

DEFLATING GRADY

Part II – Midnight Thoughts

Somehow Grady Rizeng couldn't get to sleep. He had just ripped off the e-mail to the dean to vent his frustration. He kept thinking about his 8 AM meeting with Dr. Marks. He felt blind-sided by the insinuation that the grades he gave his students were too high. He had never looked at his grades over time or in comparison with grades given by his faculty colleagues. Never had he thought he was being easy on the students and their course evaluations suggested they had worked hard in his courses. *“What evidence does she have that the increase in grades in the department is due to my courses or a decrease in my standards? Couldn't it simply be that our students are getting better? There are all sorts of reason that grades might be rising.”* At 1 AM he got out of bed and logged on to the Internet to see what he could find out that would help him later in the morning.

Meanwhile, Lois Marks was having second thoughts. *“Did I come down too hard? I assumed Grady's high teaching ratings reflected easy grading standards. Did I jump to an incorrect conclusion? I need to check into this a bit more.”* And she logged on to the Internet as well.

1. What information should Prof. Rizeng bring to the meeting with his chair?
2. What evidence would Chairperson Marks need to demonstrate grade inflation?
3. Assuming grade inflation has occurred, what forces might be driving it?