Grade Less While Students Learn More

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Background

- **Passive learning = Low-level thinking**

- **Athletic trainers need:**
  – Enhanced problem solving abilities
  – Knowledge producing abilities

- **Passive learning doesn't produce quality athletic trainers.**

Bean JC, 2011; Anderson RS, 1998

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Background

- **Active learning = Higher-level thinking**

- **Active learning requires more engagement by the faculty member.**

- **Faculty often avoid active learning to avoid the additional work from grading.**

Bean JC, 2011; Anderson RS, 1998

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Background

- **Why don't we assign more active learning such as writing?**

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO GRADE

The grading is too subjective

I am not qualified

My class is TOO large

Insecurities about grading writing

Students don't care about my feedback anyway

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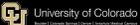
Background

- **When grading takes into account process and not just product, you get students who participate in learning and don't just look for the grade.**

~ RS Anderson, 1998

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Designing Effective Assignments

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Effective Assignments

- **Evoke deep learning**
- **Present real problems that require students to critically think or pose their own problems**
  - Instructor or student designed
- **Are presented in a rhetorical context to give students a role or purpose**

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6 Key Assignment Prompts

- **Purpose of the Assignment**
- **Format/Genre**
- **Interactive Component**
- **Expectations for Use of Sources**
- **Audience**
- **Explicit, Available Grading Criteria**

Hobson EH, 1997; Bean, 2011

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Purpose of the Assignment

- **Rhetorical Context**
- **What is the reason for the assignment in the first place?**

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Format/Genre

- **Literature Review**
- **Article Critique**
- **Journal**
- **Memo**
- **Grant Proposal**
- **Oral Presentation**

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Interactive Components

- **Number of revisions**
- **Brainstorming sessions**
  - Concept mapping
- **Visits to writing center**
- **Stages of feedback**
  - When? and who?
- **Doodles**

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Expectations for Use of Sources

- **Which style guide? AMA…APA…MLA?**
- **How many references are expected?**
- **Peer reviewed or popular sources?**
- **Textbooks allowed?**
- **Interviews?**
- **Etc…**

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Audience

- **Help the student understand the intended audience**
  - Includes helping them understand the audience's perspective on the topic.
- **Determines whether writing from a position of power, equality, or subordinate**

Explicit, Available Grading Criteria

- **How will the work be graded?**
  - Rubrics
  - Formative/summative feedback
  - Etc…
- **Grading samples**
- **Grading criteria revision**
  - use previous submissions to help characterize "good"
- **May choose to let students help determine grading criteria.**

Using Alternatives to the Traditional Grading Process

Traditional Grading

- **ABCDF**
- **Instructor-centered grading**
- **Instructor-centered feedback**
- **Emphasizes competition**
- **Emphasizes the grade**

Bean, 2011; Potts G, 2010

Questions to ask when deciding how an assignment will be graded.

- **Should I focus on grammatical and editorial errors or not?**
- **Should I grade in a formative or summative manner?**
- **Should I use a rubric for grading or do I write in the margins?**
- **Should I let students negotiate the grading criteria? To what extent?**
- **How much do I focus on the minutia versus on the activity and behavior of learning?**

Alternatives to the Traditional

- **Peer Review**
  - Facilitation is necessary for it to be productive for grading.
  - 3 types
    - *Open-ended*
    - *Guided*
    - *Directed*

Reiber LJ, 2006; Bean 2011

Alternatives to the Traditional

- **Contract Grading**
  - Focus less on degree of quality and more on activities and behaviors that lead to learning
  - Students name contract their grade in advance
  - Example:

A = pass 4 exams (80%+), 3 writing assignments, 3 practical assignments
B = pass 4 exams (80%+), 2 writing assignments, 3 practical assignments
C = pass 4 exams (75%+), 1 writing assignment, 3 practical assignments
D = pass 4 exams (70%+), 1 writing assignment, 2 practical assignments

Potts G, 2010; Anderson RS, 1998; Lindemann DF & Harbke CR, 2011 .

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Alternatives to grammar checking

- **Focus on the major revision and don't mark any errors.**
- **Have students use writing center when grammar is a concern**
- **No longer be the editor, but give them mode for learning.**
  - Work with student to edit 1 or 2 paragraphs and let them edit the rest.
  - Minimalist grading…don't make the same comment over and over again.

Bean, 2011

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Alternatives to grammar checking

With these injuries, individuals can become focused on the fact that the healing process can be a long and difficult one. With this, that person may experience many different emotions. Some of the biggest influences on the attitudes of the injured come from people in power positions such as coaches, doctors, or athletic trainers, and others closest to the individual. These following studies go into depth on how an individual's mental health, paired with these social support systems, influence the health, wellbeing, and recovery time of injured athletes.

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Public Grading

- **Grade an assignment while students watch.**
  - Before students begin work
  - Can demonstrate different levels of expectation

Lucas L, 2012

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Creating Revision Cues in Student Feedback

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Student Identified Grading Failures

- **Minimal or no feedback or explanation of grade**
- **Only negative comments**
- **Didn't tell student how to improve**
- **No grading criteria or explanation of grading**

Smith LJ, 2008

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How do you choose to provide feedback?

- **Conference**
  - Group
  - One-on-one
- **In the margins**
- **Rubric**
- **Checklist**
- **Immediate verbal**
- **Computerized tools**
  - MS Word review
  - GoodReader (pdf annotator) MarkUp app

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Editing Oriented vs Revision Oriented

- **Editing Oriented**
  - Editing without commenting on ideas or structure
- **Revision Oriented**
  - Revision is expected and thoughts on next draft should be more complex

Bean JC, 2011

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Revision Oriented

- **Multiple drafts improve end product and student learning**
  - Comment only on draft, not on final product
  - Comment and give grade on draft, allow resubmissions

Bean JC, 2011; Smith LJ 2008

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End Comments to Encourage Revision

- **Summative feedback with intent to encourage improvement**
  - Focuses on process, thought, concept
- **Bury the grade in the feedback**
  - *Excellent insight used in this draft. You mentioned different viewpoints on the value of the Lachman's test—but you never brought your argument to a conclusion. This draft scores an 88%, so your final draft should provide a more compelling conclusion to your argument.*

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