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ABSTRACT

Results of a grading-policies study in 1972 at St. Mary's Junior College are presented. To obtain information regarding these policies, an eight-page questionnaire was administered to all 47 faculty members. The three parts of the questionnaire were: I. Evaluation Tools and Approaches; II. Overall Approach to Grading; and III. Other Factors in Evaluation. Each of the parts was analyzed for both general and technical education faculty members, and differences were noted. In addition, all technical education faculty (n=14) completed an additional one-page form relating to the grading practices used in the clinical experience. The study results include the following: (1) the final examination and final course grade, written quizzes and unit tests were the most frequently used in both general and technical education courses; (2) the most frequently used method of reporting evaluation to students in general education courses was the letter grade, whereas in technical education it was in terms of points; (3) the practice of pass/no pass and satisfactory/unsatisfactory was used infrequently; (4) in general education courses, the most frequent practice of determining letter grades was use of the normal curve and adjusting grades to fit performance; (5) in approximately 60% of general education courses and 70% of technical education courses, the evaluation score is translated into a letter grade either all, most, or some of the time; (6) generally, students did not "contract" for final grades in either type of course; (7) within the technical education courses, clinical laboratory factors are more important than any others. Six appendixes provide additional information. (DB)

GRADING PATTERNS AND PRACTICES

A STUDY OF GRADING PATTERNS AND PRACTICES DURING WINTER QUARTER, 1972 AT ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA.

by

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Presented to the University of Minnesota in partial fulfillment for requirements for Ed. Ad. 8-274: "Two-Year College," under the direction of Dr. Donald Morgan, December 11, 1972.

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* Plans to develop conclusions and recommendations and to complete this report in a second course have been approved by the course instructor.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the in-depth processing and interpreting of a grading policies study in 1972 at St. Mary's Junior College in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The study was undertaken and carried out by the Studies Committee of this private, paramedical college. This Committee and the Educational Policies Committee of the school granted permission for the authors of this paper to continue and further the analysis of the data collected in that study. Two of the authors are members of the Studies Committee and the third is a former faculty member with close affiliations to the school.

The report is presented against the background of current junior college research practices ascertained from a survey of the literature. It is hoped that the study will be seen as part of a new trend in junior college activities....a trend toward accountability through research efforts to collect pertinent and useful information. Through this perspective the study gains even more value than is inherent in the purpose for which it was designed.

CHAPTER ONE:

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

BACKGROUNDS

Ever since junior colleges began to take a major role in American higher education the movement and many of its aspects has been the subject of numerous studies and reports. However, junior colleges and junior college faculties have themselves avoided research activities. Involvement in research has been seen as something that would dilute the educative function and discourage the pursuit of teaching excellence that two-year schools believe to be the heart of their endeavor.

A frequent distinction made between the role of the university and the role of the two-year college is that the university is involved in research and has research as one of its functions while the lower division schools do not. Many writers about junior colleges allude to this, state it flatly, or comment that junior college faculty are not research oriented and should concern themselves with teaching and students rather than the rigors of analytical and investigative procedures. Such references have been noted in writings by O'Connell, Cohen, Medsker, Harris, Roueche and Boggs, and Hartung, for example. (10:3,23;2:xvii,102; 9:164; 7:42; 12:52; 8:146) Stating that teaching excellence is an absolute for junior or community colleges, Hartung writes that they "must devote primary energy to achieving this excellence at a level surpassing the teaching in those institutions where the principle goal is research or is divided between research and instruction." (8:146) Another author, Good, says that research contributes to

rather than competes with educational functions, and wonders why research is played down or opposed in two-year liberal art schools. He believes that there is no basis for the attitude of some instructors in small colleges who feel that teaching and research are not compatible. (6:45) Although this view is being expressed by some, an inherent conflict between research and education can be argued (13:17-22) and junior colleges have traditionally adhered to the view that the incompatibility exists.

Studies of junior college faculty have shown that they do not want the direct, personal commitment to research that characterizes upper division faculty roles. A one-year study of issues and problems of junior college faculty was reported in 1967 and the recommendations from that study indicate that faculty saw research as necessary but wanted it done by someone else. The recommendations were for a center for junior college research, an agency to do the studies that were necessary (5:85) and for discussion of setting up offices of institutional research at each college. (5:87) Since 1967 a center for junior college information has gained an active role in junior college affairs and institutional research has advanced forward. However, the 'teaching only' role of two-year college faculty is now seen as counter-productive (16:14) and faculty <u>are</u> finding themselves involved in research. The focus of such involvement is not on individual research but rather on cooperation with the support of the broader research that is developed under the concepts of institutional research.

ACCOUNTABILITY

In recent years there has been a rising tide of demands that those responsible for use of resources and efforts identify and justify their expenditures of time and facilities and material. This pressure has certainly come upon educators (16:9) and as they work toward the accountability required of them research has tended to become more significant than had been the rule previously.

Measurement is the key to accountability and unless the measurement is accurate and valid it has no value. The need for two-year schools to show accurately what they are doing is very important to the movement and its future. (7:31; 12:1; 9:185) Society's demand for responsible action is leading junior colleges to collect and analyse pertinent data and information and to use this in decision making. Two-year college research is being forced to take on new dimensions. (16:Acknowledgments) It is a strange paradox that those who were so adverse to research should be now involved in developing the new concept of research at the institutional level.

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Institutional research is research designed or endorsed by the institution to assist it to meet its function. This type of research in educational facilities was rare in educational institutions but has been increasing rapidly in the last twelve years. (12:48; 16:1; 1:284; 17:11) The need for adequate research was recognized by the American Association of Junior Colleges and led that organization to support research activities in the

two-year schools and to advocate the establishment of research offices in every institution. (2:101-105; 12:vii) This support of research has been greatly aided by the Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC, a nationwide information and retrieval system through its clearinghouse for junior college information at U.C.L.A. ERIC was developed in 1966 under a project sponsored by the United States Office of Education. (2:102; 12:vii) Publications from this center encourage institutional research, identify what it can and should be, and offer leadership to those who undertake the task of achieving it. Their literature recommends that there be funded offices for research and a research staff with responsibility directly to the president. (12:2)

Junior college institutional research was surveyed nationally by Roueche and Boggs in 1968 for the American Association of Junior Colleges. The report, Junior College Institutional Research: The State of the Art, is frank about the deficiencies that exist but did find that the number of studies reported exceeded the number found on previous surveys. (12:38) Criticism of the calibre of much of the research was offered (12:9) but at least it is apparent that junior colleges are involved in research and perhaps, as Cohen suggested, these less adequate efforts are but steps on the way to more definitive research. (2:103)

Emerging guidelines for setting up institutional research have been listed in an ERIC publication (16:3-6) As institutions engage in more research, gain more expertise, and share it, institutional research will become ever more useful. An Association for Institutional Research has been organized and should also

further the growth of this new practice of research (12:2) and aid in sharing of fundings and useful practices and tools.

It was stated above that institutional research is designed to assist the institution towards achieving its purpose. To do this it must help solve problems (17:11), and to be effective it must be organized and it must answer the right and most pertinent questions. Institutional research should be relied on for institutional development, for evaluation of the curriculum, and for administrative effectiveness. (12:ii) Five major components of institutional research have been listed as: 1. assessment of allocation of resources, 2. assessment of student potential, 3. assessment of achievement, 4. analysis of curriculum needs and priorities, and 5. assessment of the college's impact on the community. (16:Foreword) Few institutions can yet say that they use research in all these areas. Many research efforts are simply data collection, for public relations or to gain money for the school. (2:ix) In fact most studies in junior colleges are data collection about students. (12:38) Such studies may serve a narrow purpose but are only part of the comprehensive information that could be used by administration and faculty in responsible development of their institution.

INSTRUCTIONAL RESEARCH

Instructional research is that part of institutional research that has to do with the curriculum, with the process of getting that curriculum to the student, and with the results of curriculum on the student. It has been identified as the area most in need

of research by junior college researchers. (12:8,53) With the goal of high level instruction in junior colleges it is strange that this area has not been given the attention it merits. Perhaps it is necessary to admit that this is a very difficult area and that skill in research methods is needed if worthwhile results are to be obtained. Cohen hypothesizes that in 1979 it will still be a problem but that there will be on-going efforts in instructional research and assessment. (2:101-105)

One of the aspects of instruction that is a problem to both students and faculty is grading practice. Roueche and Boggs identify this problem of how grades are awarded and of what improvements can be made in grading as one of the most pressing issues facing educators. (12:3) The purpose of this paper is to deal with an instructional research effort that surveyed the grading practices in a private junior college.

Because of the focus on grading practices the literature was reviewed for any published studies of grading practices. There were many articles on trends, on alternative grading systems, and on surveys of recorded grades but little on how grades were determined in the first place. New practices have seemed to evolve rather than be based on objective findings. Determining grades involves a tremendous amount of faculty time and the grading practices of every teacher affect every other teacher in the institution. With teacher time to account for it would seem advantageous to examine grading practices at intervals. (3:227) The examination of grading practices discussed in this paper also involved

considerable effort and time, and as with all institutional research that time and effort will not have value until the findings lead to some form of action and to change in the institution.

RESEARCH AT ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE*

At St. Mary's Junior College, although there is no funded office of institutional research, there is considerable research activity that is coordinated through the Studies Committee. This standing faculty committee was formed in 1968 as a center for research activities in the school. In this role the committee has considered proposals for studies, initiated some studies, assisted with development of studies and questionaires, and recently carried through the commission of the Educational Policies Committee to survey grading practices in the school.

The committee is not funded but any expenses that have occurred have been paid out of general school funds. School secretarial help has assisted with tabulating, mailings, or typing as required. Computer processing of data has not been sought to date but the impression is that the committee would be able to obtain this in the metropolitan area if the need arose. Most of the statistical analysis of data about students is developed by the registrar's office and is not a responsibility of the Studies Committee.

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*St. Mary's Junior College is an independent, private, fully accredited junior college chartered in 1964. It has approximately 800 students enrolled in seven paramedical fields.

This committee meets frequently, often weekly, if committee work load is heavy. Faculty and administration are polled at intervals for suggestions for studies and these suggestions are valuable in determining priorities for committee action. Reports on studies are disseminated to the faculty as well as occasional news letters on general information such as publications by faculty member, studies in progress, or studies elsewhere that might be of interest.

Roueche and Boggs, in their monograph on junior college research, stated that "Practically every two-year college in America could develop a viable program of institutional research if it would just utilize the talents of its present faculty and administrative staff." (12:51) At St. Mary's the Studies Committee is an attempt to use those faculty members with expertise and those with a willingness to be involved in this kind of activity.

Faculty research committees can be hampered in pursuing some activities simply because they are faculty members and it would seem that, especially for areas pertinent to faculty itself, a funded staff office would be in a better position to carry out certain studies. However, this limitation must be balanced against the involvement, interest, and concern that faculty can bring to the situation. These can be great advantages if channeled into constructive efforts and good methodology. As the committee at St. Mary's gains experience problems have tended to resolve themselves but it is admitted they have arisen for those institutions that choose to have faculty committees for research the St. Mary's

experience would seem to indicate that much can be done by such a committee.

It should be noted that administration is represented on the St. Mary's committee. The presence of the Vice-president as a committee member began some years ago and has expedited the function of the committee by making adm . . ive approval of studies, of costs, and of secretarial help readily accessible. His office staff file the studies and data for the committee. The literature tends to relate institutional research to the Vice-presidential level (17:14) and St. Mary's does have the Vice-president actively involved.

A partial list of studies done at St. Mary's has been included in the appendix and it can be noted that much of the research effort has gone towards instructional research. St. Mary's has continued interest in high quality instruction and has been alert to current theory and trends in education. The President has allowed implementation and adaptation of new methods and encouraged such activity. An example of this is the federally funded project in curriculum development that is adapting and implementing an audio-tutorial method to the entire nursing program.* This project, under the directorship of Dr. Carol Peterson is now in its fourth year and research methodology has been used continuously to assess the effect of this innovative approach to nursing education.

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* Nursing Project, "Multisensory Tutorial Instruction in A.D. Nursing," H.E.W. Special Project Grant No. 5D 10, NU 00330.

Another area of research activity at St. Mary's has been the laborious task of preparing for accreditation of the school and its various programs. The self-study that is necessary for those reports is certainly institutional research, even if, as was certainly the case, much of it was data collection from records and surveys. The actions that resulted from the studies are noted in the self-study reports. (14)

SUMMARY

Junior colleges had traditionally avoided research activities, but as the trend towards requiring accountability of those in responsible positions increases, the two-year school has found that research is a necessity. Leadership for the development of research in junior colleges is coming from the American Association of Junior Colleges and the Educational Resources Information Center. These organizations identify institutional research as the way to achieve accountability and suggest that offices of institutional research be funded in each college.

Institutional research is seen as self-study to assess the function and to achieve the purpose of the institution. It includes all aspects of the institution, its facilities, its resources, and the curriculum. Research is seen as the way to solve problems and to gain information on which decisions can be based.

An example of one private private college's research efforts and approach was offered, and an in-depth interpretation of some instructional research, a grading practices study, follows.

CHAPTER TWO:
DESIGN OF THE STUDY

PROCESS AND PURPOSE

A summary statement that describes the process of designing the tool used in this study reads:

> The mandate to design a tool to discover the grading practices of the faculty of St. Mary's Junior College was given to the Studies Committee by the Educational Policies Committee and recorded as discussed at the January 11, 1972 meeting of the Studies Committee...

Several events preceded this mandate from Educational Policies Committee and they are listed below in chronological order in an effort to clarify the process and the purpose of the questionnaire.

As recorded in the minutes of their second meeting of the school year, (Sept. 21, 1971) the Studies Committee asked the question: "Does St. Mary's Junior College have a set of all-school concepts with regard to student evaluation". A discussion of the possibilities and methods of soliciting research ideas from the faculty in order to focus the year's work of the studies committee on those areas that are of most concern to the faculty resulted in another question: "Could Studies Committee sponsor a survey to discover current faculty evaluation methods?"

A decision was reached (Oct. 5, 1971) to proceed with a "potential study form" to solicit ideas for search at St. Mary's from the faculty and administration and to delay any recommendations for a grading practices survey until the results from the "potential study form" were returned and reviewed.

Following the implementation of the "potential study form" the committee reviewed the suggestions from faculty and administration concerning future studies (Jan. 11, 1972). Since "grading

practices" were frequently mentioned by both faculty and administration and since the results of the potential study form had also been reviewed by Educational Policies Committee, the mandate from Educational Policies Committee represented the wishes of the faculty and administration. Recorded in the minutes were ideas about and for the grading practices study. These early ideas that resulted from "brain storming" may be considered the first attempts at defining the tool and include:

1. Individual faculty member's personal grading philosophy.
2. Departmental evaluation.
3. Technical education team versus the individual instructor.
4. Survey of actual practices - questionnaire and/or interview.
5. Semantic/differential as tool. Perhaps to be used first in the study before individual philosophy.
6. Technical as compared with general education.
7. Students' perceptions of evaluation.

The chairperson of the Educational Policies Committee met (Jan. 25, 1972) with members of the Studies Committee and further clarified the "mandate" for the study. The chairperson stated that "'Phase 1' of the study should be an evaluation of the current data (collection of grading data from 1969-fall to 1972-winter, for example)." Further possibilities discussed were: A. What are attrition rates? B. Grade distribution (historical) C. Update self-study materials D. Current data.

By the next meeting the studies committee had compiled a list of nine questions that they felt ought to be answered by the questionnaire. Following is the list of questions; it should be noted that the first four questions are important for the further refinement of the questionnaire, since specific committee members were assigned at this meeting to prepare preliminary questions for the questionnaire based on these first four questions:

1. What are the existing grading methods in the various courses at St. Mary's Junior College?

2. What are the ways these grades are determined? That is, what evaluation systems (practices) are used to determine the grades given in the various courses?

3. When all evaluation results for a given course are in, how is the grade distribution actually determined?

4. In a given course, does the faculty member (members) consider variables other than points or scores earned on established tools? If so, what are they?

5. For each course, what is the grade distribution over the past three years?

6. What are the overall attrition rates in the various courses?

7. What are the attrition rates in the various courses according to program?

8. What is the attrition picture as it relates to failure in the major versus failure in required general education courses?

9. What is the attrition picture in relationship to specific courses in a program. How is the attrition related to dismissals versus dropout of own accord?

These questions in turn were reviewed the following meeting (Feb. 15, 1972). By the time of the next meeting of the committee (April 4, 1972), the committee had a composite

questionnaire made up of "revised" questions from the four committee members. These were reviewed and revised again. Also discussed at this meeting was the method of giving the questionnaire to the faculty:

> "It was decided that this committee will turn the questionnaire over to Educational Policies Committee for their reaction and implementation."

The Educational Policies Committee recommended some refinements as did members of the Studies Committee, and these were accomplished during the meeting (April 11, 1972). The distribution data was being considered as the minutes indicate:

> "The final draft, (including an introductory letter by Educational Policies Committee) should be ready for implementation within two or three weeks" (#14,71-72)

Final work on preparing the questionnaire for handout to faculty was concluded on April 18, 1972. The deadline for completion of the questionnaire was set at May 8, 1972. Plans were discussed for the sample test gathering, which would complete the fact gathering phase of the questionnaire.

The Studies Committee concluded the school year (Spring Workshop) with a decision to review the completed questionnaires next fall workship, after they had been tallied during the summer.

According to the minutes of the studies committee during fall workshop, the group discussed the results of the questionnaire and were asked by Educational Policies Committee to prepare comments and reflections on the findings. (See Appendix E for detailed memo to Educational Policies Committee from Studies Committee, dated November 17, 1972)

The Studies Committee began work on the data collected and it was decided that for the next meeting the committee members would prepare the following:

> "All members should have reviewed both sets of data (general and technical education) and made written notes on them. The notes should include comparisons of differences between general and technical education, as well as statements or questions about possible policy implications of the data" (minutes, Oct. 3, 1972 72-73)

At the next meeting, the committee reviewed their combined observation, which in turn were summarized by the chairperson for distribution to Educational Policies Committee. One of the major points discussed at this meeting was the possibility of using the data from the questionnaire in such a way as to gain the most information out of the available data. The committee discussed and approved the request of two members of the committee, who, with a former faculty member, wished to do a more complete analysis of the data as a partial fulfillment of a University of Minnesota course on "Two-Year College."

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION

A questionnaire was selected as the method for collection of data, because it was possible, and seemed desirable to obtain information from the entire faculty population of fifteen general education faculty and thirty-two technical education faculty. A questionnaire, with a cover letter, describing the purpose of the study, was distributed to each of the forty-seven faculty members. (See Appendix F for copy of letter and questionnaire) Faculty members were given three weeks to complete the questionnaire. All but one faculty member completed and returned their questionnaire

within the alloted time. With additional encouragement the final questionnaire was returned, thus making the final returns one hundred per cent.

Both general and technical education have both full time and part time members of their staff. Within the technical education faculty, one of the seven technical programs, namely nursing, operates within a structure that differs from the other six programs and therefore has a significant influence on the interpretation of the data. Due to the size of the program, (approximately one half of the student body majored in nursing in fall quarter, 1971), the administrative structure of the nursing program is such that there are two co-directors, each of whom is responsible for a team of faculty for each of the two respective years. The freshman co-director is responsible for the administration of a team of ten faculty; the sophomore co-director is responsible for the administration of a team of eight faculty members. In completing the questionnaire therefore, each of the co-directors completed a portion of the questionnaire for her respective team members. The remainder of the questionnaire was completed by the individual member of the team.

Another factor related to, but not directly effecting the study, is the existence, during this time (winter quarter, 1972) of a federally funded nursing project. The director and faculty of this project (N = 6) were not included in this study because they were involved in innovative curriculum development and with intensive evaluation of grading procedures within the project.

Therefore they were not included in this questionnaire population due to the experimental nature of the project and already selected control group factors.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

The questionnaire was eight pages long and consisted of three major parts: Part One: Evaluation tools and approaches to tools; Part Two: The overall approach to grading; Part Three: Personal and social factors effecting grading practices.

The total faculty, with the exception of the members of the nursing program teams, (N = 18) and the Nursing Project members, (N = 6) completed the same eight page questionnaire. In addition, all technical education faculty, including the nursing program team members (N = 6) completed an extra one-page form relating to the grading practices used in the clinical experience.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data from the completed questionnaires were compiled and analyzed for both general and technical education member groups. There are 15 members of the general education faculty teaching a total of thirty-one courses. As noted in Chapter II, the 31 courses included those which are traditionally taught in the Winter Quarter of every year. Two of the courses included in this study were taught in the Spring Quarter of 1972, and one course was taught in Fall Quarter, 1971.

Technical education faculty members numbered 32, who teach a total of 20 courses. It should be noted that within one of the technical programs, namely nursing, team teaching is utilized as the method of teaching. Twenty of the 32 technical education faculty members are on the two teams within the nursing program.

The questionnaire was divided into three major parts; Part I: Evaluation Tools and Approaches; Part II: Overall Approach to Grading; and Part III: Other Factors in Evaluation. Each of the parts were analyzed for both general and technical education faculty members with differences noted and comparisons made between them.

All of the faculty members (100 per cent) returned the questionnaire resulting in a total of 47 respondents.

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF GENERAL EDUCATION FACULTY MEMBERS

The first part of the questionnaire was designed to obtain information relative to the kinds of tools or approaches used by the faculty members in the evaluation of their respective students.

Data pertaining to the frequency with which each tool or approach was used are contained in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency of Use of Selected Evaluation Tools or Approaches
(N = 31 courses)
General Education

Frequency of Use	Selected Evaluation Tools/Approaches
16-18	Final course grade; Unit tests
13-15	Final exam; Written quizzes
10-12	Special projects
7-9	Midquarter; Other
4-6	Oral tests (quizzes); Term papers
1-3	Situational test; Lab worksheets; Book reports; Case studies
0	Clinical lab conferences; Clinical lab performance; Abstracts of journal articles; Patient/Client care plans

A final course grade and unit tests were noted as the most frequently utilized evaluation tools or approaches. Special projects were also frequently used. One example of a special project was "a special research project". All but two respondents gave no indication of the nature of the special project. Those tools and approaches listed as "Other" were checked in 9 (29 per cent) of the responses. Examples of "other" were: attendance, study skills aids, in-class writing exercises, subjective evaluation of process and production of art works, and weekly written reports.

Among the least frequently utilized tools or tools which were not utilized at all were those which are directly related to clinical experiences. It appears that many of these tools are not appropriate methods of evaluating general education courses.

Part II of the questionnaire was related to methods of evaluation. Five responses were possible for each of the tools and approaches. The type of evaluation method in relation to each of the tools or approaches is summarized on Table 2, on the following page.

Table 2

Frequency of Selected Methods Used in Reporting Evaluation to Students
(N = 31 courses) GENERAL EDUCATION

Frequency of Method	Methods of Reporting Performance to Students:				
	Points	Letter Grade	Score on Rating Scale	Pass/No Pass Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory	Other
16-18	--	--	--	--	--
13-15	--	Final course grade	--	--	--
10-12	--	Unit tests; Final exam	--	--	--
7-9	Unit tests, Final exam	Written quizzes; Special projects; Midquarters	--	--	--
4-6	Written quizzes; Midquarters	Oral tests; Term papers	Final exam	Other	--
1-3	Final course grade; Oral tests; Spec. projects	Other	Unit tests; Written quizzes; Final course grade; Midquarter	Written quizzes; Book reports; Case studies; Special projects	Special proj.; Written quizzes; Unit tests; Oral tests; Term papers
0	Situational tests; Lab. worksheets; Clin. lab. conferences; Clin. lab. performance; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Term papers; Case studies; Patient/client care plans; Other	Situational tests; Lab. worksheets; Clin. lab. conferences; Clin. lab. performance; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Case studies; Patient/client care plans	Situational tests, Lab. worksheets; Clinical lab. conferences; Clin. lab. performance; Book report; Journal abstracts; Case studies; Patient/client care plans; Term papers; Special projects; Other	Unit tests; Midquarter; Final examination; Sit. tests; Lab. worksheets; Oral tests; Clin. lab. performance; Journal abstracts; Term paper; Patient/ client care plans; Final course grade	Midquarter; Final exam; Sit. tests; Lab. worksheets; Clin. lab. performance; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Case studies; Patient/ client care plans; Final course grade; Other

The most frequent method of reporting performance to students was in the form of a letter grade. The four remaining methods were used less than half or 50 per cent of the time. It should be noted that many faculty members used several of the above methods. An example of "other" ways of reporting evaluation to students was to give them an "Incomplete" until the contract grade was obtained.

Part III of the questionnaire related to standards of grading. Four responses were possible. An analysis of these responses to the tools and approaches is given in Table 3, on the following page.

Table 3

Grading Standards in Relation to Tools/Approaches in General Education Courses

Frequency of Method	Letter Grades were Determined According to:			
	Absolute Standards	Relative Performance (Curve)	Adjusted to Fit Performance	No Letter Grades; Other Evaluation
16-18	--	--	--	--
13-15	--	--	--	--
10-12	--	--	--	--
7-9	--	Final exam; Final course grade; Written quizzes; Unit tests	Final course grade	--
4-6	--	Special projects; Midquarters	Special proj.; Unit tests; Oral tests; Term paper; Other	Written quizzes
1-3	Unit tests; Final course grade; Spec. projects; Written quizzes; Midquarters; Final exam	Situational tests; Book reports; Other	Written quizzes; Midquarter; Final exam	Unit tests; Final exam; Case studies
0	Situational tests; Lab. worksheets; Clin. lab. conferences; Clin. lab. performance; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Term papers; Case studies; Patient/ client care plans; Other	Laboratory worksheets; Oral tests; Clin. lab. conferences; Clin. lab. performance; Journal abstracts; Term papers; Case studies; Patient/ client care plans	Unit tests; Situational tests; Lab. worksheets; Clinical lab. conferences; Clinical lab. performance; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Case studies; Pat./ client care plans	Midquarter, situational tests; Laboratory worksheets; Oral tests; Clinical laboratory conferences; Clinical laboratory performance; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Term papers; Patient/client care plans; Special projects; Final course grade; Other

A variety of grading standards were used by the general education faculty members as noted in Table 3. It appears that the most frequent practice was use of the normal curve or determining grades according to the relative performance of students, and adjusting letter grades which were determined according to pre-established standards to fit the performance of the students in the class. Among the "other" methods of recording performance; that is, "other" than letter grades, were subjective evaluation of the process and production of art works.

The extent to which students were told the criteria for a given grade level before an assignment or test and the process of translating the evaluation score into a letter grade equivalent in general education courses are noted on Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4.

Criteria for Grade Level Told Students

(N = 31 courses)

GENERAL EDUCATION

Yes, always	Yes, most of the time	Yes, some of the time	No, generally not	No Response
15	1	2	11	2

As noted on Table 4, in one-half (50 per cent) of the general education courses, students were given the criteria for the grade level prior to an assignment or test. In 18 courses (64 per cent) they were given the criteria either always, most or some of the time. In 11 courses (36 per cent) students were not so informed.

Table 5

Translation of Evaluation Score to Letter Grade Equivalent
(N = 31 courses)
GENERAL EDUCATION

Yes, all of the time	Yes, most of the time	Yes, some of the time	Only on the final course grade	No response or did not apply
16	1	2	3	9

From the data on Table 5, it appears that in more than one-half (52 per cent) of the general education courses, students are informed on how to translate evaluation score to a letter grade equivalent. In three (10 per cent) of the courses a translation of the evaluation score to a letter grade is given only on the final course grade. In 9 (29 per cent) of the courses there was either no response given or there was no need to translate to a letter grade.

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION FACULTY MEMBERS

Fourteen technical education faculty members completed questionnaires. A total of 20 courses are represented. Two of the members, members of the nursing department, completed one questionnaire each for their respective members of their teaching teams. These two teams represent the remaining eighteen faculty members bringing the total to 32.

Data pertaining to the frequency with which each evaluation tool or approach was used is noted on Table 6.

Table 6

Frequency of Use of Selected Evaluation Tools or Approaches (N=20 courses)
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Frequency of Use	Selected Evaluation Tools or Approaches
16-18	Written quizzes, final exam, final course grade
13-15	Clinical laboratory performance
10-12	Other, Unit tests, Laboratory worksheets, Clinical laboratory ~~performance~~ conference
7-9	Midquarter
4-6	Oral tests, Case studies, Special projects, Journal abstracts
1-3	Situational tests, Book reports, Term papers, Patient/ client care plans
0	None

The final examination, written quizzes, clinical laboratory performance, and the final course grade were the most frequently used tools and approaches. "Other" tools and approaches, such as the use of programmed texts, lesson and unit plans, simulated laboratory tasks, analysis of teacher competencies, take home exams were also frequently used by technical education faculty members. Among the least frequently used were book reports, term papers, and patient/ client care plans.

The responses to methods of evaluation for each of the tools and approaches are given on Table 7.

Table 7

Frequency of Selected Methods Used in Reporting Evaluation to Students in TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Frequency of Method	METHODS OF REPORTING PERFORMANCE TO STUDENTS: Points	Letter Grade	Score on Rating Scale	Pass/No Pass S/U	Other
16-18	--	--	--	--	--
13-15	Written quizzes;	--	--	--	--
10-12	Unit tests; Final exam	Final course grade	--	--	--
7-9	Final course grade; Other	--	--	--	--
4-6	Midquarter; Lab. worksheets; Clin. lab. performance	Final exam	--	Clinical lab. performance	Final course grade
1-3	Oral quizzes; Clin. lab. performance; Case studies; Journal abstracts; Spec. projects; Situational tests; Book report	Written quizzes; Clin. lab. performance; Lab. worksheets; Unit tests; Midquarter; Special projects; Other	Clin. lab. performance; Case stud.; Clinical lab. conference, written quizzes, Final exam	Clin. lab. conf.; Situational tests; Lab. worksheets; Oral tests; Journal abstracts; Spec. proj.; Written quiz.; Unit tests; Final exam; Book reports; Case stud.; Pat./client care plans; Final course grade; Other	Clin. lab. conference; Case stud.; Clin. lab. performance; Written quizzes, Final exam
0	Term papers; Patient/client care plans	Sit. Tests; Oral tests; Clin. lab. conferences; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Term papers; Case studies; Pat. client care plans	Unit tests; Midquarter; Sit. tests; Lab Worksh.; Oral tests; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Term papers; Pat. client care plans; Spec. proj.; Other	Midquarter; Term paper	Unit tests; Midquarter; Sit. tests; Lab. Worksh. Oral tests; Book reports Journal abstracts; Term papers; Pat., client care plans; Spec. proj.; Other

Among the five methods of evaluation, reporting performance to students in terms of either points or letter grades were the most frequently occuring. The results of more evaluation tools and approaches were reported to them in terms of points than any other method. It is of note that evaluation results in six courses were reported in "other" than the four traditional methods listed. These included attendance, anecdotes on students, class discussion, and percentage.

Standards of grading as reflected in four possible methods are reported on Table 8.

Table 8

Frequency of Grading Standards in Relation to Tools and Approaches TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Frequency	LETTER GRADES DETERMINED ACCORDING TO: Absolute Standards	Relative Performance (curve)	Adjusted to Fit Performance	No Letter Grades Given, Other Evaluation
16-18	--	--	--	--
13-15	--	--	--	--
10-12	--	--	--	--
7-9	--	--	--	Final exam; Clin. lab. conference
4-6	Final course grade	--	Written quizzes; Final exam.; Other	Written quizzes; Clinical lab. performance; Lab. worksheets; Other; Unit tests; Oral tests
1-3	Lab worksheets; Clinical lab. performance; Written quizzes; Unit test; Midquarter; Final exam; Other	Final course grade; Written quizzes; Unit tests; Final exam.; Midquarter; Lab. worksheets; Clinical lab. performance; Other	Unit tests; Midquarter; Clin. lab. performance; Lab. worksheets; Clin. lab. conf.; Journal abstracts; Spec. proj.	Situational tests; Midquarter; Journal abstracts; Case studies; Spec. projects; Book report; Term papers; Pat./ client care plans
0	Situational tests; Oral tests; Clin. lab. conf.; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Term papers; Case studies; Pat. client care plans; Spec. projects	Situational tests; Oral tests; Clin. lab. conferences; Book reports; Journal abstracts; Term papers; Case studies; Patient/ client care plans; Special projects	Situational tests; Oral tests; Book reports; Term papers; Case studies; Pat./ client care plans; Final course grade	Final course grade

A variety of grading standards are used by the technical education faculty members as noted above in Table 8. It appears that the most frequent practice is that of determining letter grades according to pre-established standards and adjusting them to fit the performance of students. "Other" standards were also used fairly frequently. No example is cited of what these other standards may be.

The extent to which students were informed regarding criteria for a given grade level before an assignment or test and the process of translating the evaluation score into a letter grade equivalent in technical education courses is reflected on Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9

Criteria for Grade Level Told to Students
(N = 23)
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Yes, always	Yes, most of time	Yes, some of time	No, not generally
11	4	2	6

As noted on Table 9, in 11 (48 per cent) of the courses, students are given criteria for grade level prior to an assignment or test; while in 6 (26 per cent) courses, students are not so informed. In 17 courses (74 per cent) students are given the criteria either always, most, or some of the time.

Table 10

Translation of Evaluation Score to Letter Grade Equivalent
(N = 21) TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Yes, all of time	Yes, most of time	Yes, some of time	Only on final course grade
11	2	1	7

From the data on Table 10, it appears than in 11 (52 per cent) of the courses, students are informed how to translate the evaluation score to a letter grade equivalent. In 7 (33 per cent) of the courses a translation of the evaluation score to a letter grade equivalent is given only on the final course grade. In 14 (67 per cent) of the courses, students are given a translation score either all, most, or some of the time.

Various types of examinations were used in both general and technical education courses. The frequency of the variety is noted on Table 11.

Table 11

Frequency of Types of Examination Used in General and Technical Education Courses

Types of Examination	Frequency of Use in Courses:	
	General Education	Technical Education
Quizzes (written)	7	15
Unit Tests	10	9
Midquarter	4	7
Final Exam	7	16

Unit tests were the most frequently used types of examination in general education courses; while in both general and technical education courses midquarter tests were the least frequently used types of examinations. In technical education courses, the final examination and written quizzes were the most frequently used types of examinations.

The second part of the questionnaire related to the overall approach to grading as reflected in letter grades, points, and percentage. In general education courses, the list of possible final grades is listed on Table 12.

Table 12

Possible Final Grades in General and Technical Education Courses

Possible Grades	Frequency of Use in:	
	General Education N = 31	Technical Education N = 21
A	30	21
B	30	21
C	30	21
D	26	17
F	27	15
I (Incomplete)	26	17
P (Pass)	1	0
NP (No Pass)	1	0
Other	1	0

It appears that the traditional letter grades A through F are possibly in all courses at St. Mary's Junior College. Grades of Pass, No Pass and Other are possible in general education courses only.

What does a letter grade of D mean to the general and technical education faculty members? Responses to this question are noted on Table 13.

Table 13

Meaning of Letter Grade of "D" in General and Technical Education Courses

Meaning of Letter Grade of "D"	Responses	
	General Education (N=25)	Technical Education (N=16)
Below average passing work	20	6
Level of work is inadequate	5	9
*Minimum level to be safe practitioner	1	5
*Below level to be safe practitioner	0	12
**Minimally adequate preparation for sub-sequent study	10	2
**Inadequate preparation for further study	0	0

*for program courses only
**for general education courses only

From the data on Table 13, in 20 general education courses (80 per cent), faculty perceive a letter grade of "D" to represent below average passing work. In 5 (20 per cent) of general education courses, "D" represents a level of work which is, in essence, inadequate.

In technical education courses, faculty members perceive a letter grade of "D" as the level of work inadequate in 9 (56 per cent) of the courses; and a level of performance below that of a safe practitioner in 12 (75 per cent) of the courses. Within technical education courses, the interpretation of "D" as "below average passing work", and "minimum level to be a safe practitioner" was offered by faculty in only five to six courses. Upon examination, it was found that three of these represented courses which contained the largest number of students, namely nursing. In effect, the interpretation of the letter grade "D" by the minority in technical education courses, corresponds to the interpretation of the majority in general education courses.

Table 14

Letter Grades Determined by Number of Points in General and Technical Education Courses

Responses	General Education N = 31	Technical Education N = 20
Yes	7	17
No	17	2

In determining the final grade for courses in 7 general education courses (23 per cent) points were accumulated, while in 17 technical education courses (85 per cent) they were so derived. In 17 (55 per cent) of general education and 2 (10 per cent) of technical education courses letter grades were not determined by accumulation of possible number of points.

The extent to which faculty members assigned a percentage of students to each of the level grades is noted on Table 15.

Table 15

Assignment of Percentage of Students to Grade Level

Responses	General Education N = 31	Technical Education N = 20
Yes	3	0
No	27	21

Neither general nor technical education faculty members tended to assign a percentage of students to each of the grade levels as noted on Table 15. Of those who did in general education courses, the distribution is noted on Table 16.

Table 16

Assignment of Percentage of Students to Each Grade Level
N = 3

Grade Level	Percentage of Students			
	0-25	26-50	51-75	76-100
A	4	-	-	1
B	2	2	-	1
C	-	3	1	-
D	3	-	-	-
F	2	-	-	-

Choices open to students in completing course requirements in both general and technical education courses is noted on Table 17. The degree to which choices are allowed and factors related to these choices are noted.

Table 17

Choices of More than One Way to Complete Course Requirements

Choices or Responses	Responses			
	General Education N=31		Technical Education N=20	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
Choice of more than one way to complete requirements	21	10	17	4
Once option chosen, ability to change to another during quarter?	N=10		N=4	
	3	5	1	3
Options devised: a. instructor at beginning of quarter b. instructor with student c. student with approval of instructor	6 2 2		3 0 2	
Option for student to design own course of study?	4	6	3	1
With option, any grade in course possible?	1	8	5	1
Student to meet preliminary criteria?	7	2	4	0
Formal, written contract for option?	8	1	3	1

As noted on Table 17, in 21 general education courses (68 per cent), students were in essentially the same sequence and responsible for the same work while in 10 courses (32 per cent) students had the choice of doing any of several types of work. In 17 technical education courses (85 per cent) students were responsible for the same work, while in 4 courses (20 per cent) they had the choice of doing several types of work. Within both general and technical education courses, there was some possibility to change to another option within the quarter for some of the courses. Among manners in which options were devised, the most frequently occuring one was that of the instructor devising the option at the beginning of the course in both general and technical education courses in contrast to either the instructor doing so in consultation with students or by students with approval of their instructor. In general education courses there was a greater opportunity for the student to design his own course of study. Any grade that was ordinarily possible to obtain in a course was also possible for students who selected options within general education courses; while in technical education courses the possibility of certain grades were limited. Ordinarily students were not expected to meet preliminary criteria for one of the options in either general or technical education courses. Generally, no formal, written contract was in use for options in either general or technical education courses.

The extent to which students "contracted" for the final course grade is reflected on Table 18. The grades for which they could contract are also given as well as any changes of contracts. Limitations associated with student freedom, differences noted, and criteria for contracting are also included.

Table 18

"Contracts" for Final Grades in General and Technical Education Courses

Questions	Responses for:			
	General Educ. Courses N=31		Technical Educ. Courses N=20	
Contracts Used?	Yes 6	No 20	Yes 2	No 15
Grades for Which Students Contracted:				
A	6		2	
B	6		2	
C	6		2	
D	2		1	
F	0		0	
Pass/No Pass	0		1	0
Satis./Unsatis.	0		0	
Change of Contract?				
Yes, higher or lower	5		2	
Yes, higher only	1		0	
Yes, lower only	0		0	
No, no change	0		0	
Limitations Associated with Student's Freedom	5	16	0	2
Re-negotiation	3		1	
Deadlines	2		0	
Original level	3		0	
Main differences noted:				
More and better work	6		1	
Better work	1		0	
More work	0		0	
Criteria for grades determined:				
Instructor only	4		1	
Instructor with students	4		0	
Students	0		0	
Formal, written contract?	0	6	1	1

From the data on Table 18, ordinarily students did not contract for final course grades in either general or technical education courses. In those courses where they contract for grades it was possible to contract for the traditional A-D system. No contract was

available for a grade of "F", No Pass, or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. In one course in technical education it was possible for a student to contract for a Pass grade. Once contracts were made, it was possible generally to change during the quarter for either a higher or lower grade. It was generally felt by both general and technical education faculty members that the contract system did not place limitations upon student's freedom. The primary differences noted in comparing the "contract" system with the others used were that students produced more and better work. The manner in which grades were determined was primarily by either the instructor or the instructor in consultation with the students. There were not formal, written contracts in general education courses, while only one in technical education courses.

The extent to which faculty members are satisfied with the present grading system was attained, with results appearing on Table 19.

Table 19

Satisfaction of General and Technical Education Faculty Members with Grading System

Satisfaction with Grading System	Responses of:			
	General Educ. Faculty N=31		Technical Educ. Faculty N=20	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	18	10	12	7

In 18 (60 per cent) general education courses, faculty members indicated satisfaction with the present grading system; in 12 (60 per cent) technical education courses, faculty members likewise indicated satisfaction with the present system.

Those respondents who had plans to change the grading system of their courses the next quarter in which they were taught, had a variety of changes planned. These changes have been summarized in Table 20.

Table 20

Changes in Grading Plans

CHANGES IN GRADING PLANS	Technical Educ. Courses	General Educ. Courses
Grading practices	6	4
Special projects	-	5
Contract system	1	4
Changes in testing	1	2
Faculty-student evaluation of course	2	-

SUMMARY: Six responses (60% per cent) of those faculty who teach technical education courses, indicated that they planned changes in grading practices within their course. Three of the six respondents specifically mentioned the desire to put the clinical portion of the course on a S-U basis. One technical education respondent, whose comment was included under the heading of grading practices, planned to design a competency-based evaluation for the "practicum" of the course.

One of the faculty in general education whose response was included under the heading of grading practices planned to switch to an individual program of instruction involving the use of mastery criteria. Five (30 per cent) of the responses of those who teach general education courses indicate they planned use of special projects which would effect their grading system. The projects included individual interest projects and independent study options. It is

important to note that 26% of responses of general education faculty indicated that they planned to use the contract system the next quarter or make adjustments in the current use of the contract system: For example "as a result of student questionnaire results--more mobility of changing learning contracts".

ADVANTAGES OF THE CURRENT GRADING SYSTEM AS SEEN BY FACULTY IN GENERAL EDUCATION: listed in rank order, found on Table 21.

Table 21

Advantages of Current Grading System as Indicated by General Education Faculty Members

ADVANTAGE (Generalized from Raw Data)	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
1. Student chooses mode of work and evaluation	7
2. Less emphasis on Grade Point Average and class standing	6
3. Use of curve: more flexible	6
4. Variety of projects to grade	4
5. Student kept current on progress	3
6. Use of grade raising incentives (drop tests, re-writes or additional papers)	3
7. Use of subjective tests	3
8. Student performance better	3
9. Easy	2
10. Grade is evidence of thinking	2
11. Students work against each other	1
12. Grading at end of course = better student cooperation	1
13. Grade doesn't depend on discussion	1

ADVANTAGES OF CURRENT GRADING SYSTEM AS SEEN BY FACULTY IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION: listed in rank order are found in Table 22.

Table 22

Advantages of Current Grading System as Indicated by Technical Education Faculty Members

ADVANTAGE (Generalized from Raw Data)	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
1. Students and faculty kept current on student progress	6
2. Variety of evaluation tools used to arrive at final grade	5
3. Ease of grading	5
4. Use of point system: as indicator of relative wrights	4
5. Balance of laboratory and lecture credits	4
6. Use of objective tests	3
7. Adjust individual student grade to group performance	3
8. Ability to grade student behavior in the laboratory experience	3
9. Flexibility	2
10. Student incentive	2
11. Use of more quizzes instead of one midquarter	1
12. Use of subjective tests	1
13. Use of P-NP, which is later averaged	1

Table 23 summarizes those responses that were given by the faculty as most significant advantages of current grading systems. Two items were requested of each respondent for each course taught. Responses were classified and are listed in rank order within each classification. The number indicates the number of responses that could be generalized under the sub-classification.

Table 23

Advantages of Current Grading Systems as Indicated by General and Technical Education Faculty Members

GENERAL EDUCATION FACULTY		TECHNICAL EDUCATION FACULTY	
Flexibility	No. of Responses	Flexibility	No. of Responses
1. Students choose mode of work and evaluation	7	1. Variety of evaluation tools = final grade	5
2. Less emphasis on G.P.A. & cl. stand.	6	2. Adjust final grade to group	3
3. Use of curve = more flexibility	6	3. Flexibility	2
4. Variety of projects to grade	4	4. Use of P-NP which is later averaged	1
Currency-Frequency		Currency-Frequency	
1. Student kept current on progress	3	1. Student-faculty keep current	6
2. Use of grade = raising incentives	3	2. Use of point system = relative wts.	4
		3. Use of more quizzes = no midquarter	1
Student Performance		Student Performance	
1. Student performance better	3	1. Ability to grade student behavior in lab. experience	3
2. Grade = evidence of thinking	2	2. Student incentive	2
3. Students work against each other	1		
4. Grading at end of course = better comprehension	1		
Ease		Ease	
1. Easy	2	1. East of grading	5
Evaluation Tool		Evaluation Tool	
1. Use of subjective tests	3	1. Balance of lab. & lecture credits	4
2. Grade doesn't depend on discussion	1	2. Use of obj. tests	3
		3. Use of subj. tests	1
TOTAL	42	TOTAL	40
(REAL RESPONSES)	41	(REAL RESPONSES)	37

SUMMARY OF ADVANTAGES OF CURRENT GRADING SYSTEM

GENERAL EDUCATION FACULTY

The majority of the general education faculty's responses (55 per cent) could be summarized under the general category of the "advantages of flexibility". Under this heading the greatest frequency of responses was under the sub-category of "students chose mode of work and evaluation". Also of great frequency were those responses which stressed the advantages of de-emphasizing the grade point average and class standing, as well as those responses which stressed the flexibility inherent in the use of a modified curve.

The second greatest general classification category (17% of the responses) which could be summarized under the "advantages of student performances", has a variety of responses within it. Three responses simply state that the student performance is "better"; two responses indicate that the grade is evidence of thinking; whereas one of the respondents sees an advantage in the current system in that "students work against each other".

Under the general classification of the "advantages of currency and frequency", 14% of the responses stressed either the advantages of students being kept current on their progress or being able to use grade-raising incentives, such as drop tests, re-writes, or additional papers.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION FACULTY

The majority of responses of the technical education faculty fell within two of the general classifications; the "advantages of flexibility" and the "advantages of currency and frequency", with

each classification receiving 27% of the total responses. The highest single response (15%) was under the "advantages of currency and frequency" and represented those responses which stressed the advantage of the current system's ability to keep the students and the faculty current on the student's progress in the course. The second greatest number of responses in this classification stressed the advantage of using the point system, as it was an indicator to the student of the relative weights within the course. Under the classification of the "advantages of frequency" the highest number of responses (13%) were those which stressed the use of a variety of evaluation tools, including objective tests, clinical reports, exercises and quizzes, to arrive at the final grade. Three responses under this general classification specifically stressed the advantage of being able, under the system, to adjust the individual grade to the peer group.

Under the general classification of the "advantages inherent within the evaluation tool", 20% of the total responses were grouped under three sub-classifications. Four responses stressed the advantage of the current system's balance of the clinical and lecture credits and three sighted the use of objective tests as an advantage.

COMPARISON OF GENERAL EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FACULTY RESPONSES

While the majority of the general education faculty (55%) seemed to value the advantages of flexibility within their current grading system, the majority of the technical education faculty's responses fell within a wider range of advantages that include flexibility (27%), currency and frequency (27%) and advantages

inherent within the evaluation tool (20%). Since the total number of responses are almost the same (G.E., N=42 and T.E., N=40), and given the fact that all the responses have been categorized and summarized with the intent of objectivity, it is possible to make the following summary statements by way of comparison:

The general education faculty members appear to value the flexibility and variety of methods of course work and evaluation, within their current grading system more than do the technical education faculty members, by a ratio of 2 to 1 (55% to 27%).

The technical education faculty appears to value the advantage of currency and frequency of their grading system more than do the general education faculty members, by a ratio of 2 to 1 (27% to 14%). This indicates their stress on current student progress, which in some programs includes the use of point systems that cue students to relative weights of the material or experience.

With regard to the classification of the "advantages of student performance", approximately 15% (G.E., 17% and T.E. 13%) of the total faculty responses fell within this category and it would appear that only this percentage of the faculty saw their current grading practices as an advantage to either the better performance of their students or the faculty's ability to better judge the performance of the student.

With regard to the classification of the advantage of "ease of grading", the technical education faculty valued this advantage by a ratio of almost 3 to 1 over the general education faculty (T.E., 13% to G.E., 5%).

The technical education faculty appears to value the advantages of their current evaluation tools as well as the relative weights of credits within their courses by a ratio of 2 to 1 (20% to 10% over the G.E. faculty).

By combining the last two general classifications it appears that the technical education faculty sees an advantage in their use of objective tests and the ease of grading that occurs (20%): whereas only (4%) general education faculty responses sighted ease of grading as an advantage. In contrast to technical education faculty, a full 10% of the general education faculty saw an advantage in their use of subjective exams.

In conclusion, it appears that the technical education faculty values the use of objective tools and the point systems which keep faculty and students abreast on class standing. The general education faculty appears to value a variety of modes of class work and evaluation as well as more emphasis on a flexible curve and subjective tools.

DISADVANTAGES OF CURRENT GRADING SYSTEM AS SEEN BY FACULTY IN GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES: listed in rand order and found in Table 24.

Table 24

Disadvantages of Current Grading System as Indicated by General Education Faculty Members

DISADVANTAGE (Generalized from Raw Data)	No. of Responses
1. No clear-cut criteria	3
2. Subject matter = art and religion = difficult to grade	3
3. Lack of time - no special interests or projects	3
4. Bookkeeping	2
5. Can't evaluate class discussion	2
6. No reward for improvement	2
7. Lack of student responsibility for deadlines	2
8. Contracts = possibility of re-working, with 80 students - no time	2
9. Contracts = doesn't allow students to do D work	2
10. Student not understand basis for grading	1
11. Not flexible	1
12. Students become grade conscious	1
13. Hard to find "worth"	1
14. Because of student choice = no real check on content	1
15. Too many variables	1
16. Standard mass education grading techniques	1
17. No use of individual performance standard or criteria	1
18. Final grade = composite of strengths and weaknesses	1

DISADVANTAGES OF CURRENT GRADING SYSTEM AS SEEN BY FACULTY IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION: listed in rank order and found on Table 25.

Table 25

Disadvantages of Current Grading Systems as Indicated by Technical Education Faculty Members

DISADVANTAGE (Generalized from Raw Data)	NO. OF RESPONSES
1. Subjectivity of evaluating affective domain at clinical level	8
2. Individual differences	4
3. Lecture grade counts too much in relation to clinical	3
4. Use of "application" test items	3
5. Poorly written test questions	2
6. Can't distinguish between outstanding and adequate written work	2
7. Final grade = composite of strength and weaknesses	2
8. New textbook = untried test items	1
9. Keeping track	1
10. New evaluation tools = threatening to students	1
11. No grading system is fair	1
12. Not enough flexibility in grading system	1
13. Inconsistancies in grades due to different clinical instructors	1
14. No "mastery level" work	1
15. Difficult to determine minimal performance	1
16. No provision to measure entry level skill	1
17. Students given responsibility too late	1
18. Subjective tests = time consuming	1
19. Quizzes and tests only basis for grade	1
20. Students don't know grade until the end of course	1

Table 26 summarizes those responses that were given by the faculty as most significant disadvantages of current grading systems. Two items were requested of each respondent for each course taught. The responses were classified and are listed in rank order within each classification. The number indicates the number of responses that could be generalized under the sub-classification.

Table 26

Disadvantages of Current Grading Systems as Indicated by General and Technical Education Faculty Members

GENERAL EDUCATION FACULTY		TECHNICAL EDUCATION FACULTY	
Subjectivity	No. of Responses	Subjectivity	No. of Responses
1. Subject matter, art/religion = difficult to grade	3	1. Subjectivity of evaluating affective domain at clinical level	8
2. Can't evaluate class discussion	2	2. Can't distinguish - outstanding or adequate work	2
3. Hard to find "worth"	1	3. No grading system is fair	1
4. Too many variables	1	4. Inconsistancies in grades due to different clinical instructors.	1
		5. Difficult = minimal performance	1
Lack of Individualization		Lack of Individualization	
1. Time = no spc. interests or projects	3	1. Individual differences	4
2. No reward for improvement	2	2. Lecture grade counts too much	3
3. Contracts = student can't opt. for "D"	2	3. Final grade = strengths and weaknesses	2
4. Student not understand basis of grading	1	4. New eval. tools = threatening to stud.	1
5. Not flexible	1	5. Not enough flexibility	1
6. Students become grade conscious	1	6. Students = responsibility = too late	1
7. Stan. mass educ. grading technique	1	7. Students don't know grade until end	1
8. Final grade = strengths & weaknesses	1		

Table 26 (Continued)

GENERAL EDUCATION FACULTY		TECHNICAL EDUCATION FACULTY	
Related to Tools	No. of Responses	Related to Tools	No. of Responses
1. Stud. choice = no check on content	1	1. Use of "application" test items	3
2. No use of individual performance standard or criteria	1	2. Poorly written test questions	2
		3. New text = untried test items	1
		4. Subjective tests = time consuming	1
Criteria		Criteria	
1. No clear-cut criteria	3	1. No "mastery level" work	1
		2. No measure of entry level skill	1
Time Related		Time Related	
1. Bookkeeping	2	1. Keeping track	1
2. Lack of student responsibility for deadlines	2		
3. Contract = possibility of re-working with 80 students - no time	2		
TOTAL	30	TOTAL	37
(REAL RESPONSES)	28	(REAL RESPONSES)	36

SUMMARY OF DISADVANTAGES OF CURRENT GRADING SYSTEM

GENERAL EDUCATION FACULTY

The greatest number of the general education faculty's responses (40%) could be summarized under the general classification of the disadvantages brought about by the "lack of individualization". Most of the responses listed under this general classification could not be summarized under a sub-classification, however 10% of the responses were summarized as: "because of lack of time, no special interest or projects".

The second greatest number of responses (23%) fell within the general classification category of the disadvantages of "subjectivity" within the current grading system. 10% of the responses dealt with the fact that the subject matter that was taught (art and religion) was difficult to grade under any grading system.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION FACULTY

The greatest number of the technical faculty's responses (38%) fell within the general classification of disadvantages brought about by factors related to subjectivity. Within this category fully 20% of the responses stressed the disadvantages of subjectivity when evaluating the affective domain, particularly at the clinical level of instruction.

The second greatest number of responses (35%) fell within the general classification of the disadvantages due to "lack of individualization". 10% of these responses stressed the lack of evaluation tools that account for individual differences. Within this category there was concern over the fact that lecture grades counted for too much of the final grade and that this final grade was a composite of a student's strengths and weaknesses.

Under the general classification of disadvantages "related to tools" where 19% of the total responses were summarized, the use of "application" test items and poorly written test items received the greatest number of responses.

COMPARISON OF GENERAL EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FACULTY RESPONSES

The majority of the total faculty's response fell within the two categories of disadvantages related to subjectivity and lack of individualization. The combined percentages of these two categories, (G.E. faculty, 63% and T.E. faculty, 73%) represents a significant majority of responses. The total number of responses for general education faculty is 30 counted responses; for technical education faculty the number is 37 counted responses. Given the fact that all of the responses have been catagorized and summarized with the intent of objectivity, it is possible to make the following summary statements by way of comparison:

The technical education faculty appears to stress the disadvantages associated with the problem of subjectivity in grading by a ratio of 38% to 23% over the general education faculty responses. The high number of responses that were summarized in the first sub-classification (concerning the affective domain at the clinical level of instruction) indicates that of all the disadvantages given by the technical education faculty, this area seems to be of most concern.

Approximately 1/3 of both general education and technical education faculty's total responses fell within the general classification of concern for the lack of individualization within their grading systems.

By combining the total percentages of the first two general classifications (G.E. 63% and T.E. 73%), it appears that the total faculty responses indicate a concern for the individual students learning process and the faculty's ability to evaluate on an individual basis, that learning process.

The technical education faculty appears to be more concerned with the disadvantages associated with their evaluation tools by a ratio of almost 3 to 1 over the general education faculty (19% to 7%).

The general education faculty appears to be more concerned with disadvantages of time related aspects of their grading system by a ratio of 10 to 1 (20% to 2%) over the technical education faculty.

Dissatisfaction with the grading system may result in change of plans for grading during future quarters the respective course (s) is (are) taught. Plans for change are noted on Table 27.

Table 27

Change of Plans for Grading System

Change of Plans	General Education Courses N=31		Technical Education Courses N=20	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	15	9	6	11

In 15 (50 per cent) of general education courses, faculty members indicated they plan to change grading practices; while in 6 (30 per cent) of the technical education courses, faculty have similar plans.

Students participated in evaluating the grading system as reflected on Table 28.

Table 28

Students' Evaluation of Grading System

General Education Courses			Technical Education Courses		
Formal Evaluation	Informal Evaluation	No Evaluation	Formal Evaluation	Informal Evaluation	No Evaluation
5	9	11	3	9	9

In 14 (56 per cent) of the general education courses, and in 12 (60 per cent) of the technical education courses, students participated in evaluating the grading system either formally or informally. In 11 (44 per cent) of the general education courses, and in 9 (40 per cent) of the technical education courses, students did not participate in any type of evaluation of the system. A formal eval-

uation of the grading system was conducted in only 5 (20 per cent) of general education courses and in only 3 (14 per cent) technical education courses.

NON-ACADEMIC VARIABLES IN STUDENT EVALUATION

General Education Courses

Non-academic variables, such as personality, background, and family responsibility may be important factors in student performance. The extent to which such factors were evaluated in general education courses and assigned weight in computing the grade is noted on Table 29.

Table 29

Socio-cultural Variables Included in Grade Calculation in General Education Courses (N=31)

Socio-cultural Variables	Assigned Weight				
	None	Little	Some	Great Deal	Sole Basis for Grade
Personal Characteristics	23	1	3	0	0
Academic Standing	20	3	1	0	2
Cultural Background	21	2	3	0	0
Racial/Ethnic Group	20	3	4	0	0
Financial Factors	23	2	3	0	0
Family Responsibility	20	2	3	1	0

From the data on Table 29, it appears that socio-cultural factors are not considered in grade calculation in the majority of general education courses, and play a minor part in only a few courses. Family responsibility is considered a "great deal" in one course. Each of the six variables is assigned "some" or "little" weight in as few as one course and as many as four courses. Academic standing is the "sole basis for grades" in two of the courses.

The extent to which classroom variables were included in calculating grades is reflected on Table 30.

Table 30

Classroom Variables Included in Grade Calculation in General Education Courses (N=31)

Classroom Variables	Weight Assigned				
	None	Little	Some	Great Deal	Sole Basis for Grade
Attendance	19	2	5	1	1
Late Assignments	23	0	4	1	0
Extremely low score on a "drop test"	25	0	1	0	0
Make up test	21	0	3	1	0
Student's attitude toward content	23	1	3	0	0
Student's attitude toward instructor	25	0	3	0	0
Student's attitude toward classmates	25	1	2	0	0
Attire and grooming in non-clinical areas	28	0	0	0	0

Most of the grades in general education courses are calculated without reference to selected classroom variables as noted on Table 30. One of the variables, namely attire and grooming in non-clinical areas, has no bearing on grade whatsoever. The other named factors are assigned a "little" or "some" weight in calculating grades in at least one and as many as five courses. Of the eight listed classroom variables, attendance is the most frequently considered factor in grade calculation. In one course it is the "sole basis for the grade".

Clinical laboratory experience is a part of several general

education courses. The extent to which variables in the clinical setting contributed to grades is summarized on Table 31.

Table 31

Clinical Laboratory Variables Included in Grade Calculation in General Education Courses (N=31)

Clinical Laboratory Variables	Weight Assigned				
	None	Little	Some	Great Deal	Sole Basis for Grade
Student attire and grooming (physical and psychol. safety)	9 8	2 2	2 1	1 1	0 0
Student attitude toward patient	6	4	2	2	0
Student attitude toward instructor and/or clinical staff	11	1	3	0	0
Student attitude toward content	10	2	1	2	0
Opinions or attitudes expressed by clinical facility personnel	9	4	2	0	0
Direct evaluative data from clinical facility personnel	6	4	3	0	0
Other clinical variables	4	1	1	0	0

Clinical laboratory variables play a minor role in calculating grades in those general education courses which have laboratory as part of the total course as reflected on Table 31. Each of the eight variables in considered either a "little" or "some" in from one to four of those courses. Factors such as student attire and grooming, student attitude toward patients and content are considered "a great deal" in arriving at a grade in one or two courses. In none of the courses are the above-mentioned clinical variables the "sole basis for the grade".

Technical Education Courses

Within technical education courses, the extent to which socio-cultural variables were included in grade calculation is noted on Table 32.

Table 32

Socio-cultural Variables Included in Grade Calculation in Technical Education Courses (N=20)

Socio-cultural Variables	Assigned Weight				
	None	Little	Some	Great Deal	Sole Basis for Grade
Personal Characteristics	8	10	3	1	1
Academic Standing	18	1	0	0	0
Cultural Background	19	1	1	0	0
Racial/Ethnic Group	20	1	0	0	0
Financial Factors	20	1	0	0	0
Family Responsibility	17	4	0	0	0

Socio-cultural factors do not play an important part in determining grades in most of the technical education courses as reflected in Table 32. Of the six variables enumerated, personal characteristics of the student carry a "little" weight in 10 courses and "some" weight in 3 courses. This variable is considered a "great deal" in one course and is the "sole basis for the grade" in one course. The second most frequently considered factor is that of family responsibility; in four of the courses it is considered a "little" in calculating the grade.

Classroom variables were reviewed in calculating grades in technical education courses. Their importance in deriving a grade

is noted on Table 33.

Table 33

Classroom Variables Included in Grade Calculation
in Technical Education Courses
(N=20)

Classroom Variables	Weight Assigned				
	None	Little	Some	Great Deal	Sole Basis for Grade
Attendance	3	10	6	2	0
Late Assignments	6	8	5	2	0
Extremely low score on "drop test"	15	4	0	1	0
Make up test	15	5	1	1	0
Student's attitude toward content	13	6	1	0	0
Student's attitude toward instructor	14	6	1	0	0
Student's attitude toward classmates	17	0	3	0	0
Attire and grooming in non-clinical areas	19	0	0	0	0

The selected classroom variables listed on Table 33 are considered to a varying extent in calculating grades in technical education courses. Two of the factors, class attendance and turning in assignments late are weighted a "little", "some" or a "great deal" in most of the courses. Attire and grooming in non-clinical areas is not considered at all in any of the technical courses. The remaining five factors are assigned either a "little" or "some" weight in at least one and as many as six courses.

Clinical laboratory variables were weighted more heavily in deriving grades within technical education courses. The importance

of selected variables is noted on Table 34.

Table 34

Clinical Laboratory Variables Included in Grade Calculation in Technical Education Courses (N=20)

Clinical Laboratory Variables	Weight Assigned				
	None	Little	Some	Great Deal	Sole Basis for Grade
Student attire and grooming(physical and psychological safety)	1 1	3 3	4 4	1 2	1 0
Student attitude toward patient	2	1	5	3	0
Student attitude toward instructor and/or clinical staff	2	2	6	2	0
Student attitude toward content	3	0	1	2	0
Opinions or attitudes expressed by clinical facility personnel	1	1	3	7	0
Direct evaluative data from clinical facility personnel	1	0	2	7	0
Other clinical variables	0	0	4	6	0

Clinical laboratory variables play a more important role in determining grades than either socio-cultural factors or classroom variables within technical education courses. Each of the variables listed on Table 34 was weighted "little", "some", or a "great deal" more frequently than "not at all". Opinions and attitudes of students expressed by clinical facility personnel and direct evaluative data obtained from clinical personnel were frequently noted as contributing a "great deal" in calculating the grade. Among "other" clinical variables which were frequently used in grade determination are initiative toward assignment, punctuality, competence, and specific activities planned and carried out.

The nature and purpose of clinical laboratory experiences are believed to be an integral part of technical education at St. Mary's Junior College. Inclusion of such variables in evaluation and grade calculation therefore reflects the philosophy of technical courses.

CHAPTER FOUR:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter follows a particular format found useful to the authors. Data have been summarized, conclusions drawn, and at various points, questions raised. Summary statements and conclusions have been categorized into related units rather than presented in the order found in the study. Categories include:

1. Use of tools, approaches, and grades.
2. Evaluation within the laboratory setting.
3. Student orientation; criteria, and evaluation.
4. Faculty attitudes with regard to grading
5. Evaluation of personal, socio-cultural and classroom-laboratory variables.

SUMMARY

1. Among the variety of evaluation tools or approaches used at St. Mary's Junior College, the final examination and final course grade, written quizzes and unit tests were the most frequently used in both general and technical education courses.

CONCLUSION: Traditional approaches and tools of evaluation are being used in most of the general and technical education courses offered at St. Mary's Junior College.

SUMMARY

2. The most frequently used method of reporting evaluation to students in general education courses was the letter grade. The most frequently used method of reporting evaluation to students in technical education courses was in terms of points.

SUMMARY

3. The practice of Pass/No-pass and Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory was used infrequently, and only in those courses which have no

credit or only a single credit and often are not transferable, such as remedial mathematics and medical terminology.

SUMMARY

4. Within general education courses, the most frequent practice of determining letter grades was use of the normal curve and adjusting grades to fit performance. Within technical education courses the most frequently used practice of determining letter grades was adjusting grades to fit performance.

CONCLUSIONS to number 2,3, and 4: Considering the frequent use of letter grades, point systems and normal curves, and combined with infrequent use of alternate grading systems, one concludes that in practice, the faculty at St. Mary's Junior College uses very traditional methods of determining grades and reporting evaluation to students.

SUMMARY

5. In approximately 60% of general education courses and 70% of technical education courses, the evaluation score is translated into a letter grade equivalent either all, most or some of the time. (In the 29% of the general education courses where there was no response or "this does not apply" - the reason might be that letter grades were always given rather than any other score which would need translation.)

SUMMARY

6. The letter grades, "A" through "F" are possible final grades in all general and technical education courses.

CONCLUSION: In general, the method of translating and reporting the faculty's evaluation of the student is the traditional method.

SUMMARY

7. In the greater majority of all courses (general education, 68% and technical education, 85%) all students were in essentially the same sequence and responsible for the same work. Minimal choices were allowed to complete course requirements. Of those courses where choice was possible, the teacher most frequently devised the options.

CONCLUSION: Student choices in completing course requirements are limited in both general and technical education courses which seems to reflect the traditional philosophy of teacher-controlled courses.

SUMMARY

8. Ordinarily, students did not "contract" for final grades in either general or technical education courses.

CONCLUSION: "Contracts" are infrequently used at St. Mary's Junior College, which seems to be another example of prevalent use of traditional methods.

QUESTIONS:

1. If faculty members view themselves as innovative in developing course content and utilizing teaching methodology, why do they generally select traditional forms of evaluation and grading practices?

2. What effect does traditional evaluation and grading have upon innovation?

3. What policy changes are needed to allow greater flexibility in evaluation and grading?

4. What implications does the traditional approach to evaluation and grading practices have on a changing student body (i.e. the older

student, transfer student, stop-out student or disadvantaged student?)

SUMMARY

9. Within general education courses, the letter grade "D" was interpreted by the faculty within the greater majority (80%) of courses as "below average passing work". Many general education faculty members did not complete the entire question: of those who did, all indicated that "D" was minimally adequate preparation for subsequent study in general education. Within technical education courses, the letter grade "D" was interpreted by the faculty within more than half (56%) of the courses as "level of work inadequate" and within the greater majority (75%), was "below level to be a safe practitioner". The interpretation of "D" held by minority opinion in technical education courses (that is 44% indicating "below average passing work" and 25% indicating "minimum level to be a safe practitioner".) represents those courses which effect the largest number of students in the school, specifically, the two nursing courses.

CONCLUSION: There is more congruence in the interpretation of the letter grade "D" between the general and technical education courses in fact, than would appear on the surface, because of the number of students affected by the courses involved.

SUMMARY

10. Within the technical education courses, clinical laboratory performance, laboratory worksheets and clinical laboratory conferences were frequently used methods of evaluation. Within general education courses, these methods were never utilized.

SUMMARY

11. Within technical education courses, clinical laboratory factors play a more significant role in determining grade, than either socio-cultural factors or classroom variables.

CONCLUSION: The frequent use of laboratory evaluation and laboratory variables within technical education courses supports the emphasis placed upon this experience contained in the statement on "The Laboratory", which is part of the philosophy and objectives of the school.

SUMMARY

12. In approximately one-half of both general and technical education courses, students were always told criteria for grade level. In approximately one-third of the general education courses, and in approximately one-fourth of the technical education courses, students were generally not told criteria for grade level.

QUESTIONS:

1. Is there a rationale for not telling students criteria for grade level?

2. Is the practice of not telling students criteria for grade level, even though it represents a minority of faculty members, inconsistent with the philosophy of student-oriented education as clearly stated in"St. Mary's Plan"?

SUMMARY

13. In more than one-half of both general and technical education courses, students participated in either formal or informal evaluation of the grading system. However the majority of both general and technical education faculty members did not elicit formal evaluations from their students.

QUESTION:

Why is there relatively little formal evaluation of the grading system at St. Mary's Junior College?

SUMMARY

14. In 60% of both general and technical education courses, faculty members were satisfied with the present grading system.

SUMMARY

15. The advantages of the present system of grading as seen by the total faculty seemed to be primarily advantages related to flexibility and currency of evaluation. The general education faculty members appear to value the flexibility and variety of methods of course work and evaluation, within their current grading system more than do the technical education faculty members, by a ratio of 2 to 1 (55% to 27%). The technical education faculty appears to value the advantage of currency and frequency of their grading system more than do the general education faculty members by a ratio of 2 to 1 (27% to 14%).

SUMMARY

16. The majority of the total faculty's response with regard to the disadvantages of the current grading system fell within the two categories of disadvantages related to subjectivity and lack of individualization. The combined percentages of these two categories, (G.E., 63% and T.E., 73%) seems to indicate a concern for the individual student's learning process, and the faculty's ability to evaluate on an individual basis, that learning process.

QUESTIONS:

1. Are there inconsistencies between advantages and

disadvantages with the current grading system as viewed by the faculty and their satisfaction-dissatisfaction levels?

2. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the grading system appears to be a subjective evaluation of the system since there was minimal formal evaluation of grading by students. Would faculty have responded differently had they obtained more input fromstudents?

SUMMARY

17. Within one-half of the general education courses, faculty have indicated plans for change of the grading system; within one-third of technical education courses, faculty have indicated similar plans.

QUESTIONS:

1. In light of the number of courses in which faculty members have no plans for changing the current system, (one-half of general education courses and two-thirds of technical education courses) does this indicate a general satisfaction with the traditional grading practice?

2. Do the faculty members really desire change in evaluation methodology and grading practices?

SUMMARY

18. Faculty members within technical education courses tend to place greater weight on personal characteristics of students than do faculty within general education courses.

SUMMARY

19. Faculty members within general education courses tend to put more weight on other variables such as culture, race, financial, and family responsibility than do faculty in technical education courses.

SUMMARY

20. Classroom variables such as attendance and late assignments bear some weight in general education courses and considerable weight in technical education courses.

SUMMARY

21. Generally, classroom variables such as student attitude toward content and instructor have greater weight in technical education courses than in general education courses.

QUESTION:

To what extent should personal-social-cultural and classroom-laboratory variables influence the evaluation process with regard to St. Mary's changing student body?

APPENDIX A:

ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDIES COMMITTEE:

ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSES

Excerpts from the Faculty Handbook, St. Mary's Junior College,
Second Revised Edition, 1972.

FACULTY ORGANIZATION PLAN,
ARTICLE IV - COMMITTEES OF THE FACULTY

Section 1. General Purpose.
Committees represent the faculty in matters where consideration by the entire faculty is not feasible. As hereafter provided, committees shall have the following functions.

a. An investigative, analytical and recommending function to the faculty as a whole on matters of faculty welfare, academic and disciplinary policy.
b. An administrative or interpretive function in the application of approved academic and disciplinary policies to specific cases.

Section 2. Terms of Office.
Members of all committees serve for a term of two years except initially when approximately half the membership of each committee is designated to serve for one year. Terms of each office begin with the opening of the fall academic quarter. Consecutive terms are permitted.

Section 3. Selection of Committees.

a. The Executive Committee of St. Mary's Junior College selects members and fills vacancies on committees other than the Faculty Welfare Committee, and designates a secretary to record proceedings in faculty meetings.

ARTICLE VI - STUDIES COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Studies Committee is to stimulate research in the college through initiation, consultation, and cooperation with departments and faculty; reflect on the compatibility of proposed studies with the college's philosophy and curriculum most directly involved in or influenced by a given study; coordinate research activities within the college whether the research is being done by college faculty or persons not on the faculty; maintain records on college research activities; arrange appropriate dissemination of information about studies and field research in the college to the faculty.

Section 2. The Studies Committee consists of members representing both technical and general education. The chairman and the secretary will be elected by members of the committee.

Section 3. Consultant services will be sought and utilized as determined by the committee. This person need not be a member of the committee.

APPENDIX B

ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDIES COMMITTEE: STATEMENT OF ROLE IN RELATIONSHIP TO STUDIES DONE AT ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE.

STATEMENT OF ROLE OF STUDIES COMMITTEE IN RELATIONSHIP TO STUDIES DONE (1) AT ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE BY NON-COLLEGE PERSONS, AND (2) AT ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE BY COLLEGE FACULTY MEMBERS.

Discussion fall quarter 1970 of the functions of the Studies Committee has emphasized these points. The Studies Committee is to

a. Stimulate research in the college through initiation, consultation, and cooperation with departments and faculty.

b. Reflect on the compatibility of proposed studies with the college's philosophy and the curriculum most directly involved in or influenced by a given study.

c. Coordinate research activities within the college whether the research is being done by college faculty or persons not on the faculty.

d. Maintain records on college research activities.

e. Maintain bibliography and resource information on research.

f. Arrange appropriate dissemination of information about studies and field research in the college to the faculty.

Further discussion of these points had led to the following statement:

STUDIES DONE BY NON-COLLEGE PERSONS

A study needs to be philosophically compatible with the college as well as compatible with the curriculum it most directly involves or influences. The Studies Committee will assume responsibility for reviewing and approving or disapproving studies done by outsiders on the basis of their compatibility. Further, the Committee has a role in expediting and facilitating such studies.

STUDIES DONE BY COLLEGE FACULTY MEMBERS

In order for the college to have a centralized body aware of all research activities in the school, the services of the Studies Committee will be offered to college faculty also. This will enable the Committee to function in its clearinghouse and coordinating capacities. Therefore, studies initiated by St. Mary's Junior College faculty members should be submitted to the Studies Committee for reflection, assistance, suggestions, facilitation, and general reviewal of their compatibility with the philosophy of the school.

Whether the study is proposed by a faculty member or an outsider, the director and faculty members of the program involved will also participate in evaluating the study's compatibility with the college philosophy and given curriculum.

APPENDIX C

MEMBERSHIP OF THE STUDIES COMMITTEE: ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE, 1972-1973.

Dr. Carol Peterson, Chairman.....is Director of the Nursing Project in curriculum development and deeply involved in the instructional research that is on-going in that endeavor as well as the institutional research of this committee.

Mr. Roger Claesgens, Secretary.....is a representative of the general education faculty and is working toward his doctorate at the university.

Dr. Thomas Scheller.....is the Vice President of the school and represents administration on the committee. His expertise and position facilitate committee activities.

Dr. Jean Zillich.....is a representative of technical education and is a clinical psychologist.

Mr. John Peltzer.....is a representative of the general education faculty where he teaches the biological sciences. He has previously been active with the Faculty Welfare Committee.

Miss Peg Thompson.....is with the specially funded project ERACE that deals with disadvantaged students and their interaction with the curriculum and school. She is keenly alert to the students' side of any research undertaken.

Miss Margaret Trenchard.....is a representative of the technical education faculty and the nursing program.

APPENDIX D

A PARTIAL LIST OF STUDIES COMPLETED OR IN PROGRESS AT ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE AS OF DECEMBER, 1972.

ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE
Minneapolis, Minnesota
April 13, 1972

TO: All Faculty

FROM: Peter O'Reilly, Chairman, Educational Policies Committee

It was during the year of self-study that the faculty considered, as a group, grading policies, practices and procedures and their effects on our students. From time to time several individuals and groups have suggested that it would be appropriate to up-date our data.

Accordingly, E.P.C. decided to initiate such a study and commissioned the Studies Committee to develop an instrument and a method which would accomplish our purpose. Upon review of the attached questionnaire, I trust that you will conclude, as we have, that they have fulfilled both tasks admirably.

It would not be wise to anticipate the results of this study, but be assured that the faculty will receive both the results and an opportunity for discussion. Perhaps, the spring and/or fall workshops will afford time for such discussion.

May I ask for your wholehearted cooperation in this study. We certainly appreciate the time, thought and effort which will results from each of you. Please observe the May 8, 1972, deadline for return of the questionnaires.

Thank you.

12. Student Satisfaction with Methods of Teaching and Grading is being assessed with the use of a questionnaire by an individual general education faculty member. Comparisons will continue as changes in the course and grading are introduced. In progress, 1972.

13. A Study of the Correlation of Selected Aptitude Scores with Achievement on Written, Oral, and Situational Tests in a Multi-Sensory Educational Setting in Associate Degree Nursing Education was carried out by a graduate student in 1971.

14. A Grading Practices Survey in 1972 is discussed in the main portion of this report.

APPENDIX E

MEMO FROM STUDIES COMMITTEE TO EDUCATIONAL POLICIES COMMITTEE

ST. MARY'S JUNIOR COLLEGE
Minneapolis, Minnesota
November 17, 1972

TO: Educational Policies Committee

FROM: Studies Committee

RE: Grading Policies Study

Attached is a summary of the Studies Committee's observations, comments, and recommendations related to the Study of Grading Policies done spring 1972. At this point we assume that EPC will deal with the data and that Studies Committee will be involved further only on request from EPC. If Studies Committee can help further they will be most open to considering that involvement.

OBSERVATIONS AND QUESTIONS RELATED TO GRADING POLICIES STUDY - COMMENTS ARE RECORDED ACCORDING TO QUESTIONS

Question #A-1

Variety of grading tools used by both GE and TE. By nature of courses TE uses clinical-related tools. Special projects appear to be used more by GE. Written quizzes, tests, and finals common in both GE and TE.

Questions: Are their evaluation alternatives that would be as effective as written quizzes? Are there more functional approaches than the final exam?

Question #A-2

Points are used more often in TE than in GE. Letter grades and scores on rating scale are used more in GE. However, neither GE or TE make much use of rating scale. TE uses P/NP or S/U idea more than GE.

Questions: Is the heavy use of points in TE functional and maximally effective? If mastery or S/U is acceptable on single tools why isn't it used more often in place of the final grade?

Question #A-3

TE more inclined to use pre-set standards to determine final grade, GE more likely to use the curve. TE generally uses curve or a combination throughout the quarter, then switches to absolute standards at end.

GE keeps same approach throughout quarter--generally.

TE more likely to record performance in some other manner than grades throughout quarter, then switch to letter grade at the end.

Questions: What does the emphasis on points within the quarter do to the student's understanding of his relative position? Would it be more fair to the student if he were always told his relative position in terms of a letter grade.

Question #A-4

Student in TE more likely to know criteria for grade level (15/23 of courses) than in GE (16/29 of courses). In 11/29 of GE courses and 6/23 of TE courses student generally not know criteria.

Question: Why in only about 50% of courses do students know the criteria for certain grade levels? Shouldn't student know for every course the entire evaluation plan and from where the various points and weights in the final total grade come?

Question #A-5

GE more than TE--students able to translate score to grade.

[illegible] with [illegible]

Question: Which is better for students, to know grades all through quarter or to have points that have to be translated or can't be until end of quarter.

Question A-6

TE more emphasis on quizzes and/finals than GE. GE main type of test was unit test, TE more emphases in quiz and final type tests.

TE--higher percentages of items objective or short answer. GE higher percentages of essay.

Question A-7

Variety of types of objective items used.

Question A-8

All TE courses--relative weight of items made known. 4/16 GE courses-student not know relative weight of questions.

Question: Why are there any courses where students don't know weight of questions on exams?

Question B-1

Generally all grades used in TE and GE. Both TE and GE--a few courses not using D and F. GE--one using P/NP. No TE using P/NP.

Question: How can P/NP concept be fostered?

Question B-2

GE--D represents below average passing work or minimally adequate preparation for subsequent study.

TE--P represents inadequate work, below level to be safe.

Question: What is the significance of this dual meaning of D in the same institution? Do TE faculty accept school policy pertaining to D work? Are there differences within TE on this question?

Question B-3

GE say no--grade not determined by % of points.

TE just opposite--grade determined by % points. Again TE point-oriented. GE grade-orientation.

TE--Some differences on meaning of C.

Question: Why and what significance does this have to student?

Question B-4

[illegible] assign certain % of students to each grade level. All but 3 GE (27/30) say no.

Question: Is it functional that even 3/30 general education courses say yes?

[illegible]

GE courses more likely to have options in completing course requirements--but in only about 1/3 (10/31) of courses. Of those who had options, GE and TE quite similar in:

a. opportunity to change option--was generally
b. options more likely set by instructor
c. not having to meet preliminary criteria
d. written contract for option not generally used

Dissimilar in

a. more GE guide option for student to design own course--of students in GE vs. 1/4 TE
b. GE--could receive any of grades with option. TE--option tied to specific grade.

Questions: In GE where are the options--more in supportive courses like A & P, Psychology or other courses? If so, why the difference?

Question 5-6

25% GE--contract for final grade. 12% TE contract for final grade.

Of those who had contracted for final grade:

a. Most GE and TE--not allow contracting for less than a C
b. Both GE and TE allowed student to change contract
c. Less flexible rules on changing contracts 83% of time. TE not at all
d. Both GE and TE--criterianess in grades tied to both quality and quantity
e. [illegible] TE tended to use instructor--determined criteria
f. GE no written contracts. One used in TE.

Questions: In those courses where the contract has been introduced, what motivated this instructor to use it and how do the students like it?

Question 6-7

37% of TE [illegible] dissatisfied with grading. 36% of GE courses--dissatisfied with grading.

Questions: What are [illegible] that could be done college-wide to improve the grading system? What could be done within courses to improve grading?

Question 8-9

62% of GE [illegible] to change grading system. Only 35% of TE plan to change--yet degree of dissatisfaction [illegible] about same for both GE and TE.

Questions: [illegible] more interested in changing than TE? Are grading processes "broken" to solve in TE because of clinical, safety, etc.?

Question 9-

[illegible] evaluates at all.

Questions: Why so little formal evaluation? Why are they dissatisfied if they have [illegible]

Section C

TE much more likely to put "a little" weight on personal characteristics than CE faculty which puts very minimal emphasis on this.

Questions: What are these personal characteristics? What implications does this have on student success, etc.?

CE more likely to put a little or some weight on other general variables (culture, race, financial, family) than TE.

Questions: Why is this? Is this related to their having more project II Sr students?

TE much more concerned with attendance than CE. Also with late assignments, student attitudes toward content.

TE much more concerned about student attire in non clinical areas, student's attitude toward instructor.

Question: Why? Does clinical component of TE warrant these differences?

Clinical Variables--Section C

Non Nursing

Use clinical evaluations (opinions and directions) quite heavily. Use other variables some.

Nursing

Generally use variables "little" or "none" except--attitude toward patient, attitude toward content, direct data from personnel--a few give these more consideration.

Questions: Implications for students--particularly those from disadvantaged settings, different subcultures, etc.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The study should be called "A Study of Grading Practices and Patterns" rather than "A Study of Policies". The word "policies" more appropriately refers to institution-wide, accepted guidelines.

2. The data show numerous inconsistencies in the evaluation and grading practices in the college. It seems that it would be beneficial to the SWJC students if all courses were [illegible] basic criteria of good evaluation. Such college-wide criteria should be clearly stated. For example, it seems essential that in every course a student should be given an overview of the complete evaluation plan and [illegible] at the start of the quarter. A "basic" such as this and similar others should be a publicized college-wide expectation.

3. As previously discussed in Studies Committee, it seems appropriate in a study of grading practices and patterns to also study the underlying philosophy about grading. Studies Committee recommends that such an extension of the present study be considered. It would seem appropriate to assess faculty members [illegible]

composite [illegible] individual faculty personal [illegible].

4. [illegible] faculty members are uncertain [illegible]

The Studies Committee believes these are important innovations. An effort should be made to further describe what rudiments of a "mastery" system co exist at the college and to foster their continued development in a sound manner.

5. Studies Committee recommends that further analysis of the data be done. This analysis would involve examining trends within programs, within general education and within technical education. Further, analysis of the open-ended responses on the questionnaire would be appropriate. The Committee recommends that Roger Christensen, Margaret Trenchard and Sister Mary Helmen be permitted to make such analysis and interpret them as part of the requirement for a course they are taking. Feedback from these further analyses would be provided to Studies Committee and Educational Policies Committee.

APPENDIX F

INTRODUCTORY LETTER AND THE GRADING PRACTICES QUESTIONNAIRE

[illegible]
[illegible]
April 14, 1972

TO: All Faculty

FROM: Peter O'Reilly, Chairman, Educational Policies Committee

It was during the year of self-study that the faculty considered (as a group), grading policies, practices and procedures and their effects on our students. Since then, several individuals and groups have expressed that it would be appropriate to update our data.

Accordingly, E.P.C. decided to initiate such a study and commissioned the Studies Committee to develop an instrument and a method which would accomplish our purpose. Upon review of the attached questionnaire, I trust that you will conclude, as we have, that they have fulfilled both tasks admirably.

It would not be wise to anticipate the results of this study, but be assured that the faculty will receive both the results and an opportunity for discussion. Perhaps, the spring and/or fall workshops will afford time for such discussion.

May I ask for your wholehearted cooperation in this study. We certainly appreciate the time, thought and effort which will result from each of you. Please observe the May 8, 1972, deadline for return of the questionnaires.

Thank you.

Instructor_____

QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR
STUDY OF GRADING POLICIES AND PRACTICES

DIRECTIONS

The questions in this form pertain to Course #_____ Titled_____

Please answer them as they pertain to this course during _____ quarter.

A. EVALUATION TOOLS AND APPROACHES

1. The following is a list of tools (or approaches) which can be used in the evaluation of students. In the column labeled 'Use', place an X beside each tool you used in this course. If you did not use the tool in this course, do not mark it. Focus only on the 'Use' column at this time.

	Use	Evaluation Method	Grading Standards
Written quizzes			
Unit tests			
Midquarter(s)			
Final exam			
Situational tests			
Lab worksheets			
Oral tests (quizzes)			
Clinical lab conferences			
Clinical lab performance			
Book reports			
Abstracts of journal articles			
Term papers			
Case studies			
Patient/Client Care plans			
Special projects			
Final course grade			
Other (Specify)			

2. Now GO BACK to the above table. Work in the column labeled "Evaluation Method." For each tool you marked as used, place the appropriate letter(s) from the list below in the column labeled "Evaluation Method."

   a. performance reported to the student in terms of points
   b. performance reported to the student as a letter grade
   c. performance reported to the student in the form of a score on a rating scale
   d. performance reported to the student as pass/no pass or other mastery level such as S/U
   e. other (please specify here)

3. Finally work in the column labeled "Grading Standards". For <u>each</u> of the tools you marked as <u>used</u> in this course, place <u>one</u> letter from the following list in the column labeled "Grading Standards".

   a. Letter grades were determined according to pre-established absolute standards, strictly applied. For example, 90% = A, 80% = B, etc.
   b. Letter grades were determined according to the relative performances of the students in the course (curve).
   c. Letter grades were determined according to pre-established standards which are adjusted slightly to fit the performances of the students in the course.
   d. Letter grades were not given; performance was recorded in some other manner.

4. Were students in this course told the criteria for a given grade level <u>before</u> an assignment or test was handed in?

   ____ Yes, all the time
   ____ Yes, most of the time
   ____ Yes, some of the time
   ____ No, generally not

5. Were students in this course told how to translate the evaluation score they received to a letter grade equivalent immediately after receiving the score?

   ____ Yes, all the time
   ____ Yes, most of the time
   ____ Yes, some of the time
   ____ Only on the final course grade

6. In the various types of examinations you gave in this course, what were the approximate percentages of each type of question listed in the table below? (NOTE: If you gave no exams, skip questions #6, 7, and 8 and continue with part B.)

Type of Exam	Check If This Type of Exam Used	Types of Questions: Objective (Multiple Choice, T-F, Matching, Fill in Blank)	Short Answer (Sentence or Two)	Essay (One or More Paragraphs)
Quizzes (written)	_____	_____%	_____%	_____% = 100%
Unit Tests	_____	_____%	_____%	_____% = 100%
Midquarter(s)	_____	_____%	_____%	_____% = 100%
Final	_____	_____%	_____%	_____% = 100%

NOTE: If you used some objective questions in your exams, then answer question #7, otherwise go directly to question #8.

7. What kind of objective items did you use? For each type of exam listed below, identify what percentage of the total number of items on the test were true-false, multiple choice, etc.

Type of Exam	Types of Objective Items			
	True-False	Multiple Choice	Classification or Matching	Simple Recall or Fill in the Blank
Quizzes (written)	____%	____%	____%	____%
Unit Tests	____%	____%	____%	____%
Midquarter(s)	____%	____%	____%	____%
Final	____%	____%	____%	____%

8. On any given exam, were students told the relative contribution of each question to the total exam score?

____ No
____ Yes

B. OVERALL APPROACH TO GRADING

1. What were the possible final grades in this course? (Check all that apply.)

____A
____B
____C
____D
____F
____I (Incomplete)
____P (Pass)
____NP (No Pass)
____Other (Explain)_____

NOTE: If "D" was a possible final grade, please answer Question #2. If not, go to Question #3.

2. Below is a list of possible meanings for the grade D. Place a check beside each of the meanings which reflected your use of a D grade in this course.

____ D represents below average passing work.
____ D represents a level of work which in essence is inadequate.
____ In program courses, D represents the minimum level which must be attained in order to be a safe practitioner.
____ In program courses, D represents attainment which is below the level necessary to be a safe practitioner.
____ In general education courses, D represents minimally adequate preparation for subsequent study.
____ In general education courses, D represents inadequate preparation for further study.

3. In determining the final grade for this course, was the letter grade determined by the percentage of possible points achieved?

____ No.
____ Yes. If yes, what percentage (approximately) of the course points was needed to achieve the various grades.

A equaled at least ____% of the points
B equaled at least ____% of the points

C equaled at least _____% of the points
D equaled at least _____% of the points
F was less than _____% of the points

(If applicable to this course)
P equaled at least _____% of the points
NP was less than _____% of the points
S equaled at least _____% of the points
U was less than _____% of the points

4. For this course did you try to assign (approximately) a certain percentage of students at each grade level?

____ No.
____ Yes. If yes, what were these percentages (approximately)?

_____% of students at A level
_____% of students at B level
_____% of students at C level
_____% of students at D level
_____% of students at F level

5. In this course, did the student have a choice of more than one way to complete the course requirements?

____No, all students were in essentially the same sequence and were responsible for the same work. (Go directly to question #6 now)

____Yes, students could do any of several types of work. (Go on to parts "a" through ("f" below, then to question #6).

FOR THOSE WHO ANSWERED YES ON QUESTION #5

a. Once the student chose one option, could he change to another one during the quarter?

____No.
____Yes. If yes, what limitations were there on a student's opportunity to change options?

b. How were the various options devised? (check one.)

____By the instructor at the beginning of the quarter.
____By the instructor in consultation with students in the course.
____By the student(s), with approval of the instructor.

c. Was there an option that allowed a student to design his own course of study for the quarter?

____ No
____Yes

d. Within any given option, could students receive any of the grades given in the course?

____ No, each option was tied to a specific grade
____ Yes

e. Did the students have to meet any preliminary criteria before they could choose any of the options?

____ No
____ Yes. If yes, what were they?

f. Did you use a formal, written contract for choosing options?

____No
____Yes. If yes, please attach a copy as a sample.

6. In this course did the student <u>contract</u> for the final course grade?

____ No. (Go directly to question #7)
____ Yes. (Go on to parts "a" through "f" below, then on to question #7)

FOR THOSE WHO CHECKED YES ON QUESTIONS #6

a. What were the grades for which the student could <u>contract</u>? Check all that apply.)

____A	____F
____B	____P (Pass)
____C	____NP (No Pass)
____D	____S (Satisfactory)
	____U (Unsatisfactory)

b. Once the contract was made could the student change it? (Check one.)

____Yes, but for a higher grade only.
____Yes, but for a lower grade only.
____Yes, for either a higher or lower grade.
____No, it could not be changed

c. If the contract could be changed, were there limitations associated with the student's freedom to do so.

____No
____Yes. If yes, please check those limitations that existed.

____Contract had to be formally renegotiated with the instructor.
____Deadlines existed for changing contracts.
____The student had to be earning at least at the original level for which he contracted.
____Other (specify)_____
_____
____Other (specify)_____
_____

d. Were the main differences between various grades (Check one).

____ qualitative differences (better work for a better grade)?
____ quantitative (more work for a better grade)?
____ a combination of qualitative and quantitative differences (more and better work for a better grade)?

e. How were the criteria for the various grades determined? (Check one)

____ By the instructor in advance of the quarter.
____ By the instructor in consultation with students in the course.
____ By the student(s) with approval from the instructor.

f. Did you use a formal, written contract for choosing the course grade?

____ No
____ Yes. If yes, please attach a sample to this questionnaire.

ALL RESPONDENTS CONTINUE WITH 7-11 AND SECTION C

7. Are you generally satisfied with the grading system you used in this course?
____No ____Yes

8. Do you plan to change the grading system in this course during the next quarter it is taught?

____ No.
____ Yes. If yes, what changes do you anticipate?

9. In your opinion, what are the two most significant advantages of the grading system in this course?

a.

b.

10. In your opinion what are the two most significant disadvantages of the grading system in this course?

a.

b.

11. Have the students in this course evaluated the grading system you used?

____ No
____ Yes, informally
____ Yes, formally. If yes, please describe briefly how this was done.

C. OTHER FACTORS IN EVALUATION

Please complete the following questions by indicating the amount of weight that you assigned in your calculation of any grade in this course to variables other than the usual points or scores earned for established criteria. (Circle your choice for each variable.)

General Variables

Variable	Weight Assigned				
	None	A Little	Some	A Great Deal	Sole Basis for Grade
1. Personal Characteristics	1	2	3	4	5
2. Academic standing	1	2	3	4	5
3. Cultural background	1	2	3	4	5
4. Racial/Ethnic group	1	2	3	4	5
5. Financial factors	1	2	3	4	5
6. Family responsibility	1	2	3	4	5

Classroom Variables

Variable	Weight Assigned				
	None	A Little	Some	A Great Deal	Sole Basis for Grade
1. Attendance	1	2	3	4	5
2. Late assignments	1	2	3	4	5
3. Extremely low score on a drop test	1	2	3	4	5
4. Make up test	1	2	3	4	5
5. Student's attitude toward content	1	2	3	4	5
6. Student's attitude toward instructor	1	2	3	4	5
7. Student's attitude toward classmates	1	2	3	4	5
8. Attire and grooming in nonclinical areas	1	2	3	4	5

Clinical Lab Variables

(Answer Only If You Have Students In the Clinical Area for This Course)

Variables	Weight Assigned				
	None	A Little	Some	A Great Deal	Sole Basis for Grade
1. Student attire and grooming (patient's physical safety)	1	2	3	4	5
2. Student attire and grooming (patient's psychological safety)	1	2	3	4	5
3. Student attitude toward particular patient	1	2	3	4	5
4. Student attitude toward instructor and/or clinical staff	1	2	3	4	5
5. Student attitude toward content	1	2	3	4	5
6. Opinions or attitudes expressed by clinical facility personnel	1	2	3	4	5
7. Direct evaluative data from clinical facility personnel	1	2	3	4	5
8. Other clinical variables	1	2	3	4	5
(Specify)_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

Reminder! Attach samples of any contracts you used in this course.

Thank you for completing this form. Please return it to Marion Hume in D407 or Cele in the College Office by May 8.

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