Exploring Approaches to Grading: Philosophies & Methods for Assessment & Feedback

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Grading is...

• Assessment of…
  student progress toward
  Goals / Outcomes (SLOs)

Goals/Outcomes can exist at all levels:
  Course (as whole)
  Unit / Chapter
  Lecture / Assignment / Activity
Course Goals/Outcomes

1. Content  ≈ “What” & “Why”
3. Attitudinal
4. Community-Building

Formative vs. Summative Assessment

Formative
• Measure students’ ongoing state/understanding of material
• Often informal, but can be formal (records/scores)
• Students receive immediate feedback
• Opportunity for on-the-fly adjustments to teaching or facilitation
Examples: Facilitation (circulating & listening during student work); clickers & voting; in-class active-learning questions

Summative
• Measure students’ final state/understanding of material
• Usually formal (detailed scores recorded)
• Delayed feedback, if any
Examples: Unit/Chapter Exams, Final Exams, Final Papers
UHM TA Responsibilities Vary Widely!

Minimal Teaching
- Only Grading & Office Hours

Moderate Teaching
- Running Discussions or Help Sessions
- Facilitation during lectures

Maximal Teaching!
- Preparing & running all class sessions
- Designing syllabus & grading schema

Tools for Grading

- Be Quantitative

- Single Questions/Problems
  - Use a “mini-matrix”
  - Choose max points wisely
  - Score one question (or page) at a time
  - Adjust after a few papers, then trust yourself!

- Large Reports and Projects
  - Rubrics
  - Basic Point Matrix
Rubrics

Vertical axis: Performance Criteria (Characteristics)

Horizontal axis: Evaluative Range (Level of Mastery)

Detailed descriptions

Sample Rubrics Packet
From Danielle D. Stevens, Ph.D.
3 to 5 level Rubric Example

Changing Conversation in Our City

Task Description: Each student will make a 3 minute presentation on the changes in one Portland community over the past 50 years. The student may choose the presentation in any way they wish, but their topic must be a topic of some sort, not just chronological

Detailed descriptions


8/10/11 - Introduction to Rubrics, Stevens & Levi
Point Matrix

Detailed breakdown of possible points

Includes brief descriptions of good/complete work

Final Letter Grades

• Definitions/ Meaning
  – What is “passing”?

• Variations in grading
  – Lecture vs. Lab/ Studio
  – Undergraduate vs. Graduate

• Incompletes
Final Course Grades

• Curve
  – *Valid for large classes (100+ students)*

• Straight/Flat Percentages
  – *Best for small classes*
  – *Students appreciate predictability*

• Hybrid Flat+Curve

• Keeping Records