Dear Fraser Roberts,

I have been puzzling over your letter, and I hope I now see the point of your remarks. The dependent variate, I understand, is based on the order of preference in which an experienced instructor has placed different students in the same group. I presume that there is no such comparison, or at least none of comparable accuracy, between one group and another.

Consequently, I think it is right to take the independent variates each from the mean of its own batch, as you say you have done.

I imagine that you have used, as dependent variate, the series of deviations appropriate to the ordinal values supplied by the instructors, averaging the deviates whenever the instructor is unable to discriminate between two or more students, and so ties them. If the weights used for each test score are the partial
regressions of the criterion on each, then the weighted test score
is itself the partial regression prediction formula, which is
that having the maximum correlation with the criterion. If
however, at this stage, different batches are thrown together,
the average predictions for different batches will presumably
differ somewhat, and to these differences the differences based
on ordinal values within each batch will supply nothing to
correspond; in fact, the sum of the deviates for each batch
will necessarily be zero.

I do not know if this explanation will satisfy the
psychologists, who may of course be obstinate merely because
your procedure is unfamiliar to them.

Yours sincerely,