

## Acknowledgments

**T**his book examines the phenomenon of grade inflation and its impact on postsecondary education. Much of this investigation is based on research conducted by others, but a substantial portion originates from data collected at Duke University during the 1998–99 academic year. As a consequence, one might be tempted to conclude that grade inflation is a more serious problem at Duke than it is elsewhere. This is, of course, not true.

Grade inflation is a national, if not international, problem. Recent scandals over grading practices at Ivy League colleges and other top universities illustrate this point all too well. That this book was written using data collected at Duke University should therefore not be regarded as an indictment of Duke, but should instead be viewed as an indication that many professors and administrators at Duke were concerned with this problem and were willing to confront it. This book would not have been possible without their support, and probably would not have been written at many other universities.

Many individuals deserve credit for their role in facilitating campus-wide discussions of grading at Duke and for making the DUET experiment a reality. Among these are Professor Daniel Graham, who chaired a committee that focused attention on the need to reform grading practices, and Professor Daniel Gauthier, who also served on this committee and later helped implement the DUET experiment. Professors Angela O’Rand and John Richards, former chairs of the Arts and Sciences Council and Academic

Affairs Committee, respectively, also played pivotal roles in this process. Angela was an ardent supporter of the DUET experiment and managed to delay its demise for at least one semester longer than I thought possible. John's support was essential in gaining approval for the experiment from the Academic Affairs Committee. Support from Provost John Strohbehn and his successor, Peter Lange, was also critical. Deans Richard White, Robert Thompson, and Mary Nijhout helped guide the project during its nascent stage and assisted in the construction of the DUET survey instrument. Harry DeMik provided important advice regarding the availability and limitations of data from the registrar's office. Ben Kennedy, a student government leader at Duke, along with fellow students Jeff Horowitz and Tammy Katz, was instrumental in encouraging students to participate in the DUET experiment and, in so doing, greatly enhanced the value of data collected. I also thank my colleagues in the Institute of Statistics and Decision Sciences, and in particular its former director Mike West, for their support of the project. Finally, I would like to thank Dalene Stangl, Peter Mueller, Daniel Gauthier, John Kimmel, and my wife Pamela Johnson for many helpful comments that improved the presentation of material in this book.



<http://www.springer.com/978-0-387-00125-8>

Grade Inflation

A Crisis in College Education

Johnson, V.E.

2003, VIII, 262 p. 44 illus., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-0-387-00125-8