Using Grading Strategies to Promote Student Learning

Grading Experiences

Two Experiences
1. Grading Done Well
2. Grading Done Poorly

Describe
1. Characteristics
2. Consequences

Student Learning and Success

What does inspirational student learning and success look like to you?

Educative Assessment

Conceptualized and articulated by
Grant Wiggins, Barbara Walvoord, Virginia Johnson Anderson, and Dee Fink

Purpose of Assessment
Audit-ive: Backward looking for grading
Educative: Forward looking for student learning

Educative Assessment

Better Learning
[diagram showing components of Educative Assessment]
Using Grading Strategies to Promote Student Success

Educative Assessment

Forward-Looking Assessment Activities
• Authentic assessments
• Perform → Receive Feedback → Revise → New Performance
• Homework is practice

Educative Assessment

Appropriate Criteria and Standards
• We want to see students “Do it Well”
• Few faculty can identify own criteria and standards
• Develop rubrics to clarify objectives and “Doing it Well”
  – Criteria are the traits (link to course objectives)
  – Standards are the performance levels (construct a 2- to 5-point scale using descriptions of good and poor performance)

Educative Assessment

Opportunities for Self-Assessment
• Must learn to self-assess to succeed as an adult
• Steps:
  1. Identify relevant criteria (either told or better yet discovered)
  2. Practice using criteria on other students’ work
  3. Practice using criteria on one’s own work

Educative Assessment

Provide FIDeLity Feedback
• Feedback is inherently evaluative
• Feedback does NOT become part of grade
• Done in shared dialogue
  – Frequent
  – Immediate
  – Discriminating (based on criteria and standards)
  – Done Lovingly (supportively)

Grading Systems

All are based on comparisons
– to people or standards
Norm-referenced
– Comparison relative to performance of others
– Grading on a curve, relative grading
– Most are C’s, a few are A’s and F’s
Criterion-referenced
– Comparison to a preset standard
– Absolute grading
– All could get an A

Grading Systems

What does an A mean? And + or -?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Norm-Referenced</th>
<th>Criterion-Referenced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Advanced, Mastery of All Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average, Fair</td>
<td>Acceptable, Meets Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>No Mastery of Objectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading Systems
NIU Undergraduate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Outstanding competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Above satisfactory competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory level of competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Marginal satisfactory competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory level of competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See: http://catalog.niu.edu/content.php?catoid=25&navoid=923#grad_syst

Grading Systems
NIU Graduate

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Deficient (will not earn credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Seriously deficient (will not earn credit)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See: http://catalog.niu.edu/content.php?catoid=26&navoid=982#grad_syst

Grading Guidelines

1. 3 Cs: Clarity, Consistency, Communication
2. Grades communicate the current level of academic achievement
3. Timesaving Strategies
4. Apply NIU and departmental policies and procedures

What Will You Do?

How will you support student learning and success?
How will you communicate achievement?
Any questions or concerns?

Contact

Stephen R. Wallace, Ed.D.
Office of Assessment Services, Associate Director
Adams 101
815-753-0816
swallace@niu.edu
Grading Done Well

Take a moment to think about your own grading experiences as a student. Reflect on two very different experiences. The first experience is when grading was done well. The second is when grading was done poorly. Picture those experiences. Recall the instructor and the course. What were the consequences of each grading experience? How did it affect you?

After thinking about these two experiences for a minute:

1. Complete the first row of the table below by describing some of the characteristics of your grading experiences.

2. Complete the second row by describing some of the consequences each experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Experience</th>
<th>Grading Done Well</th>
<th>Grading Done Poorly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Grading Guidelines


Grades communicate the current level of academic achievement.

1. Organize the gradebook (by objectives/standards)
2. Include achievement factors in the grade (and avoid other behavioral factors)
3. Limit extra credit to additional evidence and avoid zeros in gradebook (to limit distortions)
4. Consider most the recent information
5. Summarize information and determine final grade (by converting to the same scale, weighting accordingly, and then combining)
6. Verify quality of assessment data (so it is reliable and valid)
7. Involve students (by keeping them informed of their current performance)


Grading guidelines:

1. Keep the grading system consistent with the purpose of grading
2. Collect data throughout the grading period
3. Include varied sources of data (from projects, tests, quizzes, etc.)
4. Make students aware of the grading system
5. Keep academic performance separate from non-academic performance (attendance, participation, hygiene, etc.)
6. Base grades on high quality assessment data (that is reliable and valid)
7. Assign appropriate weight to assessments (with more important artifacts weighing more heavily that less important artifacts)
8. Apply grading system consistently to all students (so it is fair and unbiased)


Timesaving Grading Strategies

The following are timesaving strategies for grading from the work of Walvoord and Johnson Anderson (2010).

1. Determine what students think about their performance (use a self-assessment)
2. Don’t waste time on careless student work (ask student to resubmit)
3. Don’t extensively mark grammar and punctuation (but note global concerns with a few examples)
4. Focus on fundamental issues first
5. Consider comments without grades (when evaluating drafts)
6. Use comments only for teachable moments (extensive comments on final product may never be read)
7. Spend more time guiding (and less grading)
8. Limit amount of grade levels (to only those that are needed)
9. Limit basis for grading (by focusing on prioritized course objectives)
10. Have students organize their work for your efficiency (by using a checklist)
11. Delegate the work (by having students assess peers using checklists and guides)
12. Use technology to save time and enhance results
13. Keep a grading log (to analyze time management)