

Preceptor Perceptions and Preference of Pass/Fail and Letter Grading for Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences

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Conclusions

- More than double the number of surveyed preceptors prefer letter grading for assessing APPEs compared to pass/fail.
- APPE grading preference was not associated with any demographic, including practice type or years of precepting experience.
- Most preceptors had concerns about student motivation and having less ability to distinguish between students with pass/fail grading.
- Nearly half of preceptors had concerns about the quality of their own feedback if APPEs were assessed as pass/fail.
- Further studies should assess student and residency program director perceptions and preference for grading APPEs.

Objective

To evaluate perceptions regarding and preference between pass/fail and letter grading for APPEs among preceptors for the six Colleges/School of Pharmacy in the state of Tennessee: Belmont University⁴, East Tennessee State University⁵, Lipscomb University³, South College⁶, Union University¹, University of Tennessee².

Methods

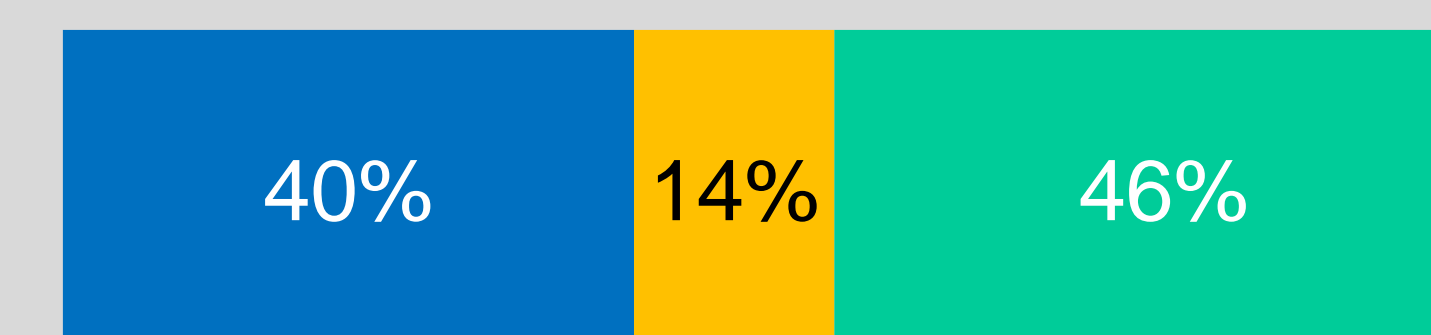
- The Institutional Review Boards for the Colleges/School of Pharmacy (COP/SOP) approved the study.
- The TAPE consortium developed a 37-item survey that was administered online through Qualtrics (Seattle, WA).
- Preceptors who had trained at least two students for a COP/SOP in Tennessee in the previous academic year were eligible for inclusion.
- Preceptors received an email requesting their participation in the study. The email provided informed consent information and a link to the online survey instrument.
- Survey responses included demographics, preceptor experience in assessing APPEs, perceptions of APPE grading, and preference of APPE grading scheme.
- Descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, chi-squares, and standard deviations, were generated to examine the data.

Respondents

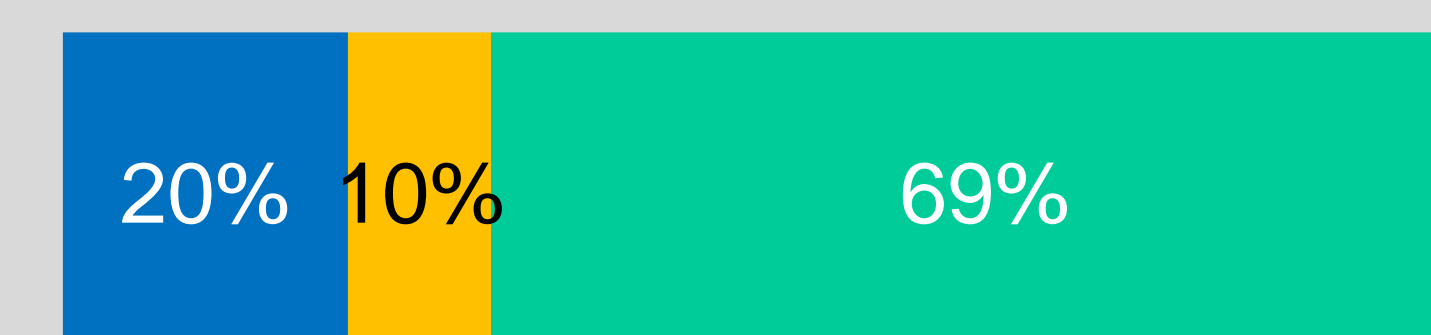
- The survey was completed by 383 of 869 eligible preceptors (44.1% response rate) including 175 preceptors (45.7%) who precept for multiple pharmacy programs.
- Preceptors reported their practice areas as: Acute Care (28%), Ambulatory Care (13%), Community Practice (22%), Internal Medicine (13%), and Institutional Practice (14%).

Preceptor Concerns

I would be concerned that the quality of my feedback may be lower if APPEs are graded as pass/fail instead of letter grading.



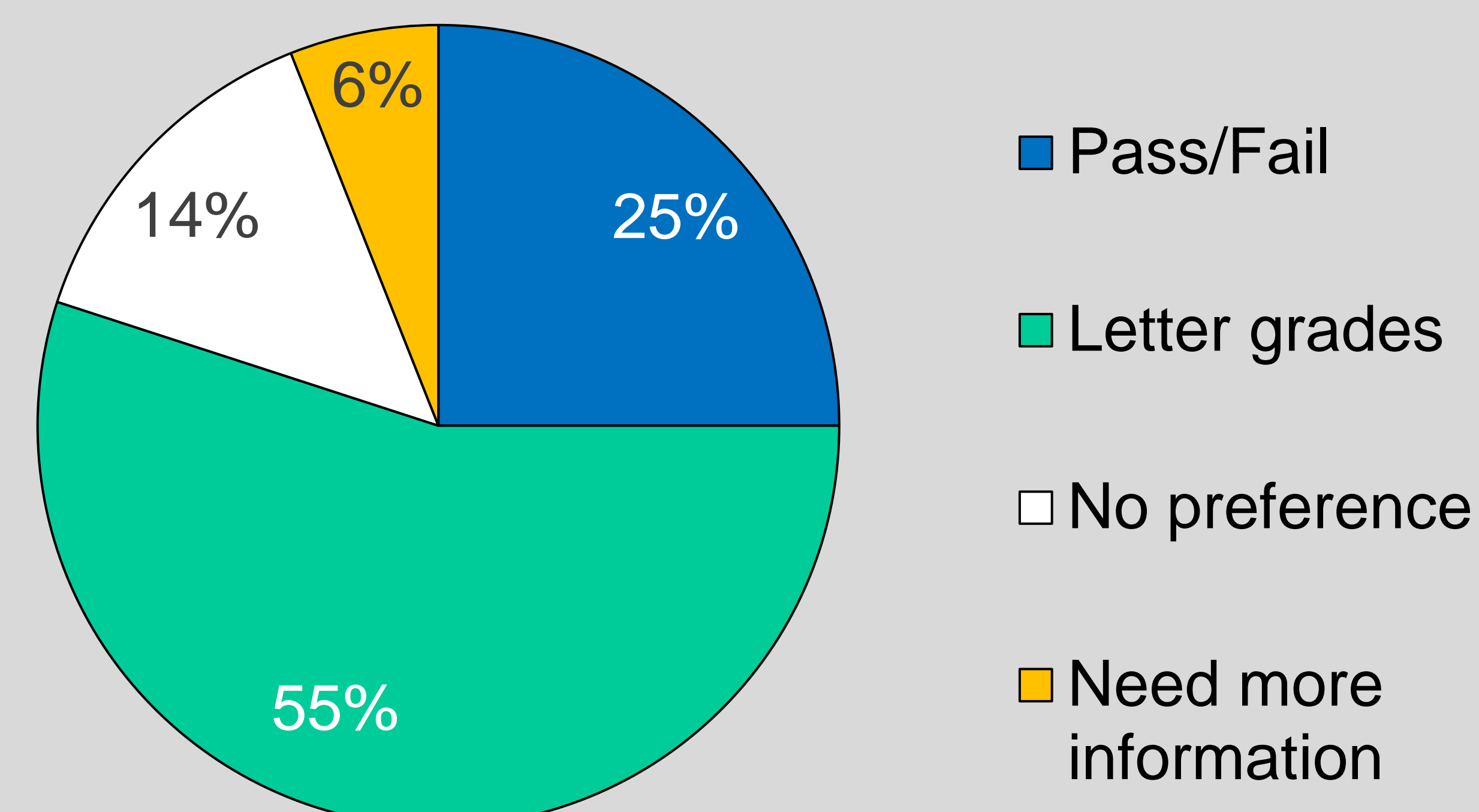
I would be concerned that students would be less motivated and/or put forth less effort if using pass/fail grading instead of letter grading.



I would be concerned about having less ability to distinguish one student from another or distinguishing the very best- or lowest-performing students without letter grades to award.



How would you prefer that APPEs are graded?



Select Survey Question Responses

If a student has performed poorly, I am confident in assigning a failing grade based on the evaluation rubric.



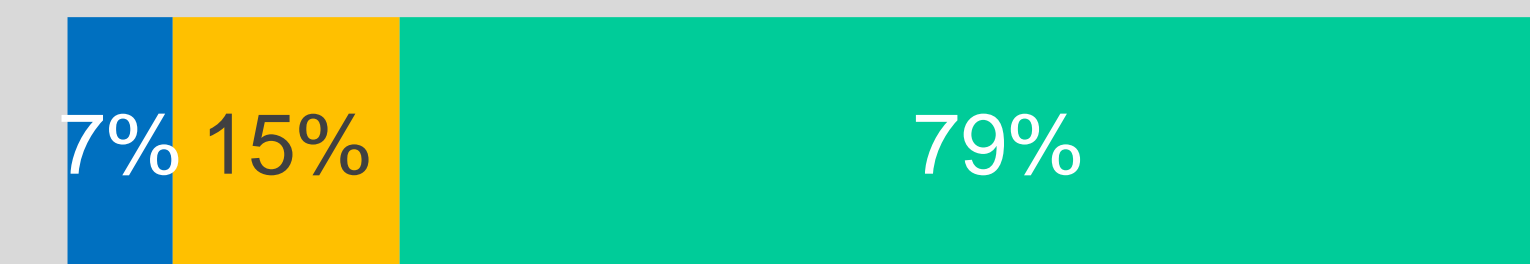
If a student has not performed at an "A" or "A-" level, I am confident in assigning the grade they have truly earned based on the evaluation rubric.



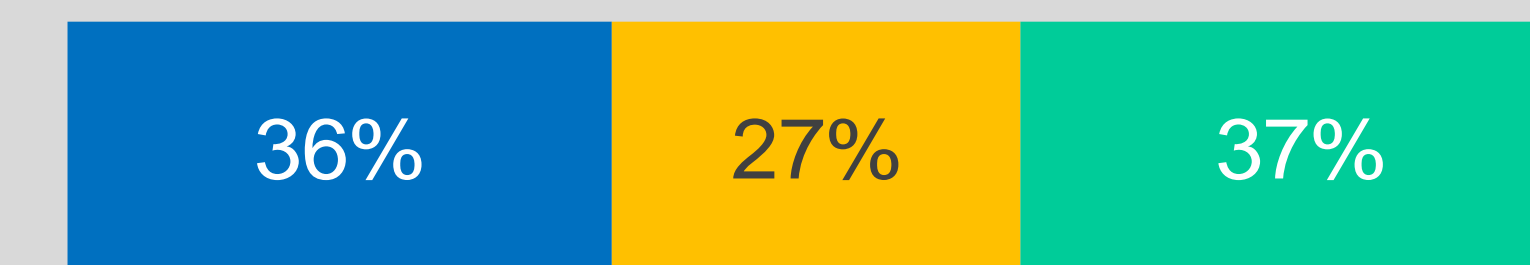
APPEs are too subjective to assign a grade lower than an "A" or "A-."



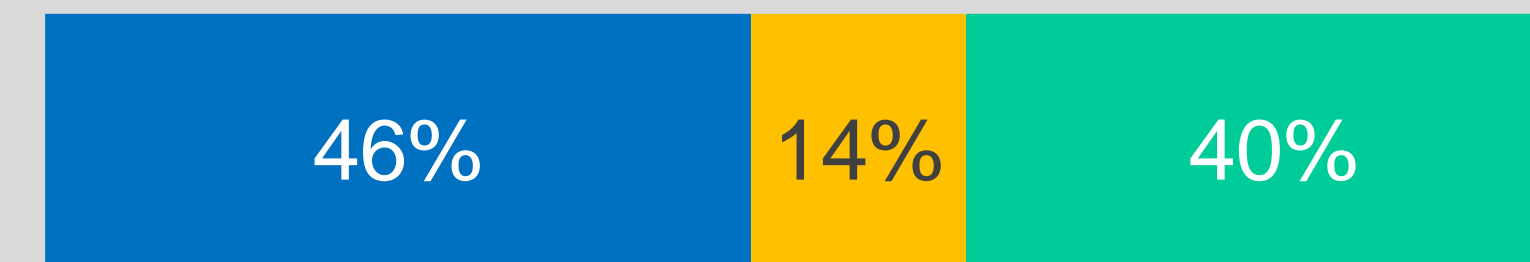
In general, student pharmacists are dissatisfied with any grade lower than an "A" or "A-" for an APPE.



Students demonstrate more concern with learning and performance during APPEs than with final grades.



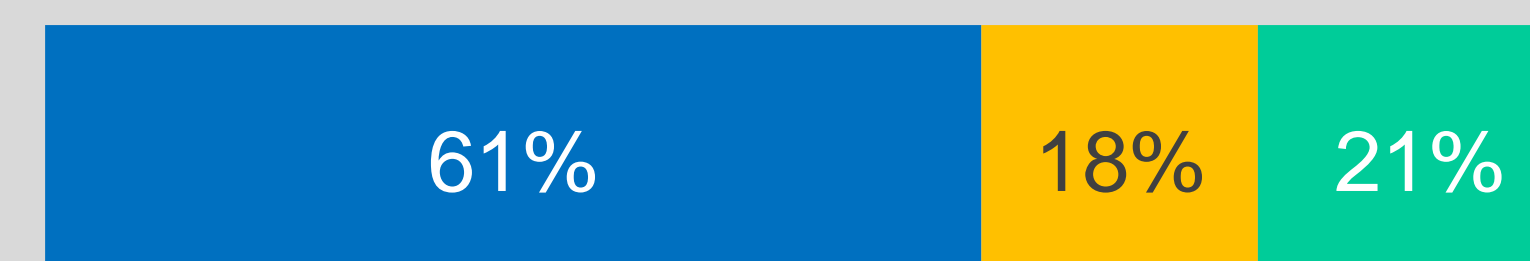
I believe that pass/fail grading would be adequate for preceptors to assess student abilities during APPEs.



I believe pass/fail grading for APPEs would better allow students to focus on learning and skill demonstration than the use of letter grading.



I believe that letter grading for APPEs creates unhealthy stress for students.



■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree