**The Contract**

**Students who receive an A will have no more than:**

- one unexcused absence
- a few days “less active” class days
- one late assignment (for which no extension is requested)
- one or two missed assignment basic goals

**Students who receive an B will have no more than:**

- five absences
- a few days “less active” class days
- two late assignments or one incomplete small assignment
- two or three missed assignment basic goals

**Students who receive a C must:**

- complete all major assignments in good faith
- complete at least half of the small assignments
- miss less than 10 class days

**Those other grades...**

You will receive either a D or an F if you do not meet the requirements for a C. If you are at risk of receiving a D or an F, I will absolutely be in contact with you to see what we can do to prevent your receiving a D or F.
The Survey

Fall 2015

After Unit 1:

- Do you think the grading contract in this class has affected your experience in this class so far? Has it affected your outlook attitude/feelings about dealing with the assignments of the course?

End of Semester:

- What is your opinion, overall, of the class's grading policy?
- In what ways do you think this class's grading policy has affected your attendance, class participation, and attention to turning in homework?
- In what ways do you think this class's grading policy has affected your writing?

Spring 2015

After Unit 1 & End of Semester:

- Do you think the grading contract for this class has affected your work in the course? Your effort on assignments? Your enjoyment/lack of enjoyment with assignments? Class activities? Attendance?
- Do you think the grading contract for this class has affected your feelings about the class? Engagement with the material?
- Do you think the grading contract for this class has affected the degree to which you're learning? The ways you're learning? The quality of your learning?
- Any other comments/thoughts on this class's grading policy?
No Effect On Participation or Performance

Equally Motivated

Less Stress

Better Learning

Better Writing

More Participation & Attendance

Academic Freedom

Less Effort on Writing

Genuine Interest in a Topic I Normally Wouldn't Care About

More Positive Attitude

Worked Harder

More Engaged in Class

Should Be stricter

Most Frequent Codes

(No of responses, not students)
I will admit the weeks I had three or more writing assignments due my writing for this class suffered which is disappointing.

However, I do spend less time preparing than I may otherwise if I was graded on the quality of my performance.

However, on some assignments I may not have spent as much time on them as I would have if it weren't graded.

Alternatively, my effort on assignments may have been slightly less because I was not concerned about not getting an A.

It also, though, takes away from a desire to really improve my writing and drafts.

I think it made me put the class on a back burner and work less hard.
No Effect On Participation or Performance

Less Stress
Better Learning
Equally Motivated
Less Effort on Writing
Better Writing
More Positive Attitude
Genuine Interest in a topic I normally wouldn't care about
Academic Freedom
More Participation & Attendance
More Engaged in Class
Should Be Strict
Worked Harder
Most Frequent Codes
(No. of responses, not students)
It has **not made me slack off** at all in the class, in fact **I've still worked as hard on my final paper as though my final grade is dependent on it**.

I think that the **level and type of kids taking it, it is perfect**. We work hard with minimal motivation - end of the day.

**I don't think it has affected my writing.** I think that the overall **effort** and **quality** of my writing has remained **consistent**.

Some people may think that the grading allows students to slack off, but **I don't feel like it has lessened the class priority for me at all.**

Everyone still seems very **motivated** to do things well.

**Every student** i've worked with seems to **take their work seriously.**
No Effect On Participation or Performance
Less Stress
Better Learning
Better Writing
More Positive Attitude
More Engaged In Class
Genuine Interest In A Topic I Normally Wouldn't Care About
More Participation & Attendance
Academic Freedom
Equally Motivated
Less Effort On Writing
Worked Harder
Should Be stricter
Most Frequent Codes (# of responses, not students)
It made me more engaged; I was less stressed about grades on assignments and more focused on the work.

In a way it takes some of the high levels of stress away even though I am doing the same amount of work. There is not so much pressure.

It made the class less stressful and a better learning environment!

I think that the grading policy has reduced my stress about this class and the writing process.

It removed a lot of stress and fear I had coming into the course.

I think that I like coming to class more because there isn't as much pressure for grades.
No Effect On Participation or Performance

Equally Motivated

Less Stress

Better Learning

Better Writing

More Participation & Attendance

Academic Freedom

Less Effort on Writing

Genuine interest in a topic I normally wouldn't care about

More positive attitude

Worked Harder

More Engaged in Class

Should Be Stricter

Most Frequent Codes

(# of responses, not students)
I think it makes me care a lot more about learning the material than just figuring out how to get enough points on an assignment to get an A.

Getting feedback without the grade helps me focus on what I need to do better rather than on the grade i got.

It has motivated me to work 100 times harder in this class because I know that I can learn -- and grow -- as a person and as a student a lot more efficiently and effectively this way!

I try to stay up to date and focused in all of my classes, but this class didn't make me feel as anxious which helped me actually retain the information presented.

I believe I've been able to learn better without fixating on my grade.
No Effect On Participation or Performance

Equally Motivated

Less Stress

Better Learning

Better Writing

More Participation & Attendance

Academic Freedom

More Engaged in Class

Genuine Interest in a Topic I Normally Wouldn't Care About

More Positive Attitude

Worked Harder

Should Be stricter

Less Effort on Writing

Most Frequent Codes

(# of Responses, Not Students)
I think it has **surprisingly helped me to pay more attention** to this class.

It's certainly made me more **motivated and willing to show up** everyday! It's made me *want to participate* and … pay more attention to the *work I complete* and *turning it in* on a timely manner.

The grading policy made me **more eager to participate** because I knew it was a large part of my grade and I knew that *it mattered like a paper* would.

I am normally not very talkative in class and this has **forced me to voice my opinion**. I know that attendance counts so *unless I am out of town or very sick I will be here!*

*I definitely would've attended way less class* then I have.

I do **engage more** in class because I know **participation is highly valued**. Normally I'm a very **passive learner** and don't participate. The grading contract definitely makes me speak up.
No Effect On Participation or Performance

Similarly Motivated

Less Stress

Better Learning

Better Writing

More Participation & Attendance

Academic Freedom

Equally Motivated

More Engaged in Class

Genuine Interest in a Topic I Normally Wouldn’t Care About

More Positive Attitude

Worked Harder

Should Be Stricter

Less Effort on Writing
It allows me to be more expressive in class without having to worry about saying something that could be counted against me.

I think it has allowed me to approach the topic with more genuine interest and gives less pressure to bs a topic.

I'm not thinking "how would my teacher want me to say this to get an A". I can just genuinely engage with the material.

Since they were not traditionally graded, I felt comfortable to be more creative and bold with the assignments.

Usually, I'll only limit myself to saying the very best things that I come up with. But this way I'm more free to say some different ideas that would open new discussions or bring up new questions.

Yes, I think it's made me enjoy the class and say what I really think about the material instead of trying to check off boxes for points.
No Effect On Participation or Performance
Equally Motivated
Less Stress
Better Learning
Less Effort on Writing
More Engagement in Class
Genuine Interest in a Topic I Normally Wouldn’t Care About
More Positive Attitude
Worked Harder
Should Be Stricter
More Participation & Attendance
Academic Freedom
Better Writing
Better Learning
Most Frequent Codes
(# of responses, not students)
Yes, it has allowed me to focus on using/improving my critical thinking and writing skills, vs. worrying about my grade. My attitude towards going into an assignment is "ah, nice. this is going to help improve my writing.”

This is because there isn't as much stress regarding grades on paper which I think has helped me write better.

I think it’s helped my writing by keeping me focused on improving the quality of my work... vs. worrying about getting little points.

I believe the grading policy has helped my writing because I am not worried about the grade, instead I am just worried about my writing and I can completely focus on that.

I think it has positively affected since I'm more concerned with improving than getting a good grade.

The way the grading works makes me feel like you are here to help me to improve and that I can come here with the type of writing that I do and that I will be able to grow.
Less stress
Better learning
No effect on participation or performance
More participation & attendance
Equally motivated
Academic freedom
Better writing
More engaged in class
Genuine interest in a topic I normally wouldn't care about
More positive attitude
Worked harder
Should be stricter
Less effort on writing

Most frequent codes

(No. of responses, not students)
I feel more open to learning about material I would otherwise dread learning about.

I think the grading contract is actually helping me learn more. As a STEM major I don’t particularly enjoy English/Composition classes and would normally just put in the bare minimum effort however the way the class is structured makes the material seem much more interesting and I actually want to put in the effort.

I think it has allowed me to approach the topic with more genuine interest.

The grading contract was fair which gave me an open wide about studying material that I wasn't excited about.
I originally saw the way we were being graded and thought that I would try less hard on assignments because of that, but actually it has made me take class more seriously. I feel engaged in my coursework and I get excited to come to class and contribute. It has made me enjoy the assignments/activities while making me work harder--I would have blown off the debate in any other class, but I was really into it and had a good time.

At the beginning, I thought the grading structure would allow kids to slack off, but I AM UNBELIEVABLY SURPRISED!! You did it Maggie! You figured out the whole world! I think we are all super engaged with what we're learning and we don't have to focus on our grade. Instead, we can focus on putting out the best possible product. This might be a maturity thing (as a freshman, I don't know how this would affect other age students), but I really think that everyone thinks it's fair and just wants to do great work because of that.

I think it made me more engaged, which surprised me. When I first heard about the grading contract I was like, "oh, let's blow this off then." But I feel like because I didn't have to worry about getting top grades I was able to actually have fun and enjoy myself, which made the class more fun. I worked harder in this class than I had anticipated I would.