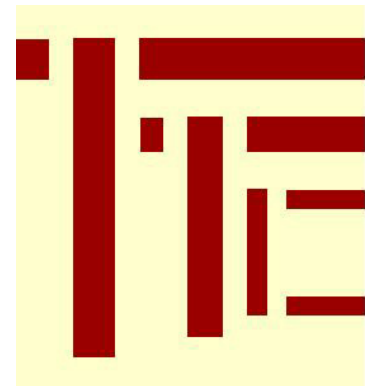

The Grading Process

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Outline

- Defining grading
- Grading models
- Process to determine grading policy
- General strategies for grading policy
- Examples
- Telesis demonstration

Grades

- A course grade communicates the student's level of achievement in a course
- Grades for assignments, papers, or exams communicate to the student how he or she is performing throughout a course.

Redefining Grading

- Identifies the most important learning in the course
- Constructs exams and assignments that test that learning
- Sets standards and criteria
- Guides student learning
- Helps make changes in teaching as a result of information gained in the grading process

Grading Models

- Normative or Relative (curve)
 - Compare a student's overall performance with the rest of the class, and the grade reflects the student's level of achievement within that group
 - ⊗ Grade relative to mean and standard deviation
 - ⊗ Give certain percentage of A's, B's, etc.
 - Advantages
 - ⊗ Outstanding performances compared to peers are rewarded
 - ⊗ Greatest flexibility for faculty
 - Disadvantages
 - ⊗ Need to interpret grades in context of entire group
 - ⊗ Grading standards fluctuate from year to year
 - ⊗ Need history of class performances

Ref: *Tips for Improving Testing and Grading*, Ory and Ryan, (SAGE, 1993).

Grading Models

- Absolute or Standards of Excellence
 - Compare student performance to specified absolute standards. How much of the tasks or content has a student mastered?

 - Advantages
 - ⊕ Course goals and standards clearly defined and communicated
 - ⊕ Final grades reflect achievement of course goals, not how student compares to a reference group

 - Disadvantages
 - ⊖ Difficult and time-consuming to determine course standards for each course grade
 - ⊖ Instructor has to decide on what are reasonable expectations of students
 - ⊖ Complete interpretation of the course grade is not possible unless major course goals are also available

Ref: *Tips for Improving Testing and Grading*, Ory and Ryan, (SAGE, 1993).

Golden Rules of Grading

- Fairness
 - Each student has an equal opportunity to receive each grade
- Accuracy
 - Should reflect the differences in performances
- Consistency
 - Determine a grading policy and follow it throughout the semester. Change only after considerable reflection.
- Defensibility
 - Be able to explain why one student received an A and another a B
- Clear
 - Students should be able to determine their progress

Ref: *Tips for Improving Testing and Grading*, Ory and Ryan, (SAGE, 1993).

Process

- Identify desired student achievements by developing course objectives
 - How should students be different when they finish this course?
 - What should students retain from your course (in 10 years)?
 - What should students be able to do with the knowledge and skills gained in this course?
 - What is your teaching philosophy?
- Develop a testing plan that evaluates the achievement of the course objectives
 - What type of grading components will be used?
 - How many of each type will be used?
 - During what times in the course will each component be administered and how?
 - How will feedback to the students be handled?
 - How will questions/regrades be handled?

Process (continued)

- Decide on a type of grading model or combination of grading models to be used – see what traditionally is used in your department
- Decide on the weighting of each grading component
 - Importance of different types to course objectives
 - Developmental or unit-based weighting
- Discuss your grading system with colleagues for feedback

Grading Components

- Homework
- Exams
- Quizzes
- Papers
- Writing components: journals, discussion questions
- Projects
- Presentations
- Group work
- Discussion board
- Class participation

General Strategies for Grading Policy

- Clearly state grading procedures in your course syllabus and discuss in class
- Set policies on late work
- Provide enough and a variety of opportunities for students to show what they know
- Keep students informed of their progress throughout the semester
- Stress that grades reflect work done and not a judgment about the person
- Give encouragement to students who are performing poorly
- With students who are upset about their grade, have them prepare the complaint (or justification of change) in writing

General Strategies for Grading Policy

- Return the first graded assignment or exam before the add/drop deadline
- Record results numerically instead of letter grade for greater accuracy when calculating final grades
- Give students an opportunity to rewrite their papers (and receive a higher score)
- Compare your grade distributions with those of similar courses in your department
- Ask the students about your grading policies on student evaluations
 - Were the grading procedures clearly explained?
 - Did you receive adequate feedback on your performance?
 - Were regrade requests handled fairly?

Examples of grading policies

● Science

- Quizzes: Eight 10-point quizzes, lowest score dropped, top 7 scores normalized to 100.
- Exam: Three 100-point exams, lowest score dropped
- Final: 200-point exam
- Final Grade:
 - ⊕ Point total is sum of the normalized grades for the final-exam score and the three highest of the 1.5 hour exams and the total quiz scores.
 - ⊕ Students will be ranked in the order of their point totals. Letter grades based on: position in the ranking and a subjective evaluation of the performance of the class as a whole.

● Science

- Semester grades will be based upon 480 possible total points.
- Quiz: one 50-point quiz
- Exams: three 100-point exams
- Homework: 13 10-point problem sets.
- Final: optional 100-point final; may replace one of the exams.

Examples of grading policies

● Mathematics

- **GRADES:** Each of the Exams 1-4 will count 18% toward the final course grade. Similarly the grade of the quizzes will be 18%. The homework will be 10%. Each exam is worth 100 points, the total quiz score is worth 100 points and the total homework score is worth 100 point.
- Example: If **E1**, **E2**, **E3**, and **F** are your four exam scores, **QU** is your quiz score, **HMW** your homework score then your total **T** is given by:

$$T = .18(E1 + E2 + E3 + F + QU) + .10 HMW$$

- In cases where the lowest of the **E1 – E3** is less than **F**, this lowest value will be replaced in the formula by **F**. Thus, the lowest in-semester exam will be dropped out in computing averages provided this lowest score isn't **F**.
- Your letter grade for the course will not be lower than it would be if it were based on the scale appearing in the following table.

Letter Grade	A	B	C	D
Range	90-100	80-89.99	65-79.99	50-64.99

Examples of grading policies

● Social Sciences

- Exams: 2 exams, each worth 25% of your grade
- Final: worth 40% of your grade
- Class participation grade: 10% of your grade.
 - ⊕ Based on participation in the discussion sections. Also, based on 10 one-page memos answering the weekly discussion questions.
- The standards are:

98+ A+	88-90 B+	78-80 C+	68-70 D+
92-98 A	82-88 B	72-78 C	62-68 D
90-92 A-	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-

● Social Sciences

- Midterm papers: 20% each
Final: 30%
- Attendance: 10%
- Class Participation: 20%
- Class participation, especially in discussion sections will also count toward your grade
- If people don't come to class, I will invoke the dreaded pop quiz and adjust the weights of the other assignments accordingly. So show up!

Examples of grading policies

- Social Sciences

- **Course Grading:** Exam 1– 30%, Exam 2– 35%, Exam 3 – 35%
- If you are taking the course pass/fail or credit/no credit, you must receive a C or better for credit (i.e., C- will not earn credit)
- **Exams:** No make-ups will be given. If a missed exam is excused, your course grade will be based upon your performance on the other exams.
- **Homeworks:** These problem sets will be graded, but they will not affect your course grade. The assignments are provided as an opportunity for feedback and a supplemental study resource.

- Social Sciences

- Problem Sets: 10%
 - ⊕ Graded: good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory
- 2 Midterm Exams: 25%, each
- Final Exam: 40%
 - ⊕ The final exam will be cumulative.

Examples of grading policies

- Writing/Humanities

- Draft of one paper: 5%
- Paper 1: 10%
- Paper 2: 10%
- Paper 3: 15%
- Paper 4: 20%
- Research paper
 - ⊗ Draft: 10%
 - ⊗ Final: 20%
- Active participation in discussions: 10%

- Writing/Humanities

- Paper 1: 20%
 - ⊗ Draft: 5%
 - ⊗ Revised: 15%
- Paper 2: 20%
 - ⊗ Draft: 5%
 - ⊗ Revised: 15%
- Paper 3: 20%
 - ⊗ Draft: 5%
 - ⊗ Revised: 15%
- Group project: 30%
- Class participation: 10%