Grading in the Humanities and Social Sciences

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Workshop Objectives

1) Examine the dual role of assessment in courses

2) Learn how to establish criteria and standards

3) Deal with Plagiarism

Introduction Activity

Why choose this workshop?

What is your department?

What class are you TA-ing?

What are the challenges and concerns about grading?

The Dual Role of Assessment

- **Formative** – how are they learning (meta-cognition, critical thinking, feedback, self-evaluation, low stakes)
- **Summative** – what have they learned (outcomes, milestones, domain knowledge, high-stakes)

The Expanded Role of Assessment

Formative & **summative** (also **diagnostic**) – more recently have been re-conceptualized as:

Assessment **FOR** learning   **diagnostic**

Assessment **AS** learning   **formative**

Assessment **OF** learning   **summative**

Adapted from Growing Success Framework by the Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010

Formative Strategies

1. **Clarify what good performance is**
2. Facilitate self-assessment
3. **Deliver high-quality feedback information**
4. Encourage teacher and peer dialogue
5. **Encourage positive motivation and self esteem**
6. Provide opportunities to close the gap
7. **Use feedback to improve teaching**

Nicol, D. J., & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in higher education*, *31*(2), 199-218.

Formative Strategies

Give some examples of formative assessments that apply to your field. (Hint: how would you help someone move towards the learning outcomes)

Summative Strategies

Give some examples of summative assessments that apply to your field. (Hint: think about the learning outcomes of one of your courses)

Establishing Criteria & Standards for Grading

- Criteria (minimum requirements)
- Standards (levels of performance)

What is a Rubric?

Why are they important?

- ✓ Scoring "rules"
- ✓ Make public key criteria that students can use in developing, revising, and judging their own work

Activity

Develop one criteria and describe the various levels of performance.

Rubric for Article Critique

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NOT SATISFACTORY
I: Summary	The article is summarized succinctly, and includes the key points.	The article is summarized, but may be missing a few key points.	The abstract of the article written by the authors is rephrased.
II: Analysis	Each component of the article is critically analyzed.	Most components of the article are critically analyzed.	The components are described but not analyzed critically.
III: Conclusion	A logical conclusion is drawn from the critical analysis, and precise recommendations made on how to improve the study.	Conclusion is logical, but may not be completely related to the analysis. Incomplete recommendations are made on how to improve the study.	Conclusion is vague and unrelated to the critical analysis; Conclusions are too general to be useful. Recommendations to improve the study are unrelated to the critical analysis, and/or are too vague to be useful.

From GLIS 601: Prof. Jamshid Beheshti, adapted from Prof. Moffat

How might it benefit students?

- Exposes the hidden mental processes that the learner needs to use to understand the subject or discipline

- Fosters higher level thinking

- Allows students to become more deeply involved in the writing process and therefore in their own learning

- Helps students evaluate their own work

- Helps students give each other constructive feedback

How might it benefit the teacher?

- Defines your expectations
- Provides feedback to instructor on students' strengths & weaknesses
- Saves time overall
- Fosters consistency and fairness
  - Increases the consistency in grading among multiple graders
  - Helps colleagues reach agreement on common goals
- Supports instructor if/when students question their grade

Reliability and Fairness

"Reliability is only a problem when judges operate in private and without shared criteria. In fact, multiple judges, when properly trained to assess actual student performance using agreed upon criteria, display a high degree of inter-rater reliability" (Wiggins, 1989, p. 710).

Grading Bias

- Develop an ability to assess the work as distinct from the student

- Develop an awareness of cultural issues; however, try not to make assumptions about a student based on his/her cultural group.

Plagiarism

1.9 "Plagiarism" means the representation of another's work, published or unpublished, as one's own or assisting another in representing another's work, published or unpublished, as his or her own. (Conduct of Research Regulation, McGill)

Plagiarism

Decision	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Exonerated	55	60	57
Admonished	115	126	123
Reprimand	-	-	1
Totals	170	186	181

Admonished:
- Failed paper, assignment, exam
- Placed on conduct probation
- Partial grade for paper, assignment, exam

Table adapted from Annual Reports of the Committee on Student Discipline (2012-2015)

Plagiarism – what indications are there?

- Changes/irregularities in writing style

- Incorrect citation

- Self-plagiarism

- Social media

- Close collaboration

Plagiarism – how can you stop it?

- Assignments that can't be plagiarized

- Education – talk about plagiarism (or ask your prof to)

    - Mini (formative) assignments on proper citation, paraphrasing

- Online checkers – with caution

Is This Plagiarism?

Alonso, 1st year undergrad

Lin, 3rd year undergrad

Elyse, 1st year grad student

Tips and Tricks

- Review rubric with students (when possible)
- When writing comments 'pick your battles'
- Give examples (good and bad)
- Mark with your 'boss' or other TAs

For those who have graded before, what are your tips?

Resources

Fair Play Website - McGill (Integrity for Undergraduates)
http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/students

Regulation on the conduct of research - McGill
https://www.mcgill.ca/research/files/research/conduct-of-research-regulation-on.pdf

Annual Report on Student Discipline - McGill
https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/disciplinary/annual-report

Website on dealing with plagiarism
http://www.plagiarism.org/resources/webcasts/

Article on plagiarism checker limitations
https://www.plagiarismtoday.com/2011/12/07/the-limitation-of-every-plagiarism-checker/

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