"Many students, but especially students who face negative stereotypes, worry that a teacher could be biased or unfair. They may wonder if critical feedback is a genuine attempt to help them or reflects bias against their group... Even a little mistrust can harm a student’s learning. But when minority students were encouraged to see critical feedback as a sign of their teacher’s high standards and his or her belief in their potential to reach those standards, they no longer perceived bias (Cohen, Steele, & Ross, 1999)."


The advice below was adapted from Columbia University’s Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Teaching Center

To see more: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/tat/pdfs/feedback.pdf

**Providing Constructive Feedback — That Won’t Exasperate Your Students**

One of the biggest challenges you face is to make the grading and evaluation process constructive. The feedback process is the best chance to improve student learning and enhance their skills. To be effective, feedback needs to be timely, encouraging, and carefully tailored to the student.

1. Establish a climate of trust and respect. Student egos are fragile. Feedback should be given to help, not hurt. Be encouraging. Remember, negativity creates defensiveness.

2. Don’t overwhelm students. Limit feedback to the amount of information that the student can absorb. Identify the key areas that need additional work.


4. Refer back to your grading criteria.

5. Couch comments in “I” terms. I got lost here. I’m confused—did you mean to say...?

6. Structure your comments as questions or suggestions, rather than as criticisms.

7. Rephrase the paper’s main points. If you take students’ ideas seriously, they will work harder to express them clearly.

8. Use questions to identify errors. You might, for example, ask students for more information, or ask whether this is what they meant to say.