Structure and Freedom Allowed Adjunct Faculty in Teaching Introductory Statistics
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Dimensions of Structure

Syllabus

Unstructured		Highly Structured
Extreme Anchors for the Dimension		
Adjunct choice of topics with constraint of course catalog description		Daily schedule provided to adjunct with a 'stick to the schedule' effort expected
Advantages		
• Capitalize on skills and interests of adjunct		• Ensures uniform coverage of topics across instructors
Disadvantages		
• Variance across sections		• Adjunct may not teach favorite topics

Textbook

Unstructured		Highly Structured
Extreme Anchors for the Dimension		
Adjunct selects text		Standard text used in all sections
Advantages		
• Text is familiar to adjunct		• Consistency for students • Text may be used in sequence of courses
Disadvantages		
• Text may be inappropriate for students		• Text may not be familiar to adjunct

Examples Used in Class

Unstructured		Highly Structured
Extreme Anchors for the Dimension		
Adjunct provides own examples		The department provides examples
Advantages		
• Adjunct provides examples with real-world appeal • Adjunct has in-depth knowledge of the example		• Consistency across sections
Disadvantages		
• Statistical principles have the potential to become complex		• Examples tend to be simple-minded

Grading Scales

Unstructured		Highly Structured
Anchors for the Dimension		
No constraints on adjunct		Median grade or frequency distribution recommended and expected
Advantages		
• Adjunct is free to use grades to maximize class involvement		• Expected consistency across sections in grade distribution
Disadvantages		
• Adjunct may be too easy and concerns about grade inflation are raised. • Substantial variance across sections		• Adjunct may be overly rigid in applying guidelines.

Evaluation Exercises

Unstructured		Highly Structured
Anchors for the Dimension		
Adjunct develops own tests, homework, and problems		Department provides standardized tests, homework, and projects
Advantages		
• Adjunct can develop interesting assignments		• Consistency across sections
Disadvantages		
• Substantial variance across sections		• Opportunities for academic misconduct • Adjunct needs to be sure all elements of tests are adequately covered

We would like to hear from you. Consider the dimensions noted above and tell us, "What constitutes ideal structure when employing adjunct faculty?"