

Alternative Grading Strategies For An Anti-Black Institution of Higher Learning

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Introduction

This study reviews sources about different grading policies and strategies for anti-racist institutions of higher learning. Racist grading strategies are still in place to undermine and prevent people of color from succeeding or outright denying access to higher education. The purpose of a grading system is to properly show the academic mastery of a subject or a topic. Grading is used to evaluate and provide proper feedback on a student's work quality. Based on my research findings and journal articles, I have encountered several different grading systems and strategies that can be used as alternatives to racist policies and procedures. One of these grading systems is contract grading. Contract grading is a grading system in which students and instructors are contracted and obligated to meet both ends of their respective roles.

For instance, a student has to meet several criteria to pass a class. An instructor has to grade according to guidelines set out by a college system and will be inspected by several administrators if they grade unfairly or harshly. (Hill, 2001) is a journal article about the positives of contract grading and how to use contract grading efficiently in a higher education environment. As noted, one of the main problems with regular grading is that students don't learn the material but instead grade on memorization rather than a test of ability. Coupled with systematic racism, this often leads people of color students at a disadvantage with academic achievement in higher education.

Objectives

- The objective in this study aims to understand the implementation of different grading systems in an anti-black higher education institution. To see which is the best grading system for a higher education system that deals with racist policies and strategies. In this study, the goal is to understand how different grading systems work.
- To dismantle racist grading ideology with fair grading practices and outcomes with professors and students.

Method

- The method for this study it will be a review of different grading systems detailing pros and cons of each grading system. Looking at each grading system it will give insight on each different practice and how it relates to a student system. I will evaluate different grading systems by developing an pros and cons list. By developing the pros and cons list I will show how each grading systems works in higher education and will picked the best one for an anti-black institutions.
- Another method that I will be using is the implementation of different graphs and data for this study. One of my graphs will be on graduation rates of several different races and dropout rates of college students by race. Using the data will accurately show a correlation between racist grading methods and non racist grading methods.

Results

Pros-Research shows that mastery grading is done well because students often retrain skills, and there aren't any learning gaps or students not on grade level.

Pros-The pros of a letter grading system are it takes the pressure off students since letter grading tends to group students into bands, and the difference between 90 and 92 is not a problem.

Pros-The main benefit of contract grading is if the student meets the requirements for the course to earn a grade of A than the student will earn the grade.

No Cons-Mastery and Narrative

Cons-There are some cons with letter grading; one of the problems is low accuracy levels and discourages healthy academic competition, which for some students is needed for success.

Cons-The only cons with contract grading are that students who have relied on traditional grading methods or systems might be overwhelmed with implementing an unorthodox grading system.

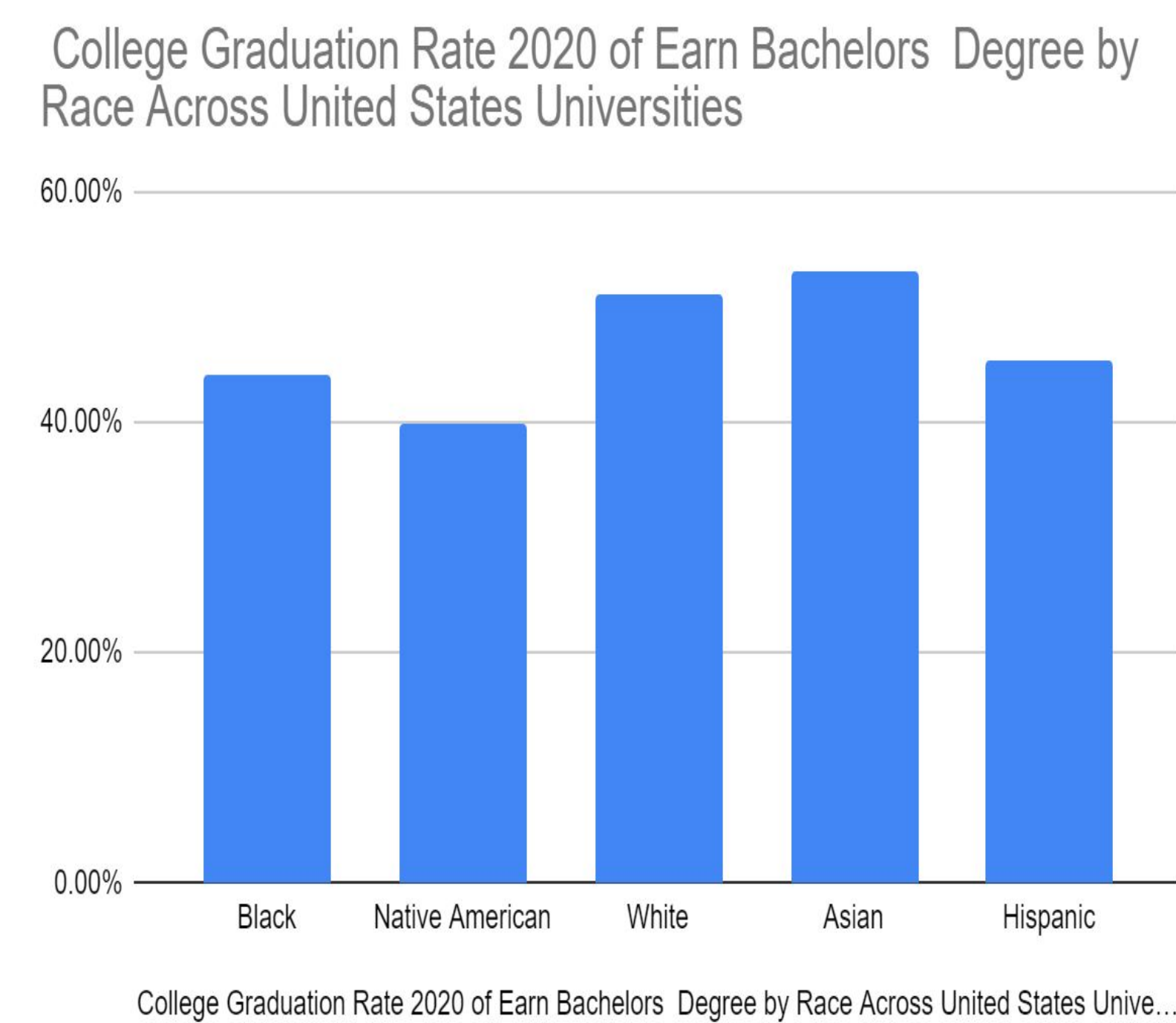
Cons- Percentage Grading ,the main cons with this grading system are that this type of grading is subjective and limited.

Cons- Norm Referenced Grading, one of the drawbacks is that this type of grading system is not individualized but relies on group grading, which is a disadvantage for individual students.

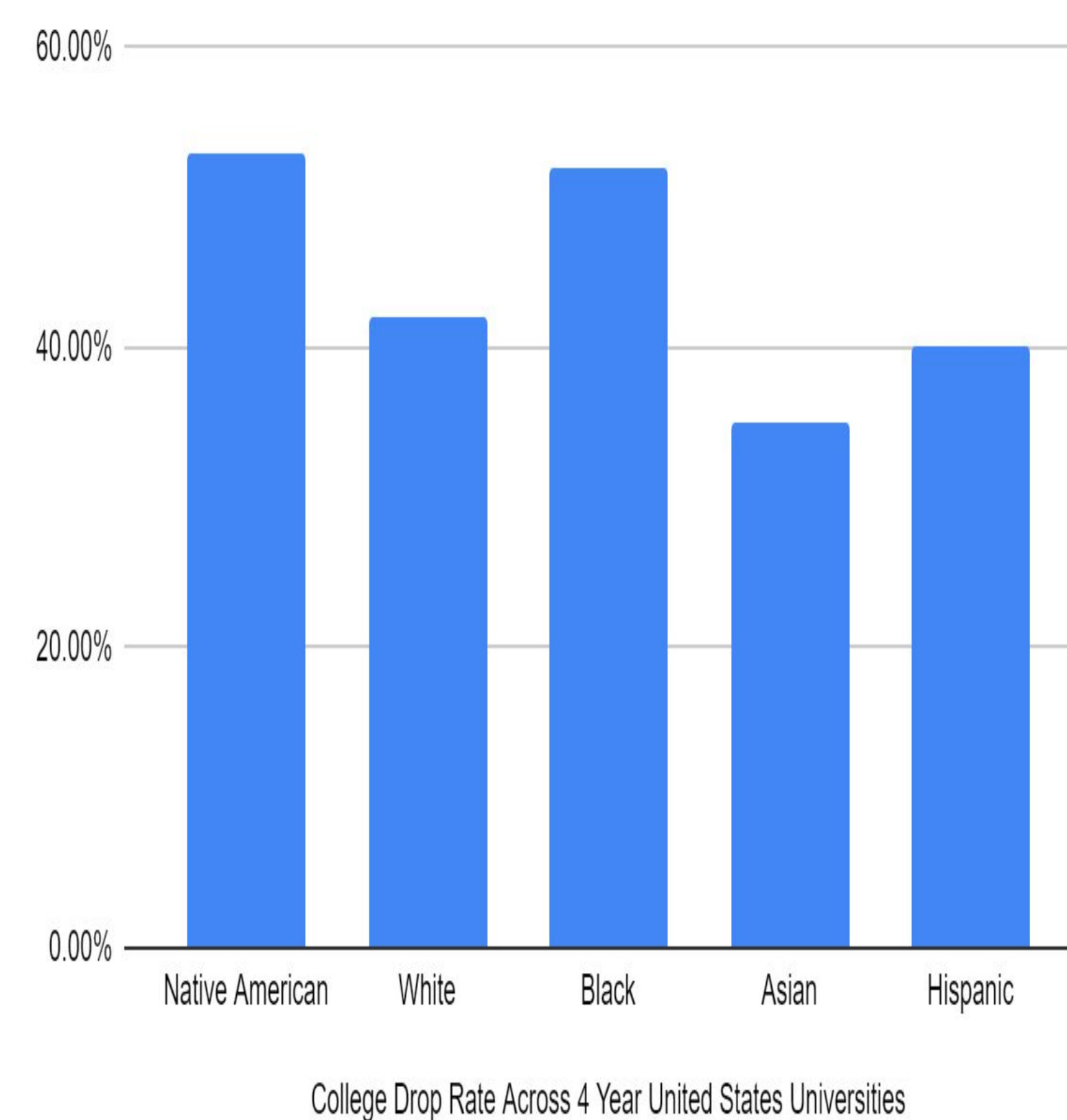
Cons- Pass Fail-Another critical con is that for students trying to attend graduate school or professional school, pass/fail might look inadequate or non-viable.

Data

Graphs and Data



College Drop Rate Across 4 Year United States Universities



Conclusions

For this study, I found that the best grading method for an anti-black institution is **contract grading**. Contract grading is a grading system that employs contracts with a student and instructor.

I found it to be the best for the following reasons. Instructors and students **know what is expected** to earn the desired grade. It enables students to progress **at their own pace**. And if the student meets the requirements for the course to earn a grade of A, then the student will be contractually obligated to that grade. Furthermore, because the grade is based on student labor, writing quality is not evaluated since it is understood that evaluating writing can be highly subjective and based on pre-determined and biased views that privilege certain kinds of writing. Moreover, when using traditional grading methods, faculty often spend most of their time telling students what is wrong with their work.

The only drawbacks with contract grading are that students who have relied on traditional grading methods or systems might be overwhelmed with implementing an unorthodox grading system. An article explaining the benefits of contract grading is "Klotz, Sarah, and Whithanus" (2021).

Acknowledgements

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