesaurus.

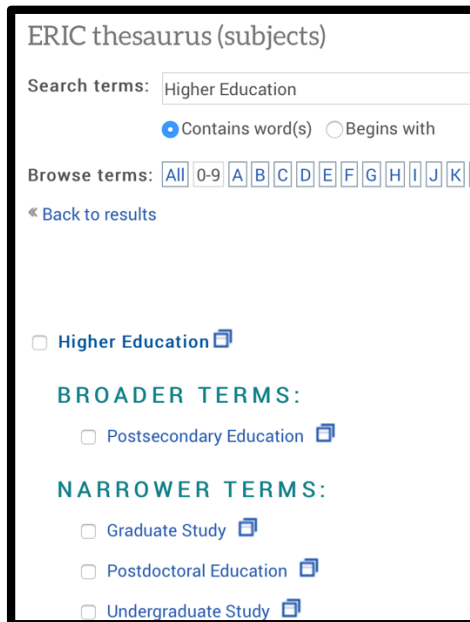


Figure 55: Broader and narrower terms for *higher education* in the ProQuest ERIC thesaurus.

## Search Variants

Finding no new significant terms to add to my search string, I was ready to begin my ProQuest search. As I typed in **grade inflation** into the advanced search box, I was immediately given additional prompts that I may use later if my search strings prove ineffectual (see Figure 56). However, my first search seemed productive, though the recall of 366 was a bit large (see Figure 57). The results page also suggested related searches that I could perform. This is a helpful feature of ProQuest that we discovered in earlier assignments (see Figure 58). At first check of the Database facet limiter, it appeared that the ABI/Inform Complete Database would be the best database from which to cull our articles for this information need but a recall of 315 articles was too large to scan for relevancy (see Figure 59). I refined my search and was able to get a recall that was small enough for me to evaluate which database was best suited for the information need. Of the 41 records retrieved by ABI/INFORM Complete, 16 seemed worth saving as possibilities for the information need (see Figure 60 and Figure 61). It is interesting to note that ProQuest is taking away some functionality that could have been important for this particular information request: the ability to search by and save Figures and Tables (see Figure 62). Since the vice-chancellor indicated her preference for articles with figures and tables, it would have been helpful to be able to search for those features separately and then determine to which articles they were linked. EBSCO*host* offers a similar feature with its image quick view search limiter that I found to be helpful in my searches on that platform. Unfortunately, in order to find articles with figures and tables in ProQuest, each potential article must be reviewed individually. Retaining this functionality would certainly be a point that I would bring up in a

vendor negotiation but I wonder if the reason ProQuest is suspending this feature is because of the difficulties and inconsistencies of indexing graphs and tables.

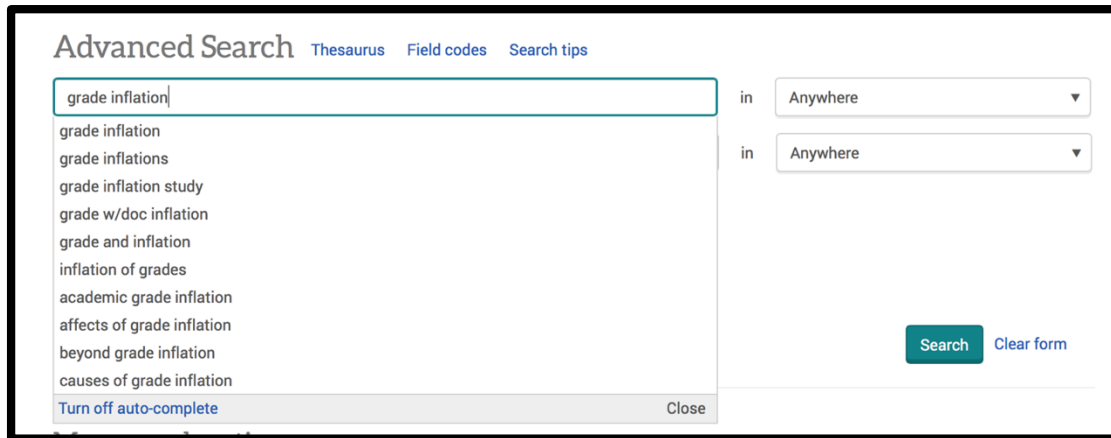


Figure 56: ProQuest auto-prompt suggests additional terms to be used later, if necessary.

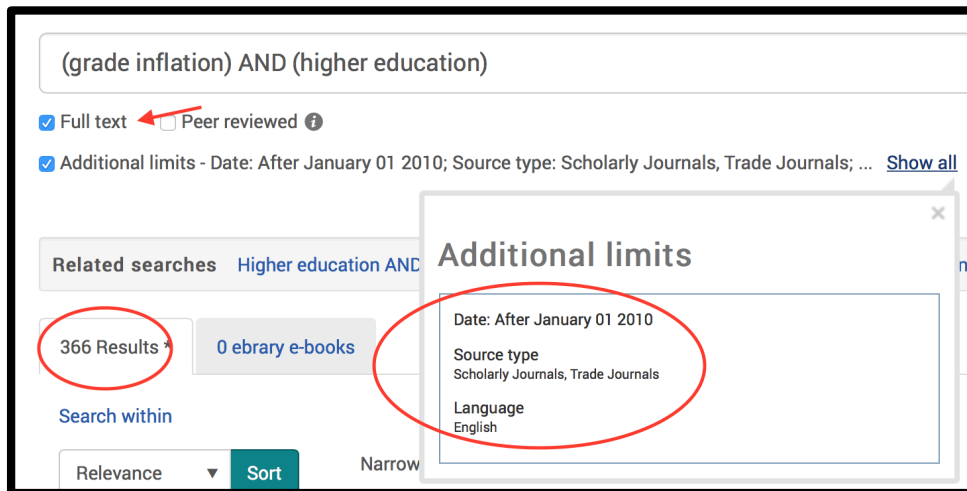


Figure 57: Initial search in ProQuest across all databases.

## Related searches ✕

Click a link below to search for documents on the related search.

Higher education AND Inflation   Higher education   Higher education AND Colleges & universities   Higher education AND Academic grading   Higher education AND Academic Achievement   Higher education AND College students   Higher education AND Education   Higher education AND Minority & ethnic groups   Higher education AND School administration   Higher education AND Teaching   Education AND Inflation

Figure 58: Even more additional subject term searches suggested by ProQuest.

## Database ✕

	Include	Exclude	Database	Count ▾
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		ABI/INFORM Complete	315
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		ABI/INFORM Global	278
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Accounting & Tax	86
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Banking Information Source	58
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		ABI/INFORM Trade & Industry	49
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		ProQuest Entrepreneurship	17

Cancel   Apply

Figure 59: ABI/INFORM Complete appears to be the best database for our information need.

("grade inflation" OR grade NEAR/4 inflation) AND (higher education) AND ftany(yes) AND  
 stype.exact("Scholarly Journals" OR "Trade Journals") AND la.exact("English") AND (at.exact("Article" OR  
 "Feature" OR "Case Study") AND aloc.exact("United States-US"))

Full text    Peer reviewed ⓘ

Additional limits - Date: After January 01 2010; Source type: Scholarly Journals, Trade Journals; ... [Show all](#)

Related searches: Higher education AND colleges & universities [View all >](#)

**46 Results**   Search within   Search

Relevance ▼   **Sort**    Select 1-20   0 Selected items   Brief view | Details

1 DO COMMUNITY COLLEGE FULL-TIME AND ADJUNCT FACULTIES DIFFER IN THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF RIGOR IN ASSIGNING GRADES?

Figure 60: A refined search across all databases yields more manageable recall.

Database

- ABI/INFORM Complete (41)
- ABI/INFORM Global (40)
- Accounting & Tax (6)
- ProQuest Entrepreneurship (4)
- ABI/INFORM Trade & Industry (2)
- More options...

Figure 61: Of the 41 articles retrieved by the ABI/INFORM Complete database, 16 seemed to be relevant.



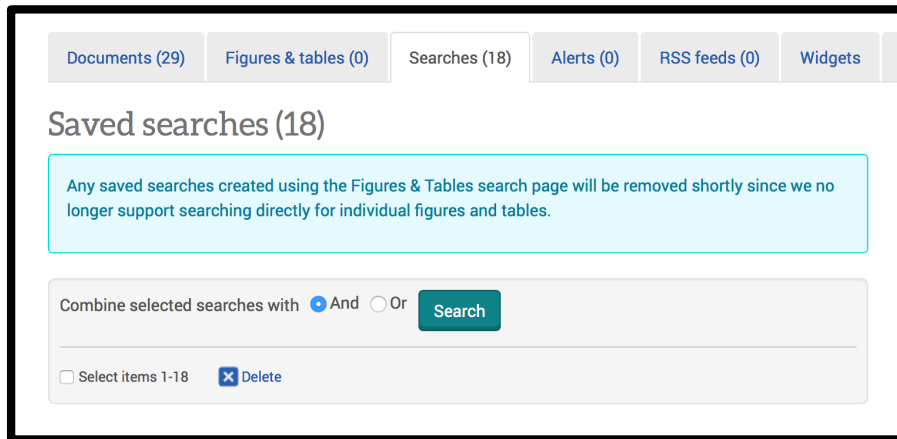


Figure 62: Unfortunate loss of functionality in ProQuest.

Though the result set seemed to identify ABI/INFORM Complete as the most appropriate database for the information need, I also chose to search the ERIC database as well, knowing that ERIC focuses on topics related to education and knowing that I was able to get many relevant articles from the EBSCOhost ERIC database. I used slightly different search string than the one I used in EBSCOhost because I was curious to see if similar records would be retrieved with a somewhat varied search strategy (see Appendix D).

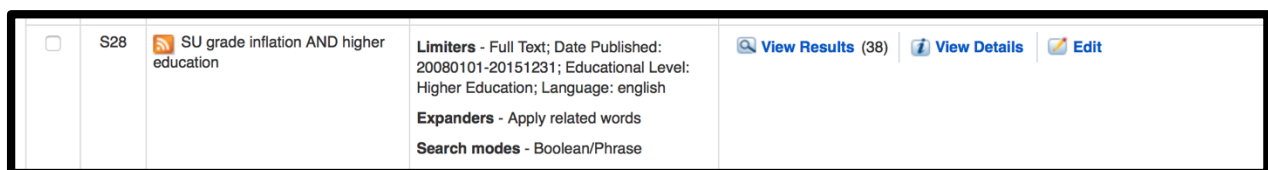


Figure 63: Final search in EBSCOhost ERIC extending back two additional years.

Based on preliminary scanning of the records that I had initially saved for further consideration, I noticed that several articles had cited articles pertaining to **grade inflation** and **education** that were written in 2008 and 2009. Therefore, to get a few more relevant articles, I expanded the search back two years (see Figure 63). I chose to do this final search in EBSCOhost ERIC because most of the cited articles came from education journals and I was comfortable with the

EBSCO*host* platform. From that revised search, I was able to pick several more potential records.

## Selecting articles

I used the same criteria to initially select articles in ProQuest that I did in EBSCO*host*. When recall was small, like in the title index search, I would scan the entire list of records retrieved. When recall was large, like in the abstract search, I would further reduce the number of records to scan by using subject facet limiters (see Figure 64). I noticed that, most often, the most relevant records would be retrieved by a title index search, though this was not always the case. Regardless of the result set from which I chose them, I would save prospective documents to My Research for further analysis. I used the notes features in ProQuest's My Research to note particular strengths and weaknesses of a particular record and to remind myself which articles I felt were highly relevant (see Figure 65).

The screenshot shows a search results page in ProQuest. On the left, there is a sidebar with a bar chart at the top labeled '2010-2016 (years)'. Below the chart is an 'Update' button and a text input field 'Enter a specific date range'. Underneath, there are two main sections: 'Subject' and 'Classification'. The 'Subject' section is expanded, showing a list of subject terms: 'academic grading (28)', 'colleges & universities (10)', 'studies (9)', and 'school boards (6)'. The 'Classification' section is also visible. The main search results area on the right displays a list of documents. Three results are visible, each with a radio button for selection. The first result is 'Public schools graded, most get Cs' by Garrett, Crystal, published in McClatchy - Tribune Business News on 06 Feb 2015. The second result is 'Keresztes' road to the interim superintendent post has been a bumpy ride' by Williams, Deidre, published in McClatchy - Tribune Business News on 16 June 2014. The third result is 'Yale Has a Retro Plan to Push a Tenth of its MBAs to the Bottom of the Class' by Lorenzetti, Laura, published in Business Week on 7-Apr 13, 2014. The fourth result is partially visible: 'SHAREHOLDER ALERT: Pomerantz Law Firm Investigates Claims On Behalf of Investors of Apollo Education Group, Inc. - APOL'.

Figure 64: Using Subject facet limiters to further reduce recall in ProQuest.

The screenshot shows the 'Folder: All documents (48)' interface in ProQuest My Research. At the top, there is a dropdown menu set to 'All Documents'. Below this is a toolbar with a checked checkbox for 'Select items 1-20' and several action icons: 'Add to folder', 'Delete', 'Cite', 'Email', 'Print', and 'More'. The main area displays a list of documents. The first document is selected with a checked checkbox and a trash icon. The document title is 'Factors Related to the Likelihood of Grade Inflation at Community Colleges' by Heulett, Steven Talmadge, 2013. It has 95 references. Below the title, there are links for 'Abstract/Details', 'Preview - PDF (166 KB)', and 'Full text - PDF (863 KB)', along with an 'Order a copy' button. A 'Notes' section contains the text 'Dissertation but HIGHLY relevant'. Below the notes, it shows 'In folders: grade inflation' and 'Saved: November 19 2015'. At the bottom of the document card, there are 'Delete' and 'Add to folder' buttons.

Figure 65: Notes feature in ProQuest My Research.

## Final Selection and Ranking of the Records

When evaluating records, I determined that an article fit the information need, based on the following criteria. First, the article had to be primarily about the causes and/or methods of grade inflation at the university or college level at a US institution of higher learning. The article had to be written in English and have been published in the last 5-7 years. It must have been available in full text and ideally should have included graphs, tables, or charts, as per the vice chancellor's request. I did, however, include some highly relevant articles that did not contain graphs, tables, or charts if I determined that the text was particularly relevant. Only articles that contained the above criteria made into my list of final selection. In that final group, I looked for helpful citations at the end of each article and considered their presence an asset. As mentioned earlier, I used the notes feature of the ProQuest platform to note strengths and weaknesses of each article. Evaluating articles in EBSCO*host* was a little more difficult. Adding notes to each EBSCO*host* record was possible, but notes were not visible in the brief or detailed record, as they are in ProQuest (see Figure 66). This meant a lot of extra clicks to go back and try to remember if an article was relevant or not. However, the detailed records in EBSCO*host* are robust, and combined with the preview feature, give the user a lot of bibliographic information without having to go to the full text (see Figure 67). Some information in ProQuest, like number of pages of the document, is much harder to access. As mentioned earlier, I created the table to decide relevancy by my own ranking which includes 22 records from both ProQuest and EBSCO*host* platforms (see Appendix B).

Notes (1) + New Note

1. no tables or charts. extensive history of grading in US. last part of article is most relevant. very relevant.

[Print List](#)

### Making the Grade: A History of the A-F Marking Scheme

**Author(s):** Schneider, Jack; Hutt, Ethan

**Source:** Journal of Curriculum Studies, v46 n2 p201-224 2014. 24 pp.

**Peer Reviewed:** Yes

**ISSN:** 0022-0272

**Descriptors:** Grades (Scholastic), Grading, Educational History, Educational Change, Report Cards, Student Evaluation, Student Motivation, Grade Inflation, Foreign Countries, Elementary Secondary Education, Higher Education, Postsecondary Education

**Identifiers:** Europe, United States

**Abstract:** This article provides a historical interpretation of one of the defining features of modern schooling: grades. As a central element of schools, grades--their origins, uses and evolution--provide a window into the tensions at the heart of building a national public school system in the United States. We argue that grades began as an intimate communication tool among teachers, parents,

Print  
E-mail  
Save  
Cite  
Export  
Create Note  
Permalink  
Share

Figure 66: Adding notes to records in EBSCOhost is not as user friendly as in ProQuest.

### Making the Grade: A History of the A-F Marking Scheme

**Author(s):** Schneider, Jack; Hutt, Ethan

**Source:** Journal of Curriculum Studies, v46 n2 p201-224 2014. 24 pp.

**Peer Reviewed:** Yes

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**Abstract:** This article provides a historical interpretation of one of the defining features of modern schooling: grades. As a central element of schools, grades--their origins, uses and evolution--provide a window into the tensions at the heart of building a national public school system in the United States. We argue that grades began as an intimate communication tool among teachers, parents, and students used largely to inform and instruct. But as reformers worked to develop a national school system in the late nineteenth century, they saw grades as useful tools in an organizational rather than pedagogical enterprise--tools that would facilitate movement, communication and coordination. Reformers placed a premium on readily interpretable and necessarily abstract grading systems. This shift in the importance of grades as an external rather than internal communication device required a concurrent shift in the meaning of grades--the meaning and nuance of the local context was traded for the uniformity and fungibility of more portable forms.

**Abstractor:** As Provided

**Number of References:** 112

**Number of Pages:** 24

**Publication Type:** Journal Articles; Reports - Evaluative

**Availability:** Routledge. Available from: Taylor & Francis, Ltd. 325 Chestnut Street Suite 800, Philadelphia, PA 19106. Tel: 800-354-1420; Fax: 215-625-2940; Web site: <http://www.tandf.co.uk.eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/journals>

**URL:** <http://dx.doi.org.eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/10.1080/00220272.2013.790480>

**Journal Code:** JAN2015

**Entry Date:** 2014

**Accession Number:** EJ1029383

**Database:** ERIC

Figure 67: Ample information in the detailed record in EBSCOhost.

## Formatting and Saving Records and Search Histories

In the EBSCO*host* platform, the best way to save and format records for sharing with users was with the Save Manager tool from the tool menu (see Figure 68). I could select all of the articles that made my final cut and click the save tool and then copy and paste the resulting text box into a word document. For each record, I chose to save the Standard Field Format which includes: the brief record, the abstract, and the URL link to the document (see Figure 68 and Appendix C). Saving search histories in EBSCO*host* was not as easy. One can not save or print or email search histories from one's saved search folder. The best way that I found to share a search history was to retrieve the searches of interest from my saved searches folder, select "Print Search History," copy/paste the search histories into a new word document, and then format the table as desired (see Figure 69 and Appendix D). A more efficient method would be preferred!

Saving ProQuest documents required a similar process as described in the paragraph above for EBSCO*host*. After selecting the records to save, one can click the More tab on the menu bar and then choose the format by which to save the records (see Figure 70). Then one can either choose a preformatted selection of bibliographic information or create custom fields as per the user's request (see Figure 71). I chose the following fields based on the information requested by the user and some additional fields that I found helpful when evaluating and the records: abstract, author, database, number of pages, publication info, publication title, publication year, subject terms, title, and URL (see Figure 72 and Appendix C). To save a search history, one has to view recent searches (see Figure 73) and then select the preferred export format (see Figure 74). I felt that text format would probably be the simplest and would allow

one to copy, paste and reformat the text (see Figure 75), but the PDF format was presented in an appealing way (see Figure 76). RTF format would have been useful if one intended to copy and paste the search into ProQuest in a future search, as ProQuest advertises, but when I attempted to export my search history in that format, I only received garbled code (see Figure 77). A word of caution: If one intends to save search histories, do so frequently and always before walking away from the computer. If the ProQuest session times out, the user must recreate the search history in order to share it. Saved ProQuest search histories are shown in Appendix D.

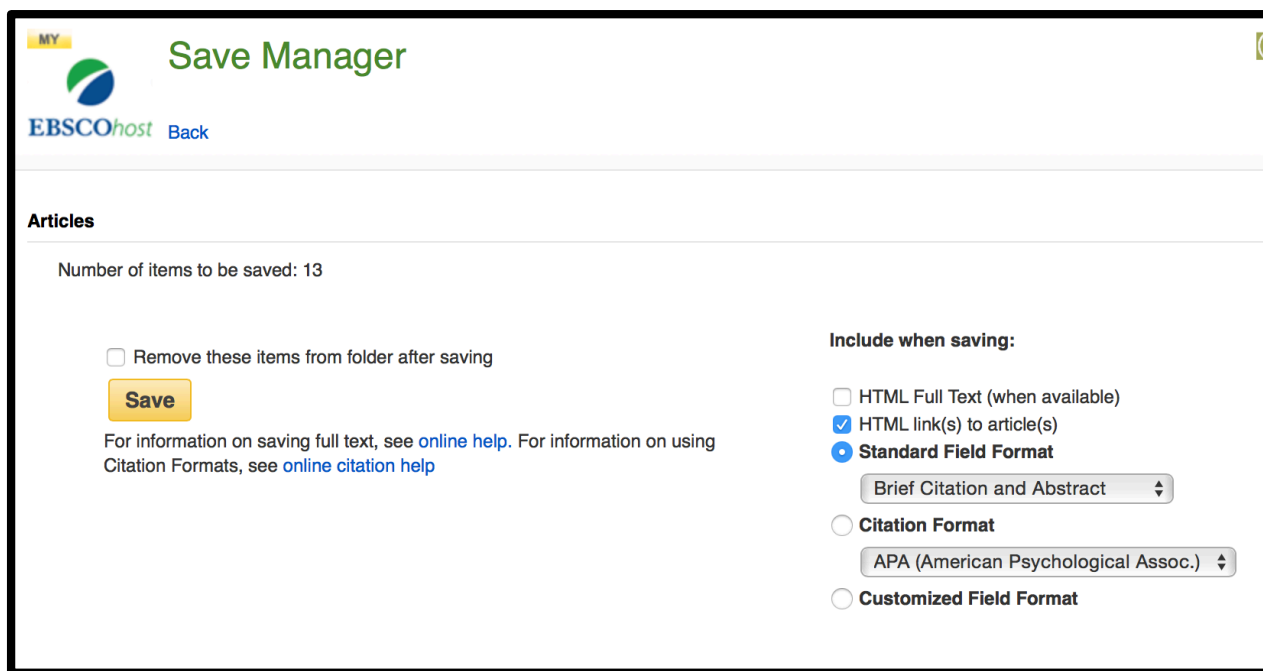


Figure 68: The Save Manager tool in EBSCOhost.

### Search History/Alerts

[Print Search History](#) | [Retrieve Searches](#) | [Retrieve Alerts](#) | [Save Searches / Alerts](#)

Select / deselect all | **Search with AND** | **Search with OR** | **Delete Searches**

	Search ID#	Search Terms	Search Options	Actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	S7	TI ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND TI ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	<b>Limiters</b> - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231  <b>Expanders</b> - Apply related words  <b>Search modes</b> - Boolean/Phrase	<input type="button" value="Rerun"/>   <input type="button" value="V"/>

Figure 69: Saving Search Histories to share with users in EBSCOhost.

Search | Advanced Search | About

Documents (48) | Searches (106) | Alerts (0) | RSS feeds (0) | Widgets | Account

### Folder: All documents (48)

All Documents

Select items 1-48 | [Add to folder](#) | [Delete](#) | [Cite](#) | [Email](#) | [Print](#) | [More](#)

RefWorks  
 EasyBib  
 HTML  
 PDF  
 RIS (works with EndNote, Citavi, etc.)  
 RTF (works with Microsoft Word)  
 Text only  
 XLS (works with Microsoft Excel)

1 **Factors Related to the Likelihood of Grade Inflation at Community Colleges**  
 Heulett, Steven Talmadge. 2013.  
 References (95)  
[Abstract/Details](#) | [Preview - PDF \(166 KB\)](#) | [Full text - PDF \(863 KB\)](#)  
[Order a copy](#)  
**Notes:** Dissertation but HIGHLY relevant  
**In folders:** grade inflation  
**Saved:** November 19 2015  
[Delete](#) | [Add to folder](#)

2 **Performance-related Funding of Universities: Does More Competition Lead to** | [Preview](#)

[Manage Folders](#)  
[New folder](#)

Figure 70: Choosing formatting for saving bibliographic information in ProQuest.



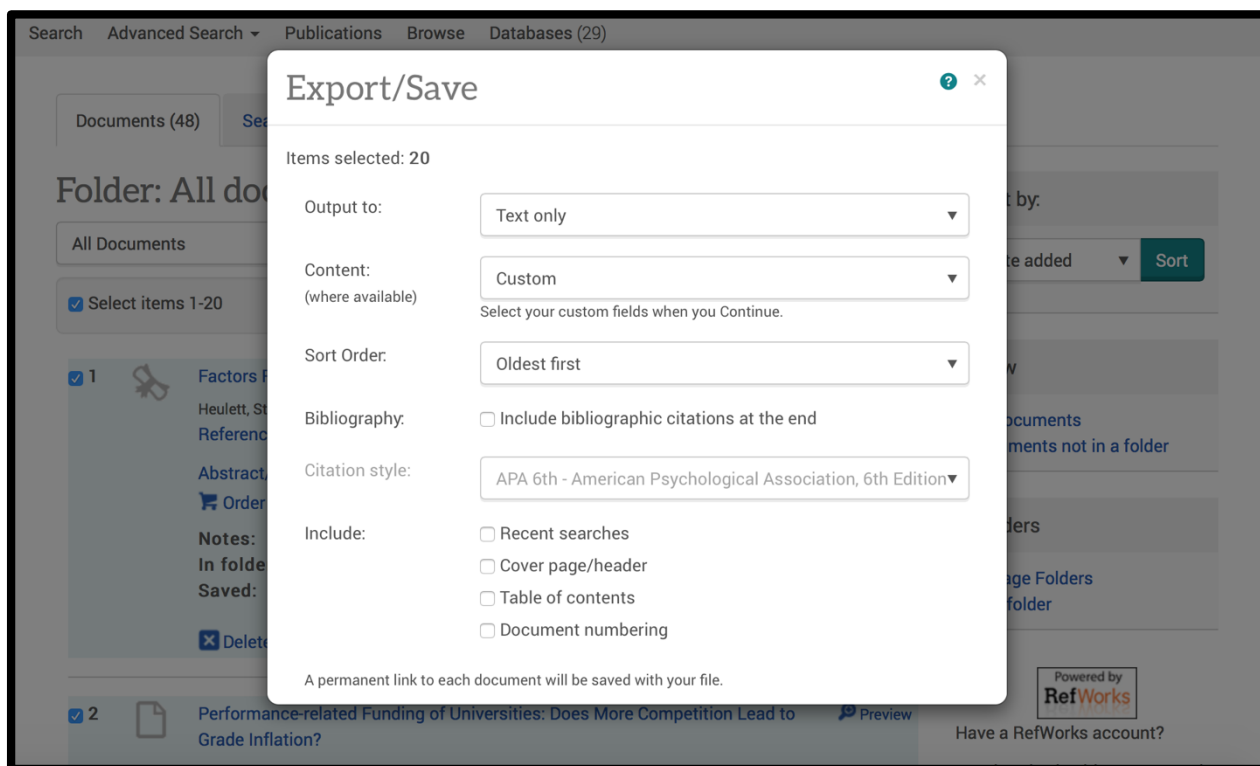


Figure 71: Choosing format and content for saving ProQuest records.

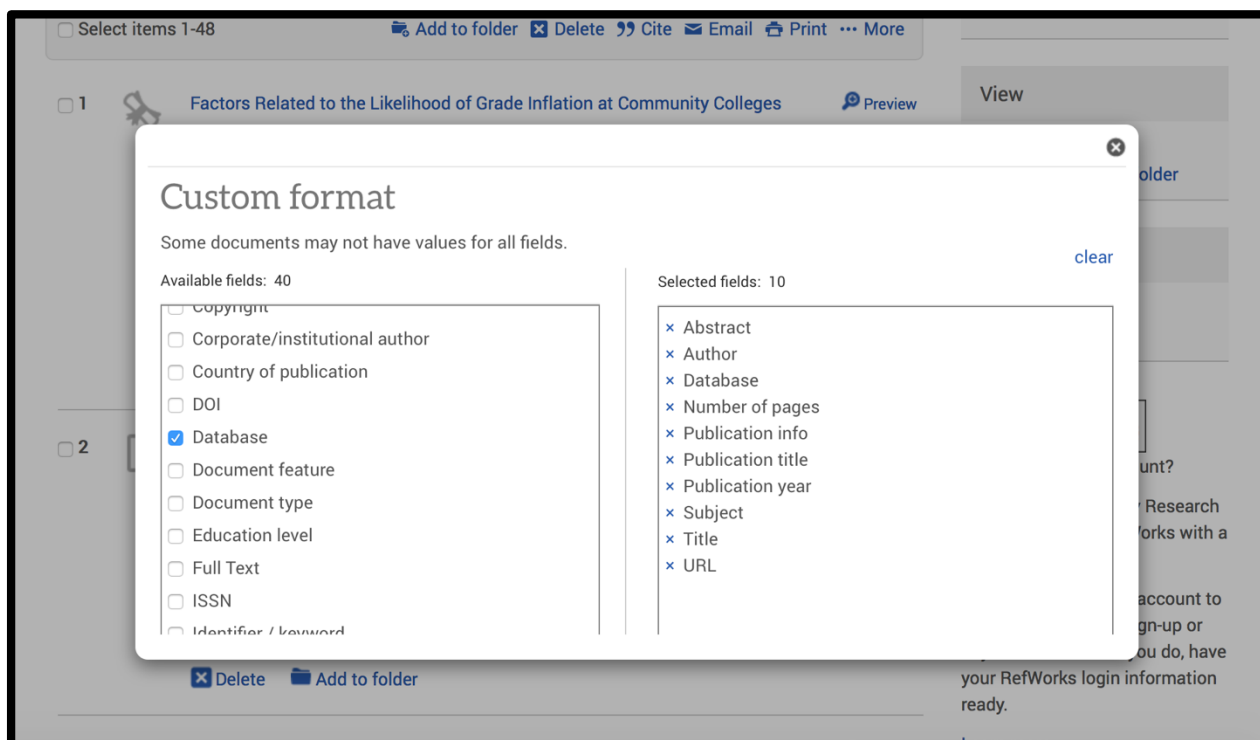


Figure 72: Custom fields chosen for the ProQuest records, as requested by the user.

ERIC

Basic Search   Advanced Search ▾   About

ti(((grade OR grading OR grade inflation OR grade point average OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*))) AND ti(("higher education" OR university OR college)) AND ericftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND lv("higher education")

Peer reviewed ⓘ   [Modify search](#)   [Save search/alert ▾](#)

Additional limits - Date: After January 01 2010; Language: English; ... [Show all](#)

Did you mean: ti(((grade OR grading OR "grade inflat\* OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenient\* OR distort\*))) AND ti(("higher education" OR university OR college)) AND la.exact("English") AND lv("higher education")

- Save search
- Create alert
- Create RSS feed
- View recent searches**

4 Results

Figure 73: Saving Search Histories in ProQuest.

## Recent Searches

To save a search, select **Save search** from the **Actions** menu. [Learn more](#)

Combine searches:  [Search](#) [Search tips](#)

Examples: 1 AND 3 or "6"  
(1 AND 3) OR (1 AND 2)  
3 NOT treatment

Items selected: 0 [Delete](#) [Save](#) | [Show all details](#) | [Export all searches ▾](#) [Saved search](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Set ▾	Search	ases	Results
<input type="checkbox"/>	S7	⊕ ((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat* OR standards OR evaluat* OR grading OR lenien* OR distort*)) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND la.exact("English") ✓ Limits applied	FORM ete	16,569*
<input type="checkbox"/>	S6	⊕ ab((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat* OR standards OR evaluat* OR grading OR lenien* OR distort*)) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND ftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") ✓ Limits applied	ABI/INFORM Complete	1,466*
<input type="checkbox"/>	S5	⊕ ab((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat* OR standards OR evaluat* OR grading OR lenien* OR distort*)) AND ab(("higher education" OR university OR college)) AND ftany(yes) AND	ABI/INFORM Complete	399*

PDF

RTF

HTML

**Text only (no images or text formatting)**

If you want to copy & paste your search into ProQuest in the future, choose RTF format.

Figure 74: Choosing formats to export search histories in ProQuest.

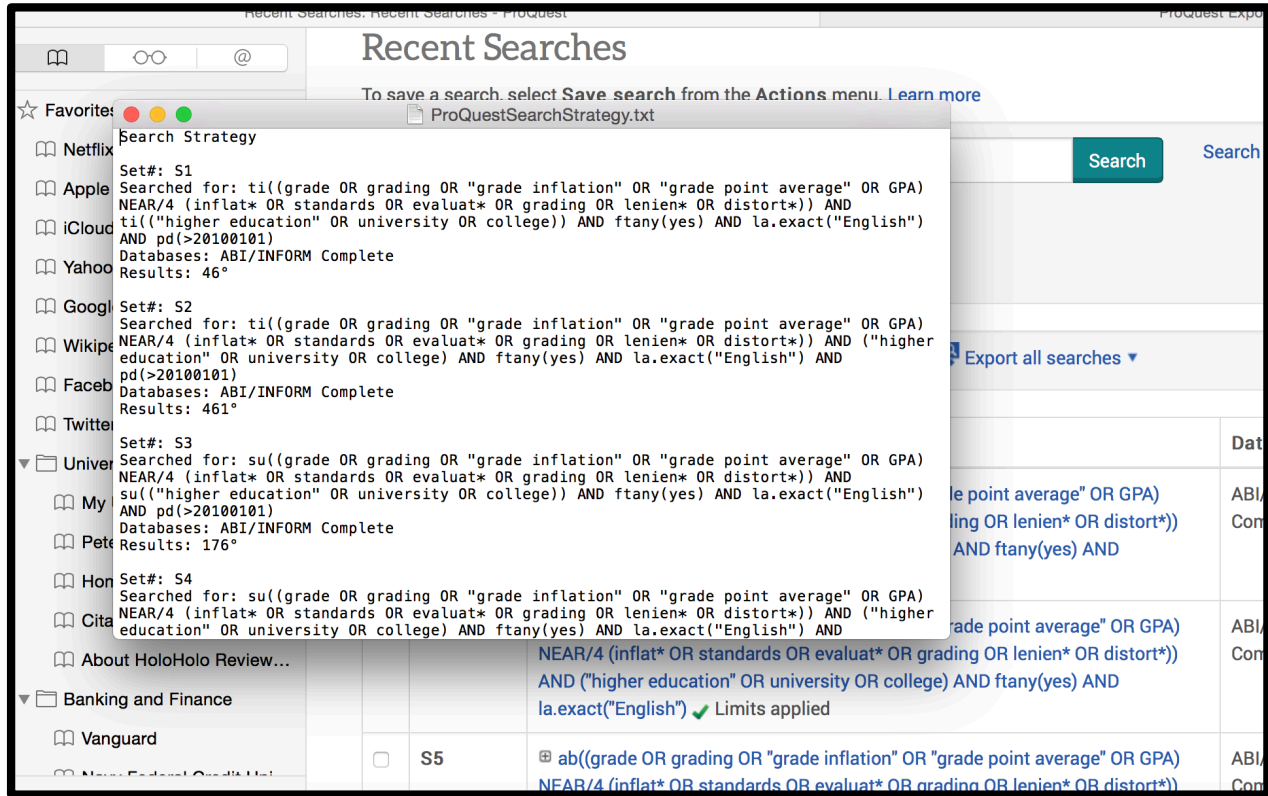


Figure 75: Text format for Search Histories in ProQuest.

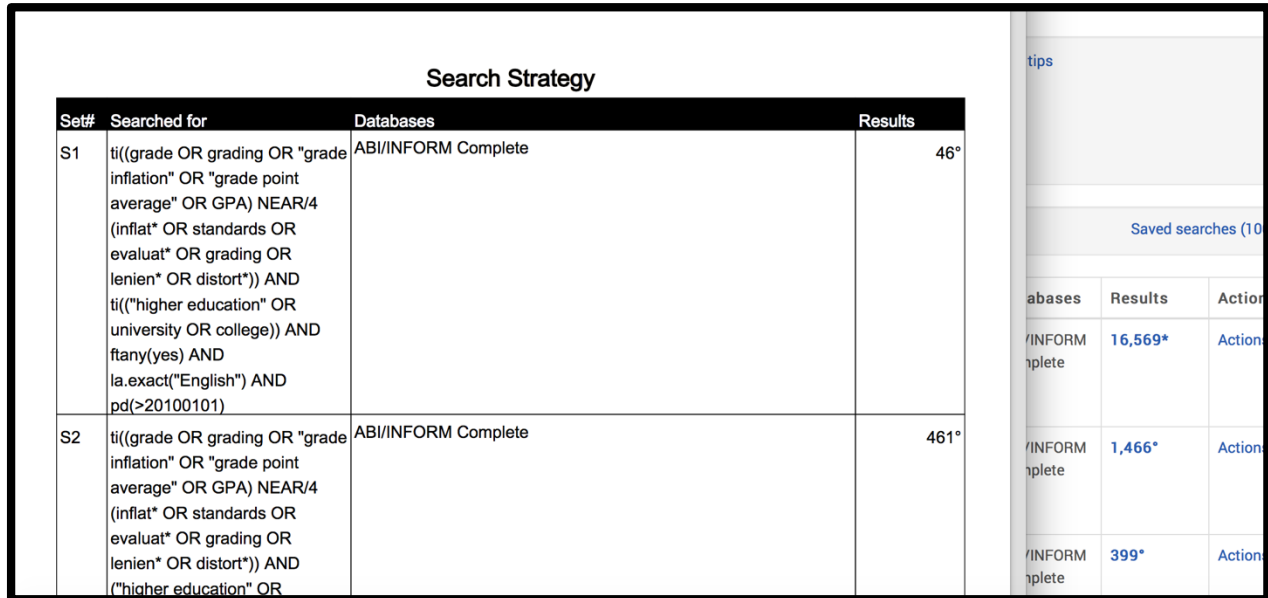


Figure 76: PDF format for Search Histories in ProQuest.

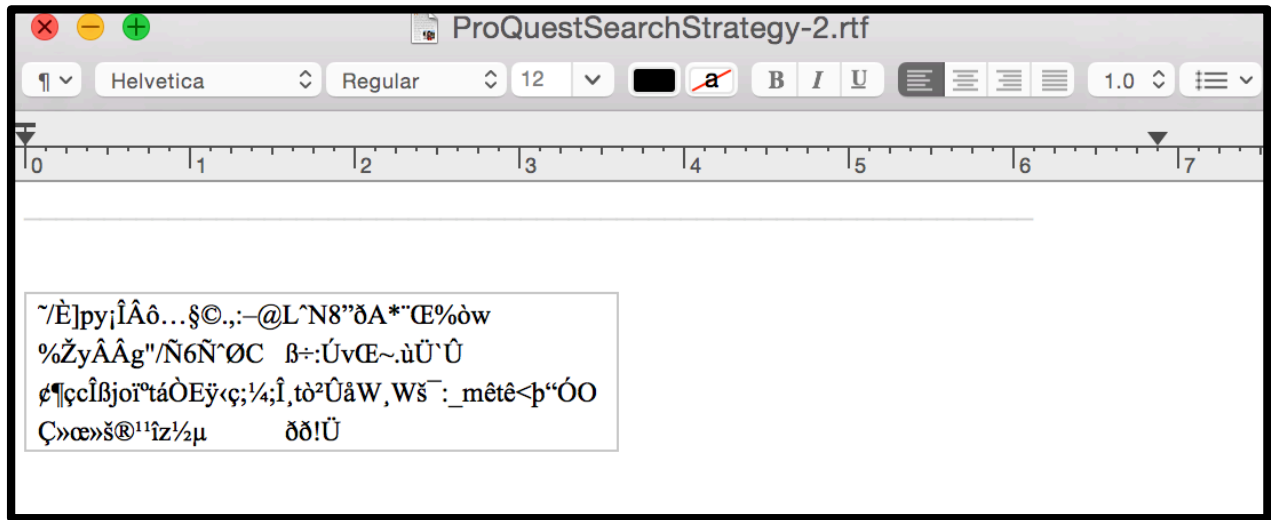


Figure 77: RTF format for Search Histories in ProQuest.

## E-mailing Records and Search Histories

The final step was formatting the bibliographic information for the records and search histories and emailing them to the user (or, in this case, myself). Emailing the brief citation, abstract and link for the 13 EBSCOhost articles was easy using the Email Manager Tool (see Figure 70). In my mail server, the records were delivered both as individual emails and as a combined email, which was interesting. Other mail servers may not behave in the same way. In ProQuest, one can email records with predetermined bibliographic information (e.g. brief citation plus abstract), as in Figure 78 or one can set up custom fields to be included in the exported text file (see Figure 79). I chose the latter option for the 9 documents from the ProQuest databases, making sure to include all of the information requested by the user (see Figure 80).

Neither EBSCOhost nor ProQuest had a satisfactory method for emailing search histories. In order to email search histories in either platform, I had to follow the steps for saving search histories described in the previous section and create a new word document for the

histories I needed to save. EBSCOhost search histories were easier to retrieve since one could save histories to My EBSCOhost and email them at later times. And while you can save individual searches in ProQuest, one can only save a series of search histories during an active session of searching. This is critical information for a searcher to know so that one can avoid having to recreate a series of searches for the user.

The screenshot displays the 'E-mail Manager' interface in EBSCOhost. At the top left, there is a 'MY' tab and the EBSCOhost logo with a 'Back' link. The main heading is 'E-mail Manager'. Below this, the section is titled 'Articles' and shows 'Number of items to be e-mailed: 33'. The form includes several input fields: 'E-mail from:' with the value 'ephost@epnet.com', 'E-mail to:' (empty), 'Subject:' (empty), and 'Comments:' (a large text area). To the right, under 'Include when sending:', there are three radio button options: 'HTML Full Text (when available)', 'PDF as separate attachment (when available)' (checked), and 'Standard Field Format' (selected). Below these are two dropdown menus: the first is set to 'Brief Citation and Abstract' and the second is set to 'ABNT (Brazilian National Standards)'. At the bottom of the form, there are radio buttons for 'Format:' with 'Rich Text' selected and 'Plain Text' unselected. A yellow 'Send' button is located at the bottom right of the form area.

Figure 78: Choosing the format for emailing records in EBSCOhost.

**Email** Help ? ✕

Items selected: **9**  
 Deselect items when done

Content:  
 (where available) Citation, abstract, indexing ▼

Bibliography:  Include bibliographic citations at the end

Citation style: APA 6th - American Psychological Association, 6th Edition ▼

Include:

Recent searches       Cover page/header  
 Table of contents       Document numbering

Email addresses: harr@hawaii.edu

Figure 79: Choosing the format for emailing records in ProQuest.

**Custom format** ✕

Some documents may not have values for all fields. clear

Available fields: 40

- Abstract
- Accession number
- Author
- Classification
- Copyright
- Corporate/institutional author
- Country of publication
- DOI
- Database
- Document feature

Selected fields: 8

- ✕ Abstract
- ✕ Author
- ✕ Database
- ✕ Number of pages
- ✕ Publication info
- ✕ Subject
- ✕ Title
- ✕ URL

Figure 80: Choosing custom fields for emailing bibliographic information in ProQuest.

## Conclusion

After the searches were completed and the results finalized and formatted, I went back to my original OneSearch advanced search to see how many records that I ultimately chose were also retrieved by OneSearch. I found that 2 records matched with the records I ultimately picked from the ProQuest and EBSCO*host* databases. This result leads one to question the value of using OneSearch as a discovery tool. One could argue that OneSearch's weaknesses stem from not having a controlled vocabulary source for more precise searching and from not being able to search all of the databases to which UH subscribes.

Another observation is that in my earliest searches across multiple databases in ProQuest and EBSCO*host*, I was able to find relevant articles without much effort. Put another way, the search terms **grade inflation** and **education** seemed to work without adding variant terms. If I were at a busy reference desk, trying to help many customers, it is unlikely I would be able to invest the kind of time needed to find variant search terms and optimal databases. However, the point of the exercise is well understood. Learning these search strategies and techniques are critical for precise, relevant recall and the more they are practiced, the easier they will become.

Overall, the assignment revealed deficits in federated searches like OneSearch and highlighted the importance of a well researched and well constructed search string used across various indexes to obtain a highly relevant recall for a user. The assignment also opened my eyes to the complexities of communicating and sharing the results of the search with a user. Knowing how to search the databases and find the articles is not very helpful to the user if you can not send them away with the tools and/or the information to access the articles that they need. This experience is sure to be helpful in future coursework and employment. I feel confident that with continued practice, I will become a seasoned database "finder."

## References

OneSearch Manoa: Home. (2015, August 17). Retrieved November 19, 2015, from <http://guides.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/c.php?g=105653>



## Appendix A: Variant Search Terms

Table 1: Variant terms for three components of the information need

Concept	Variant terms
Grade	Academic, grade, grading, grade point average, GPA
Inflation	Inflation, inflat*, practice, leniency, lenien*, standard, reliability, distortion, rigor
Education	Education, higher education, university, college

## Appendix B: Relevancy Ranking of Records

Table 2: Final list of articles ranked most relevant \*\*\* to least relevant \*.

Article title	Platform	Database	Title relevancy	Abstract relevancy	Education Journal	Length (pages)	Reading Level	Quantity of illustrations	Quality of illustrations	Citations
**Grade inflation: An Issue for Higher Education	PQ	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	8	Scholarly	N/A	N/A	Y
*Grading Standards in Education Departments at Universities	PQ	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	23	Scholarly technical	HR	HR	Y
*Radical Change in Faculty and Student Evaluation: A Justifiable Heresy?	PQ	ERIC	R	R	Y	8	Scholarly	R	R	Y
*Plus/Minus Grading: Solution or Problem? Research into Practice	PQ	ERIC	SR	SR	Y	2	Not Scholarly	N/A	N/A	Y
*Stop Giving in to Higher Grades: Ten Suggestions on How to Fight Grade Inflation	PQ	ERIC	HR	HR	N	13	Scholarly viewpoint	N/A	N/A	Y
**Local grade inflation and local proportion of withdrawals	PQ	ABI/INFORM	HR	HR	Y	33	Scholarly	HR	HR	Y
***Training Our Future Teachers: Easy A's and What's behind Them	PQ	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	52	Scholarly instructional	HR	HR	Y
***Grade inflation in the college classroom	PQ	ABI/INFORM	HR	HR	N	9	Scholarly viewpoint	SR	SR	Y
***Grades, Course Evaluations, and Academic Incentives	PQ	ABI/INFORM	HR	HR	N	13	Scholarly technical	HR	HR	Y
***Whose fault is it? Assigning blame for grade inflation in higher education	EB	Business Source Complete	HR	HR	N	16	Scholarly technical	HR	HR	Y
**The Politics of Grade Inflation: A Case Study	EB	ERIC	R	R	Y	6	Scholarly viewpoint	N/A	N/A	Y
**The Effects of Grading and Teaching Practices on Students' Perceptions of Grading Fairness	EB	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	6	Scholarly	HR	HR	Y
*Putting Grades in Context	EB	Business Source Complete	R	R	N	34	Scholarly technical	SR	SR	Y
*Making the Grade: A History of the A-F Marking Scheme	EB	ERIC	R	R	Y	24	Scholarly	N/A	N/A	Y
***Just Say "A": Grade Inflation Undergoes Reality Check	EB	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	Html	Scholarly	R	R	N
**Instructor-Specific Grade Inflation: Incentives, Gender, and Ethnicity*	EB	Business Source Complete	HR	HR	N	15	Scholarly	HR	HR	Y
***Grade Integrity and the Representation of Academic Achievement	EB	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	20	Scholarly	N/A	N/A	Y
***Faculty at for-Profits Allege Pressure to Keep Students Enrolled: Instructors Say They Have Been Encouraged to Dumb down Courses and Change Failing Grades	EB	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	7	Scholarly descriptive	N/A	N/A	N
**Can fighting grade inflation help the bottom line?	EB	Business Source Complete	HR	HR	N	5	Scholarly Technical	HR	HR	Y
***Dialogue and Exchange of Information about Grade Inflation Can Counteract Its Effects	EB	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	9	Scholarly	HR	HR	Y
***Analysis of Engineering Discipline Grade Trends	EB	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	12	Scholarly	HR	HR	Y
*Grading Standards and Student Performance in Community College and University Courses	EB	ERIC	HR	HR	Y	7	Scholarly	HR	HR	Y

## Key for Table 2

- ◇ Article Title – The article title preceded by a subjective overall ranking
  - *An acceptable record for the information need, fulfills most of the criteria \**
  - *A good record for the information need, fulfills almost all of the criteria, may be particularly strong in one criteria \*\**
  - *An outstanding record for the information need, fulfills all or nearly all of the criteria, strong in more than one criteria \*\*\**
- ◇ Platform - in which platform was the record found?
  - *ProQuest – PQ*
  - *EBSCOhost – EB*
- ◇ Database - in which database was the record found? Databases are listed by name.
- ◇ Title relevancy - did the title relate to the information need? Did it contain the terms grade inflation and education or variant terms?
  - *Highly relevant - HR Relevant - R Somewhat relevant - SR*
- ◇ Abstract relevancy - If the record contained an abstract, did it appear to discuss the causes and methods of grade inflation in higher education?
  - *Highly relevant - HR Relevant - R Somewhat relevant - SR*
- ◇ Education journal - Was the record produced by a journal or an organization that is related to education?
  - *Yes - Y or No - N*
- ◇ Length (pages) What was the length of the full text records in pages?
- ◇ Reading Level – A subjective measurement of the complexity of the text.

- *Not scholarly, Scholarly viewpoint, or scholarly descriptive - did not usually contain graphs or charts.*
  - *Scholarly - may have contained graphs or charts but the reading level was lower.*
  - *Scholarly technical - had complex language and extensive discussion of mathematical or statistical analyses.*
- ◇ Quantity of illustrations - Did it contain graphs charts or tables relating to grade inflation in education?
- *Highly relevant - HR Relevant - R Somewhat relevant - SR*
- ◇ Quality of illustrations - Did the graphs charts and tables enhance the understanding of grade inflation in higher education?
- *Highly relevant - HR Relevant - R Somewhat relevant - SR*
- ◇ Citations - Did the record contain additional citations that the user could access in order to perform further research?
- *Yes - Y or No - N*

## Appendix C: Exported Bibliographic Information from EBSCOhost and ProQuest records

### EBSCOhost Records

#### Record: 1

Just Say "A": Grade Inflation Undergoes Reality Check By: Bartlett, Thomas; Wasley, Paula. Chronicle of Higher Education, v55 n2 pA1 Sep 2008. (EJ812073)

Grade inflation is among the oldest and thorniest problems in higher education. In 1894 a committee at Harvard University reported that A's and B's were awarded "too readily." But after more than a century of fulmination, there is little agreement on the cause or how to fix it. There is even contentious debate about whether the phenomenon of grade inflation exists at all. It is the question at the center of a new collection of essays, "Grade Inflation: Academic Standards in Higher Education" (State University of New York Press). Those who believe that grade inflation exists say that when colleges do try to hold grades in check or make professors accountable, they usually fail. In this article, the authors enumerate the reasons for grade inflation and the possible cure for this.

#### Persistent link to this record (Permalink):

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ812073&site=ehost-live>

#### Cut and Paste:

<A

href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ812073&site=ehost-live">Just Say "A": Grade Inflation Undergoes Reality Check</A>

#### Database:

ERIC

#### Record: 2

Making the Grade: A History of the A-F Marking Scheme By: Schneider, Jack; Hutt, Ethan. Journal of Curriculum Studies, v46 n2 p201-224 2014. (EJ1029383)

This article provides a historical interpretation of one of the defining features of modern schooling: grades. As a central element of schools, grades--their origins, uses and evolution--provide a window into the tensions at the heart of building a national public school system in the United States. We argue that grades began as an intimate communication tool among teachers, parents, and students used largely to inform and instruct. But as reformers worked to develop a national school system in the late nineteenth century, they saw grades as useful tools in an organizational rather than pedagogical enterprise--tools that would facilitate movement, communication and coordination. Reformers placed a premium on readily interpretable and necessarily abstract grading systems. This shift in the importance of grades as an external rather than internal communication device required a concurrent shift in the meaning of grades--the meaning and nuance of the local context was traded for the uniformity and fungibility of more portable forms.

#### Persistent link to this record (Permalink):

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1029383&site=ehost-live>

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<A

href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1029383&site=ehost-live">Making the Grade: A History of the A-F Marking Scheme</A>

**Database:**

ERIC

**Record: 3**

Putting Grades in Context. By: Bar, Talia; Kadiyali, Vrinda; Zussman, Asaf. Journal of Labor Economics. Apr2012, Vol. 30 Issue 2, p445-478. 34p. 2 Graphs. Abstract: Concerns over grade inflation and disparities in grading practices have led institutions of higher education in the United States to adopt various grading reforms. An element common to several reforms is providing information on the distribution of grades in different courses. The main aims of such "grades in context" policies are to make grades more informative to transcript readers and to curb grade inflation. We provide a simple model to demonstrate that such policies can have complex effects on patterns of student course enrollment. These effects may lower the informativeness of some transcripts, increase the average grade, and lower welfare. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR] (AN: 73813401)

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=73813401&site=ehost-live">Putting Grades in Context.</A>

**Database:**

Business Source Complete

**Record: 4**

The Effects of Grading and Teaching Practices on Students' Perceptions of Grading Fairness By: Gordon, Michael E.; Fay, Charles H.. College Teaching, v58 n3 p93-98 2010. (EJ887007)  
To examine the antecedents of perceptions of grading fairness, approximately 600 college students were surveyed about the prevalence and desirability of 1) teaching practices that assisted students to prepare for examinations, and 2) common test scoring manipulations used to transform poor scores into acceptable ones (e.g., curving low scores upward). Students also described the fairness of the grading they had experienced. Regression analysis revealed that grading fairness was predicted best by exposure to the teaching practices rather than the scoring practices. Results are discussed in terms of the possible effects of these teaching and grading practices on grade inflation. (Contains 2 tables and 1 footnote.)

**Persistent link to this record (Permalink):**

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ887007&site=ehost-live>

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ887007&site=ehost-live">The Effects of Grading and Teaching Practices on Students' Perceptions of Grading Fairness</A>

**Database:**

ERIC

**Record: 5**

The Politics of Grade Inflation: A Case Study By: Abbott, William M.. Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, v40 n1 p32-37 Jan-Feb 2008. (EJ782170)

The author examines the reluctance of most American colleges and universities to address grade inflation. In addressing the problem of grade inflation, the author describes two proposals he made to his faculty's Educational Planning Committee. The first, presented in spring 2002, proposed that two new items be added to each course listed on students' transcripts: the number of students in the course section and the average grade awarded. At the end of the transcript, a cumulative average of all the grades in all of the course sections would be listed alongside the student's own cumulative average. Anyone examining the transcript could thus see how well the student had performed relative to the other students in his or her courses. The author counters the following three objections from faculty colleagues: (1) All students can excel; (2) Academic freedom extends to grading; and (3) We must not disadvantage our students. Following the Academic Council's rejection of the author's transcript-notation measure, he proposed that that the university registrar make available to all department chairs, at the end of every semester (1) the average grade given in each course taught in the department, and (2) the average grade awarded by each department in the school or college for that semester. This second proposal passed the Educational Planning Committee in 2004 but was voted down by the Academic Council. The primary objection was that this information might be used against a professor in the tenure, promotion, or merit-pay processes. The author's experience suggests that anyone seeking to curb grade inflation must, early in the process, thoroughly inform the various constituencies of the ways in which they are collectively harmed by the inflation. (Contains 11 resources.)

**Persistent link to this record (Permalink):**

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ782170&site=ehost-live>

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<A

href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ782170&site=ehost-live">The Politics of Grade Inflation: A Case Study</A>

**Database:**

ERIC

**Record: 6**

Whose fault is it? Assigning blame for grade inflation in higher education. By: Jewell, R. Todd; McPherson, Michael A.; Tieslau, Margie A. Applied Economics. Mar2013, Vol. 45 Issue 9, p1185-1200. 16p. 5 Charts, 2 Graphs. Abstract: This study attempts to isolate the potential sources of grade inflation and to measure their relative importance. We incorporate existing models of grade inflation into a model of grade inflation at the department level. Our data

comprise 1683 separate courses taught in 28 different academic departments by 3176 distinct instructors at a large public university over two decades. Our results suggest that incentives to inflate grades vary according to characteristics of academic departments. However, the vast majority (over 90%) of grade inflation observed in our data is estimated to be a result of either university-level factors or instructor-specific characteristics. [ABSTRACT FROM PUBLISHER] DOI: 10.1080/00036846.2011.621884. (AN: 67750743)

**Persistent link to this record (Permalink):**

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=67750743&site=ehost-live>

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=67750743&site=ehost-live">Whose fault is it? Assigning blame for grade inflation in higher education.</A>

**Database:**

Business Source Complete

**Record: 7**

Analysis of Engineering Discipline Grade Trends By: McAllister, Charles D.; Jiang, Xiaoyue; Aghazadeh, Fereydoun. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, v33 n2 p167-178 Apr 2008. (EJ787586)

Among the academic community, there is a perception that there is an upward shift in grade point average over an extended period of time without a corresponding increase in achievement. This trend has become an alarming topic among educators, industry and the general public. Some attribute increases in GPA to improvements in student quality while others point to the emergence of a consumer-based perception of education that unjustly awards high grades. The objective of this paper is to review various opinions regarding grade inflation, investigate whether grade inflation exists in engineering curricula, and analyze the related factors. Using eight years of detailed course data from a college of engineering, we seek insight into recent grading practices within each engineering discipline. The results indicate an upward trend in grade point average and an increasing prevalence of "A" grades. However, both trends match increases in student achievement potential as measured by ACT composite score. The results also show different grade outcomes among the engineering departments and the importance of class size as a predictor of grades. (Contains 4 tables and 8 figures.)

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<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ787586&site=ehost-live>

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ787586&site=ehost-live">Analysis of Engineering Discipline Grade Trends</A>

**Database:**

ERIC

**Record: 8**



Can fighting grade inflation help the bottom line? By: Caplan, Arthur J.; Gilbert, John. Applied Economics Letters. Nov2010, Vol. 17 Issue 17, p1663-1667. 5p. 2 Charts. Abstract: This article uses a rich set of student transcript data to estimate the economic cost incurred by a university when it does not adopt a 'mean-shift grading policy' to fight grade inflation. We show that even in the face of moral hazard constraints a university can enhance its profitability by fighting grade inflation with a distribution-shifting policy. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR] DOI: 10.1080/13504850903251231. (AN: 54862877)

**Persistent link to this record (Permalink):**

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=54862877&site=ehost-live>

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=54862877&site=ehost-live">Can fighting grade inflation help the bottom line?</A>

**Database:**

Business Source Complete

**Record: 9**

Dialogue and Exchange of Information about Grade Inflation Can Counteract Its Effects By: Barriga, Alvaro Q.; Cooper, Eric K.; Gawelek, Mary Ann. College Teaching, v56 n4 p201-209 Fall 2008. (EJ812498)

This investigation documents an intervention that successfully counteracted a grade inflation trend at a small, Catholic, liberal arts university in the eastern United States. The intervention produced a significant drop in grades awarded by full-time faculty, but not by adjunct faculty who were not yet included in the intervention. Institutional factors affecting grade inflation (i.e., class size, course level, academic discipline, day and semester of delivery) were also analyzed before and after the intervention. (Contains 4 figures and 2 tables.)

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<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ812498&site=ehost-live>

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ812498&site=ehost-live">Dialogue and Exchange of Information about Grade Inflation Can Counteract Its Effects</A>

**Database:**

ERIC

**Record: 10**

Faculty at for-Profits Allege Pressure to Keep Students Enrolled: Instructors Say They Have Been Encouraged to Dumb down Courses and Change Failing Grades By: Field, Kelly. Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, v77 n2 p21-27 Oct 2011. (EJ964211)

Three times during the past decade, the Pittsburgh campus of Kaplan Career Institute was named "school of the year" by Kaplan Higher Education, a for-profit higher-education company with

more than 70 campuses nationwide. The award recognized the college for its rapid growth and high graduation and job-placement rates. But some former faculty members say the honor came at a steep price: To keep those numbers high, administrators would pressure employees to falsify attendance records, raise grades, and manipulate job-placement numbers. If a professor refused to change a student's grade, the professor's supervisor would do it. In this article, the author reports on how some private universities are inflating their graduation and job-placement rates to obtain federal student aid.

**Persistent link to this record (Permalink):**

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ964211&site=ehost-live>

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ964211&site=ehost-live">Faculty at for-Profits Allege Pressure to Keep Students Enrolled: Instructors Say They Have Been Encouraged to Dumb down Courses and Change Failing Grades</A>

**Database:**

ERIC

**Record: 11**

Grade Integrity and the Representation of Academic Achievement By: Sadler, D. Royce. Studies in Higher Education, v34 n7 p807-826 Nov 2009. (EJ865710)

In this article, grade integrity is defined as the extent to which each grade awarded, either at the conclusion of a course or module of study, or for an extended response to an assessment task, is strictly commensurate with the quality, breadth and depth of a student's performance. The three basic requirements for this aspiration to be realised are, in order: assessment evidence of a logically legitimate type; evidence of sufficient scope and soundness to allow for a strong inference to be drawn; and a grading principle that is theoretically appropriate for coding the level of a student's performance. When further developed, the general approach outlined could produce positive side benefits, including ways of dealing with grade inflation.

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ865710&site=ehost-live">Grade Integrity and the Representation of Academic Achievement</A>

**Database:**

ERIC

**Record: 12**

Grading Standards and Student Performance in Community College and University Courses By: Friedl, John; Pittenger, David J.; Sherman, Michael. College Student Journal, v46 n3 p526-532 Sep 2012. (EJ996951)

Research was undertaken to determine whether comparable grading standards are used in

evaluating student performance at two-year community colleges and four-year universities. Examination of academic records of 417 students who took college level math at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga in fall 2009 compared the performance of those who had previously taken intermediate (high school level) algebra at a community college with those who had taken intermediate algebra at a four-year institution. Although students who transferred intermediate algebra from a community college had earned significantly higher grades in that course, on average, than those who took the course at a four-year university, their subsequent performance in college-level math courses was substantially poorer. This suggests that grade inflation at the community college level may ultimately result in lower graduation rates for students who transfer to four year universities with inadequate preparation for courses in the general education or major curriculum. As states seek to create incentives for four-year institutions to increase graduation rates and as they reduce subsidies to higher education by encouraging more students to begin at a less expensive community college and then transfer to a four-year university, the public policy implications of the results of this research become increasingly important.

(Contains 2 tables and 5 footnotes.)

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<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ996951&site=ehost-live>

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ996951&site=ehost-live">Grading Standards and Student Performance in Community College and University Courses</A>

**Database:**

ERIC

**Record: 13**

Instructor-Specific Grade Inflation: Incentives, Gender, and Ethnicity\*. By: Jewell, R. Todd; McPherson, Michael A. Social Science Quarterly (Wiley-Blackwell). Mar2012, Vol. 93 Issue 1, p95-109. 15p. 3 Charts, 1 Graph. Abstract: Objectives This study attempts to isolate instructor-specific measures that may be sources of grade inflation and to measure their relative importance. Methods We estimate a fixed-effects model, using by far the most extensive data set related to grade inflation ever assembled. Our data comprise 48,038 courses taught by 1,871 distinct instructors at a large public university over a two-decade period. Results Our results suggest that female faculty members are the most likely to inflate grades, while ethnicity has a lesser effect. Conclusions Characteristics of instructors, in particular gender, affect the degree of observed grade inflation, controlling for student- and department-specific effects. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR] DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-6237.2011.00827.x. (AN: 73908408)

**Persistent link to this record (Permalink):**

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=73908408&site=ehost-live>

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href="http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=73908408&site=ehost-live">Instructor-Specific Grade Inflation: Incentives, Gender, and Ethnicity\*.</A>

**Database:**  
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## ProQuest Records

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Grades, Course Evaluations, and Academic Incentives

Author: Love, David A; J Kotchen, Matthew

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/198081649?accountid=27140>

Abstract: We develop a model that identifies a range of new and somewhat counterintuitive results about how the incentives created by academic institutions affect student and faculty behavior. The model provides a theoretical basis for grade inflation and the behavioral response of students. Comparative statics are used to analyze the effects of institutional expectations placed on faculty. The results show that placing more emphasis on course evaluations exacerbates the problems of grade inflation and can even decrease a professor's teaching effort. Increased emphasis on research productivity also decreases teaching effort and provides a further incentive to inflate grades. We use the model to analyze how grade targets can control grade inflation and align professorial incentives with institutional objectives. We also discuss the implications of the model for hiring, promotion, and tenure. [PUBLICATION ABSTRACT]

Database: ProQuest Business Collection

Number of pages: 13

Publication title: Eastern Economic Journal

Publication year: 2010

Subject: Studies; Economic theory; Economic models; Incentives; Academic grading; Colleges & universities

Title: Grades, Course Evaluations, and Academic Incentives

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Grade Inflation: An Issue for Higher Education?

Author: Caruth, Donald L.; Caruth, Gail D.

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1413415412?accountid=27140>

Abstract: Grade inflation impacts university credibility, student courses of study, choices of institution, and other areas. There has been an upward shift in grades without a corresponding upward shift in knowledge gained. Some of the most frequently mentioned causes of grade inflation are: (1) student evaluations of professors; (2) student teacher dynamics; (3) merit-based financial aid; and (4) student expectations. Among the reasons for higher student grades on the part of professors are: (1) fear of student evaluations; (2) avoidance of bad relations with students; (3) below average teaching skills; (4) lack of experience; (5) a lack of clearly stated objectives; and (6) job security. While grades are not a perfect answer to assessing student performance in a course they are still the best answer we have for evaluating students. In order to evaluate students more accurately, universities must identify the problems in grading and grading practices. Once this is accomplished new practices can be designed and policies implemented.

Database: ERIC

Number of pages: 9

Publication title: Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education

Publication year: 2013

Subject: Student Evaluation; Grading; Grade Inflation; Best Practices; Educational Practices; Barriers; Performance Factors; Robustness (Statistics); Evaluation Criteria; Experimenter Characteristics; Credibility; Accountability; Achievement Rating; Evaluation Research

Title: Grade Inflation: An Issue for Higher Education?

URL: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ1006251>

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Grading Standards in Education Departments at Universities

Author: Koedel, Cory

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/968110319?accountid=27140>

Abstract: Students who take classes in education departments at universities receive significantly higher grades than students who take classes in other academic departments. The higher grades awarded by education departments cannot be explained by differences in student quality or by structural differences across departments (i.e., differences in class sizes). The remaining explanation is that the higher grades are the result of lower grading standards. This paper formally documents the grading-standards problem in education departments using administrative grade data from the 2007-2008 academic year. Because a large fraction of the teachers in K-12 schools receive training in education departments, I briefly discuss several

possible consequences of the low grading standards for teacher quality in K-12 schools.  
(Contains 5 tables, 3 figures and 15 footnotes.)

Database: ERIC

Number of pages: 23

Publication title: Education Policy Analysis Archives

Publication year: 2011

Subject: Schools of Education; Teacher Effectiveness; Grades (Scholastic); Elementary Secondary Education; Grading; Academic Standards; Educational Quality; Teacher Qualifications; Educational Policy; Data Analysis; Data Interpretation; Grade Inflation; Teacher Education; Teacher Education Programs; Statistical Distributions; College Outcomes Assessment; Intellectual Disciplines; Policy Analysis

Title: Grading Standards in Education Departments at Universities

URL: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ956000>

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Radical Change in Faculty and Student Evaluation: A Justifiable Heresy?

Author: Gentry, Jeffery

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1697505707?accountid=27140>

Abstract: This article addresses the connection between two continuing trends in higher education: semester evaluation of faculty by students (SE's) and grade inflation. The two phenomena are explored historically; then a two-part plan is proposed to enhance the evaluation of both students and faculty. This solution does not replace current evaluation practices; it merely adds information on each student's relative performance. Although subject to criticism as radical reform, the plan is offered as a feasible check on grade inflation and diminished student responsibility--one that is consistent with long held higher education values, as well as recent calls for increased educational accountability. The author concludes that such efforts offer hope in reversing a set of disturbing trends in student achievement.

Database: ERIC

Number of pages: 8

Publication title: Administrative Issues Journal: Education, Practice, and Research

Publication year: 2011

Subject: Higher Education; Student Evaluation of Teacher Performance; Grade Inflation; College Students; College Faculty; Educational History; Accountability; Academic Achievement; Grading; Likert Scales

Title: Radical Change in Faculty and Student Evaluation: A Justifiable Heresy?

URL: <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1055002>

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Plus/Minus Grading: Solution or Problem? Research into Practice

Author: Johnston, Howard

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1314319155?accountid=27140>

Abstract: Surprisingly, the debate over +/- grade systems seems to occur, largely, at the college and university level. Few middle and high schools seem to have taken on the issue, at least in any way that appears in the public literature. Other opinions suggest that it is the discriminating quality of plus/minus grading systems that make them useful. A report to the Faculty Senate at Western Illinois University stated that "The single most important argument in favor of a system of final grades that includes plus and minus grades is the increased accuracy of the grade as a reflection of student performance. In addition, plus/minus systems are seen as an antidote to grade inflation, since a student barely earning an A would receive an A-, rather than an A. Those opposed to +/- systems say that it is unfair, particularly to students in the 3.5-4.0 range. Will it take more effort to earn the A that they might have earned earlier? A second concern is the pressure put on teachers to award a "slightly higher" grade. The research and commentary offers no clear guidance on empirical reasons for shifting to a +/- grading system. It appears as if the benefits are determined largely by the intentions of the school in creating the system and the ways in which administrators and faculty implement it. Ultimately, grading systems rely on consensus among students, faculty, parents, colleges and/or employers about what the grades actually mean. If a change is planned, it appears as if all of these stakeholders should be involved in the discussion to assure that grades actually communicate with all of the people who need the information they provide. References and Resources are included.

Database: ERIC

Number of pages: 2

Publication year: 2012



Subject: Grading; Educational Change; Evaluation Criteria; Goodness of Fit; Educational Policy; Evaluation Methods; Methods Research; Performance Factors; Student Evaluation; Achievement Rating; Educational Practices

Title: Plus/Minus Grading: Solution or Problem? Research into Practice

URL: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED539176>

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Stop Giving in to Higher Grades: Ten Suggestions on How to Fight Grade Inflation

Author: Costley, Kevin C.

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1651827489?accountid=27140>

Abstract: Grade inflation has been a consistently ignored problem in the public schools and universities for over fifty years. Grades keep getting higher and higher for a multitude of reasons. Students expect high grades. Parents demand high grades of their children and teachers. Some administrators implicitly or explicitly require that their teachers give high grades for various reasons. Thus, with more and more inflated grades in American public schools, college and university students demand more high grades. They are conditioned to receive high grades. This is the entitlement generation; students often feel unsuccessful when they receive a grade lower than an A. Teachers at all level have heard students plead for A grades. This article states that this subject should be brought back up in many forums, in public schools and published articles. High grades are an epidemic. Grading students will never go away; however, grading should be the result of actual learner outcomes, not inflated grades to make students and parent happy. This article states ten ways on how teachers can begin to begin the process of eliminating inflated grades. The article also advocates the dire need for administrators from the top down to evaluate why excessively high grades are given and return to fair grading. This article is useful for administrators, teachers, and parents/guardians.

Database: ERIC

Number of pages: 13

Publication year: 2014

Subject: Grade Inflation; Educational Practices; Guidelines; Student Evaluation; Credits; Scores; Incentives; Grades (Scholastic); Testing; Tests; Academic Standards; Student Problems; Higher Education; College Students; College Faculty; Teacher Student Relationship

Title: Stop Giving in to Higher Grades: Ten Suggestions on How to Fight Grade Inflation

URL: <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED546783>



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Local grade inflation and local proportion of withdrawals

Author: Kuhn, Jonathan; Warren, Aaron; Maletta, Diane; Branford, Alan

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/913134844?accountid=27140>

Abstract: Educational institutions must be accountable to communities in general and students in particular, and fair and consistent assessment is an important component of this. If assigned grades for one group of students are higher than grades for a similar group of students, then grade inflation is said to be localized to the first group relative to the second. Local grade inflation is essentially a form of favoritism; one group of students is favored over another group of students. Identifying the behavior of local grade inflation involves comparing local grade point averages (LGPAs) of the grade distributions of different groups of students. Local grade point averages are calculated from the grades of individual students. Grade distributions for 7,500 class sections from a small public Midwestern University, from fall 1998 to fall 2007, were collected and analyzed. Statistically significant ( $p$ -value  $< 0.01$ ) categorical explanatory variables for LGPAs were compared and contrasted with statistically significant categorical explanatory variables for local proportions of withdrawals (LPWs). Statistical analysis found clear evidence ( $p$ -value  $< 0.01$ ) that both LGPA and LPW are significantly different for different explanatory variables such as courses and instructors, as well as subjects, departments and academic course levels, but not for instructor academic qualifications, gender, and job category, nor for academic year, academic semester and class time period. Moreover, the  $R^2$  measures of fit of model to data for one-variable, two-variable and multi-variable LGPA-dependent analysis of variance models were mostly larger than for equivalent LPW-dependent one-variable, two-variable and multi-variable models. [PUBLICATION ABSTRACT]

Database: ProQuest Business Collection

Number of pages: 33

Publication title: Research in Higher Education Journal

Publication year: 2011

Subject: Studies; Higher education; Statistical analysis; Academic achievement

Title: Local grade inflation and local proportion of withdrawals

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Training Our Future Teachers: Easy A's and What's behind Them

Author: Putman, Hannah; Greenberg, Julie; Walsh, Kate

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1697491627?accountid=27140>

Abstract: Using evidence from more than 500 colleges and universities producing nearly half of the nation's new teachers annually, this report answers two questions that go to the heart of whether the demands of teacher preparation are well matched to the demands of the classroom: Are teacher candidates graded too easily, misleading them about their readiness to teach? Are teacher preparation programs providing sufficiently rigorous training, or does the approach to training drive higher grades? [Listed appendices available online for this document: (1) Institutions' scores on the Rigor Standard; (2) Methodology to analyze grade differences as revealed by honors; (3) Methodology to analyze coursework; (4) Converting criterion-deficient assignments to criterion-referenced assignments; (5) Validating the findings on teacher candidates' grades; (6) Statistical relationship between course grades and proportion of grades based on criterion-deficient assignments; and (7) Exploring the effects of high grades. Numerous organizations sponsored this work; the full list can be seen on page 2 of the document.]

Database: ERIC

Number of pages: 52

Publication year: 2014

Subject: Teacher Education Programs; Preservice Teachers; Grading; Readiness; Teacher Competencies; Grades (Scholastic); Assignments; Instructional Design; Academic Standards; Statistical Analysis; Criterion Referenced Tests; Teacher Qualifications; Grade Inflation; Honors Curriculum; Majors (Students); Academic Achievement; Feedback (Response); Public Colleges

Title: Training Our Future Teachers: Easy A's and What's behind Them

URL: <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED556292>

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Grade inflation in the college classroom

Author: Tucker, Jan; Courts, Bari

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/224180072?accountid=27140>

Abstract: Purpose - The purpose of this article is to assess the concept of grade inflation in higher education institutions in an effort to determine its prevalence, causes, and strategies that can be implemented to curtail it. Design/methodology/approach - A literature review of the problem is presented along with several strategies as possible solutions to restraining the problem of

escalating grades in the college classroom. Findings - The problem of grade inflation has been a topic of concern for over a century and there are no quick fixes or simple methods of reversing this trend but there are several alternatives presented which could help curtail this trend. Research limitations/implications - Most of the research is based on anecdotal research. Very little has been written on how to fix this problem. Practical implications - This paper brings this issue to the forefront in an effort to engage the reader, college administrators and educators. Originality/value - The paper begins with an overview of previous research in this area and then moves on to what is currently being implemented to curb grade inflation. The authors then propose several methods and possible solutions that could be implemented to deal with this problem.

Database: ProQuest Business Collection

Publication title: Foresight : the Journal of Futures Studies, Strategic Thinking and Policy

Publication year: 2010

Subject: College students; Colleges & universities; Higher education; Tuition; Inflation; Industrialized nations

Title: Grade inflation in the college classroom

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## Appendix D: Saved Search Histories from EBSCOhost and ProQuest

### Search History for EBSCOhost ERIC

S7	TI ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND TI ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Date Published: 20100101-20151231; Language: English Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	12
S6	TI ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Date Published: 20100101-20151231; Language: English Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	62
S5	AB ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND AB ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Date Published: 20100101-20151231; Language: English Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	275
S4	AB ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND (	Limiters - Full Text; Date Published: 20100101-20151231; Language: English Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	405

	"higher education" OR university OR college )			
S3	SU ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND SU ( " higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Date Published: 20100101-20151231; Language: English Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	641
S2	SU ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( " higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Date Published: 20100101-20151231; Language: English Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	852
S1	( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( " higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Date Published: 20100101-20151231; Language: English Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - ERIC	1,125

### Search History for EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete

S7	TI ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Academic Search Complete	18
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	standard) ) AND TI ( "higher education" OR university OR college )			
S6	TI ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Academic Search Complete	151
S5	AB ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND AB ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Academic Search Complete	354
S4	AB ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Academic Search Complete	894
S3	SU ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND SU ( "higher education"	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Academic Search Complete	21

	OR university OR college )			
S2	SU ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Academic Search Complete	35
S1	( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Academic Search Complete	1,705

### Search History for EBSCOhost Business Source Complete

S7	TI ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND TI ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Business Source Complete	7
S6	TI ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND TI ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Business Source Complete	31

	OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Boolean/Phrase		
S5	AB ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND AB ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Business Source Complete	73
S4	AB ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Business Source Complete	203
S3	SU ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND SU ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Business Source Complete	11
S2	SU ( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND (	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Business Source Complete	13



	"higher education" OR university OR college )			
S1	( (academic OR grade OR grading OR GPA OR "grade point average") N3 (inflat* OR distort* OR practice OR lenien* OR reliability OR standard) ) AND ( "higher education" OR university OR college )	Limiters - Full Text; Published Date: 20100101-20151231 Expanders - Apply related words Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Business Source Complete	343

## ProQuest ABI/INFORM Complete Searches

Set#: S1

Searched for: ti((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*)) AND ti(("higher education" OR university OR college)) AND ftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ABI/INFORM Complete

Results: 46°

Set#: S2

Searched for: ti((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*)) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND ftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ABI/INFORM Complete

Results: 461°

Set#: S3

Searched for: su((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*)) AND su(("higher education" OR university OR college)) AND ftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ABI/INFORM Complete

Results: 176°

Set#: S4

Searched for: su((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*)) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND ftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ABI/INFORM Complete  
Results: 528°

Set#: S5

Searched for: ab((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*)) AND ab(("higher education" OR university OR college)) AND ftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ABI/INFORM Complete  
Results: 399°

Set#: S6

Searched for: ab((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*)) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND ftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ABI/INFORM Complete  
Results: 1466°

Set#: S7

Searched for: ((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*)) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND ftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ABI/INFORM Complete  
Results: 16569\*

\* Duplicates are removed from your search, but included in your result count.

° Duplicates are removed from your search and from your result count.

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## ProQuest ERIC Searches

Set#: S2

Searched for: ((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*)) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND ericftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND lv("higher education") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ERIC  
Results: 135°

Set#: S3

Searched for: ab(((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*))) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND ericftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND lv("higher education") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ERIC

Results: 71°

Set#: S4

Searched for: ab(((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*))) AND ab(("higher education" OR university OR college)) AND ericftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND lv("higher education") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ERIC

Results: 46°

Set#: S5

Searched for: su(((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*))) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND ericftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND lv("higher education") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ERIC

Results: 96°

Set#: S6

Searched for: su(((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*))) AND su(("higher education" OR university OR college)) AND ericftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND lv("higher education") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ERIC

Results: 96°

Set#: S7

Searched for: ti(((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*))) AND ("higher education" OR university OR college) AND ericftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND lv("higher education") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ERIC

Results: 18°

Set#: S8

Searched for: ti(((grade OR grading OR "grade inflation" OR "grade point average" OR GPA) NEAR/4 (inflat\* OR standards OR evaluat\* OR grading OR lenien\* OR distort\*))) AND ti(("higher education" OR university OR college)) AND ericftany(yes) AND la.exact("English") AND lv("higher education") AND pd(>20100101)

Databases: ERIC

Results: 4°

° Duplicates are removed from your search and from your result count.