

Why We Should Stop Grading Students on a Curve

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The New York Times:

Ask people what's wrong in American higher education, and you'll hear about grade inflation. At Harvard a few years ago, a professor complained that the most common grade was an A-. He was quickly corrected: The most common grade at Harvard was an A.

Across 200 colleges and universities, over 40 percent of grades were in the A realm. At both four-year and two-year schools, more students receive A's than any other grade — a percentage that has grown over the past three decades.

Among older graduates, figures like these usually elicit a comment involving the words “coddled,” “damn” and “millennials.” But the opposite problem worries me even more: grade *deflation*. It happens whenever teachers use a forced grading curve: The top 10 percent of students receive A's, the next 30 percent get B's, and so on. Sometimes it's mandated by institutions; sometimes it's chosen by teachers.

Read the whole story: [*The New York Times*](#)