Promoting Thoughtful Faculty Conversations about Grade Distributions

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2007 - 08 Educational Policies Committee

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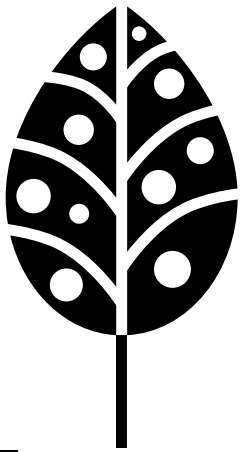

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

Contents

Abstract

Assigning grades to student work, both during the academic term and as a summation of a student's mastery of subject matter, is a longstanding practice in all levels of education, from kindergarten through graduate and professional studies. Recently, a variety of factors have brought the criteria for assigning, and the resulting distribution of letter grades under heightened scrutiny. From increased attention from accrediting agencies, through new online services that publicize grades, to newly revised Title 5 Regulations, these forces require thoughtful faculty reflection, and an informed and collegial discussion on the rationale for the grades faculty assign to their students' coursework. Such discussions might well reveal practices that could both enhance the integrity of the grading system and improve student success. One purpose of this paper is to examine system data from the state Chancellor's Office about grade distributions within California community colleges; a second purpose is to identify some of the issues that need further exploration, and to encourage local faculty and senates to pursue such conversations. This paper does not propose specific criteria or practices to be used by faculty, though one of the recommendations of this paper is that further work should be done to explore that topic in more detail.

Introduction

Faculty take great professional care in designing curriculum and the learning experience for students, and in determining the plan for a specific class. The assignments for the course and the methods of evaluating the assignments are carefully considered and should be stated in the syllabus for the course. Students use the grades that they earn for a variety of purposes—transfer, employment advancement, and interest—making grades extremely important to both the instructor and the student. Grades are the measure used by faculty to record the learning achieved, and the improved skills of the student.

Education Code §76224(b) establishes that the legal authority and responsibility for assigning grades belongs to the individual faculty member teaching the course. In addition, "grading policies" is an area where collegial consultation with the local academic senate is required by Title 5, §53200 and §53203. That said, there are many conflicting pressures that could affect an instructor's decision about grades, and many interesting examples and questions that are worthy of serious, thoughtful faculty discussion. Faculty members now face new pressures from two sources. On the one side, new online services provide unscreened student evaluations of instructors with special attention paid to the rigor with which those instructors assign grades. On the other hand, the Federal Department of Education appears to have concluded that grades are meaningless and would prefer to substitute the results of national standardized tests for locally assigned grades. This paper will consider a variety of good reasons for initiating thoughtful discussion of grading, specifically grade inflation and grade distributions, and the possible factors that can contribute to variances in grade distributions. It recommends and encourages that faculty be the ones to initiate and guide these conversations within a local professional development or program review context.

The initial impulse for this paper came from Resolution 9.07, adopted in Spring 2007:

> **9.07 Grading, Student Equity, and Developing Senate Guidelines**
>
> Whereas, The disparity between grade distribution for students taking the same course with different instructors, formats and lengths within the same department/program/college raises questions of academic rigor and common standards;
>
> Whereas, Students can now access the grade distributions of faculty at a given institution and may begin to make course selections based on the grade distribution of individual faculty;
>
> Whereas, This practice of selecting a course section based on the grade distributions of an individual faculty member, could "incentivize" some faculty to change their grading standards in order to ensure their courses "make" and thus exacerbate the problem of grade inflation and/or disparity; and
>
> Whereas, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, while recognizing the importance of academic freedom in the primacy of faculty to assign grades, also supports meaningful dialogue among faculty about grading standards and rigor;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges research the prevalence of grade inflation within the California Community College System and the impact, if any, of the availability of faculty grade distributions on grade inflation;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges develop a white paper to empower local academic senates seeking to initiate local campus discussions on the topics of grade inflation and academic rigor; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges use its appropriate institutes and plenary sessions to share the results of its research on grade inflation.

The Importance of Perceptions

The often erroneous public perceptions of grading provide an initial reason for the importance of these faculty conversations. Students, legislators and the general public have a wide variety of preconceptions and misconceptions about grading. They are sometimes negative and are often based on anecdotes. Faculty could simply reiterate the integrity of the grading process, ignore the perceptions, and hope that they go away. But a better response is to acknowledge and understand them—and to share them with colleagues as further motivation for serious dialogue about grading.

In part, these perceptions are based on the wide range of purposes or values placed on grades by different stakeholders. Grades address a wide range of objectives: students sometimes hope for a good education and sometimes merely for a ticket to graduate school and high salary; parents want value for money or success for their children, or just want a GPA adequate to maintain their children in insurance coverage; administrators worry about the reputation and ranking of the college; and some legislators misuse grades as an accountability measure, viewing them as a simplistic and invalid measurable outcome for the allocation of public dollars. While grades are a valid measure of student learning, they are not a tool for evaluating instructors or institutions.

Media stories about grades are almost always about sensational anomalies, but they are particularly dangerous. They have the potential to provide "reasons" that external authorities will cite to justify radical changes in grading process. Once again, ignoring them is not a productive reaction. But faculty who have examined local data and have discussed its implications are in an excellent position to respond to the misperceptions.

"Faculty could simply reiterate the integrity of the grading process, ignore the perceptions, and hope that they go away. But a better response is to acknowledge and understand them—and to share them with colleagues as further motivation for serious dialogue about grading."

For example, negative perceptions of grading are produced when students cheat and do so successfully. The media sometimes carry stories of elaborate systems to improve scores on national standardized tests: students take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in New York and "leak" the questions to students taking the test on the west coast. The pressure to cheat in California community colleges is probably not as great, but some students are always on the lookout for easy ways to improve their grades. If a particular instructor evaluates students in a way that makes it easier for some students to cheat, that instructor's grade distribution may skew upward if students cheat successfully—or downward, if those students are caught and receive failing grades on assessments due to academic dishonesty. The effect of cheating on overall grade distributions is probably small, and would be difficult to prove. For a broader look at academic integrity and institutional responsibilities see the Academic Senate's Spring 2007 paper *Promoting and Sustaining an Institutional Climate of Academic Integrity*.

And of course, there are occasional examples of positive perceptions about grades and their uses but they seldom appear in news stories. For example, California State University (CSU) Mentor states "the grades you earn in high school are an important factor in CSU admission decisions." UC uses Grade Point Average (GPA) as an important component of their requirements for admission and for scholarships. Indeed, UC research has shown that grades are a better predictor of future student success than standardized tests such as the SAT.[1]

A final example is the effect of online rating services, discussed later, that can create both negative and positive perceptions of institutions and individual instructors.

As a response to both the resolution and the negative perceptions just described, this paper seeks to stimulate professional discussion of the issues amongst faculty by exploring the following questions:

(1) is there a grade inflation problem in California community colleges?

(2) how can a college decide if there is grade inflation within the college or within a discipline?

(3) what factors influence grade inflation?

(4) what threats are posed to faculty autonomy over grading from accrediting agencies and federal regulators?

(5) what should faculty do in light of these issues?

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[1] Retrieved March 17, 2008, from UC and the SAT at http://www.ucop.edu/news/sat/qa.html

Grade Inflation

One specific and widespread public perception about grades concerns the topic of grade inflation. To get a sense of how the general public might perceive grade inflation, one could consider the topic as it appears on Wikipedia in March 2008:

> Grade inflation is often conflated with lax academic standards. For example, the following quote about lax standards from a Harvard University report in 1894 has been used to claim that grade inflation has been a longstanding issue: "Grades A and B are sometimes given too readily ... insincere students gain passable grades by sham work." [1]. Issues of standards in American education have been longstanding. However, rising grades did not become a major issue in American education until the 1960s . . .
>
> However, recent data leave little doubt that grades are rising at American colleges, universities and high schools. Leaders from a number of institutions, including Harvard University and Princeton University, have publicly stated that grades have been rising and have made efforts to change grading practices.[2]

How high have grades risen? According to the website, "GradeInflation.com," the average GPA at monitored schools nationwide rose from 2.94 in 1991-92 to 3.09 in 2001-02.[3] That is a 5.1% increase. If that figure is considered to be grade inflation, then it would appear from the data below that grade inflation is *not* a significant problem in California community colleges, or at least it is not one that is evident in systemwide data. The Chancellor's Office has kept a record of grades assigned across the System going back to 1992, and the overall pattern of grades awarded during that period does not show any pattern of gradual increase (see Figure 1). Rather, the complete data (see Appendix B) seems to suggest that faculty may be adopting *higher* standards or, alternatively, that students are less well prepared. System average GPA for fall terms has ranged between a low of 2.68 in Fall 2005 and 2006 and a high of 2.78 in Fall 1992 and 2002. Spring terms have ranged from a low of 2.72 in Spring 2006 and a high of 2.81 in Spring 1993.

> "However, the fact that the system as a whole does not demonstrate a problem with grade inflation does not mean that there are not significant variations in the grade distributions at local colleges or between faculty members within the same department or discipline."

[2] Retrieved March 17, 2008, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grade_inflation

[3] In March 2008, a number of California institutions are reflected at GradeInflation.com, including UC Berkeley, Irvine, Riverside, Santa Barbara and CSUs Hayward, Sacramento and San Bernardino.

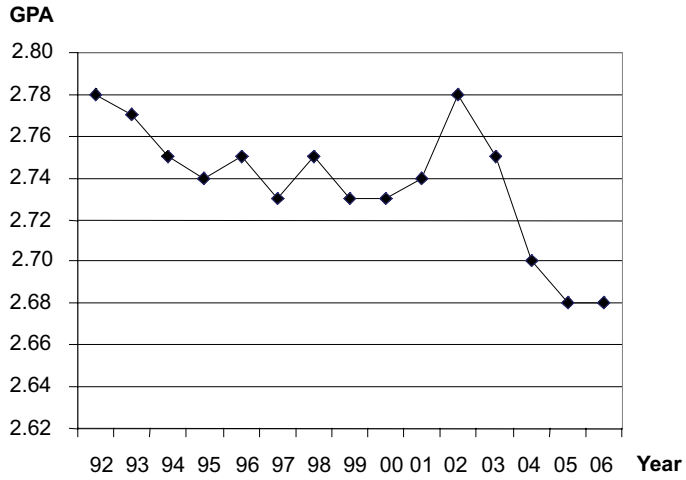

Figure 1. System Level Fall Grade Point Average (1992-2006)

If one looks in greater detail at fall semester grade patterns, one sees that the percentage of As (as a percentage of grades A through F; Incompletes, CR, and other symbols are not reflected) has held relatively steady between approximately 36% and 38%. There were more As assigned in 2001-03, but the percentage declined again in the following three years. By contrast, the number of Fs has slowly but steadily increased, from around 8.5% in 1992 and 1993 to 12.5% in Fall 2005 and 12.7% in Fall 2006—a fairly significant increase. While the percentage of As awarded seems to have remained fairly constant, the percentages of Bs has declined steadily from over 28% in 1992 and 1993 to below 26% in 2005 and 2006.

Figure 2 shows the grade distribution for the California Community College System during the 2006-2007 academic year. With minor fluctuations, this pattern is representative of the annual grade distributions observed across all disciplines since 1992. It is interesting to note that on average, grade distributions and GPA are usually lowest in the fall and highest for summer terms. This may be partially explained by lower fall to spring and spring to summer persistence of "less successful" students.

Based on the data in figure 2, one's initial conclusion would certainly be that grade inflation does not exist across the system as a whole. The optimist might point to the increasing number of Fs as indications that faculty have not abandoned standards, the skeptic might point out that more students received As than Bs, and that *twice* as many students consistently received As as received Cs.

However, the fact that the system as a whole does not demonstrate a problem with grade inflation does not mean that there are not significant variations in the grade distributions at local colleges or between faculty members within the same department or discipline. Observing variations in grade distributions and determining reasons and possible courses of action is best accomplished in a professional development setting, with ongoing local faculty discussions, informed by local data. Grade distribution data for the college is available for local senates to obtain from local researchers; grade distribution data for departments or disciplines can also be obtained from the local researcher but must be used carefully to protect individual faculty.

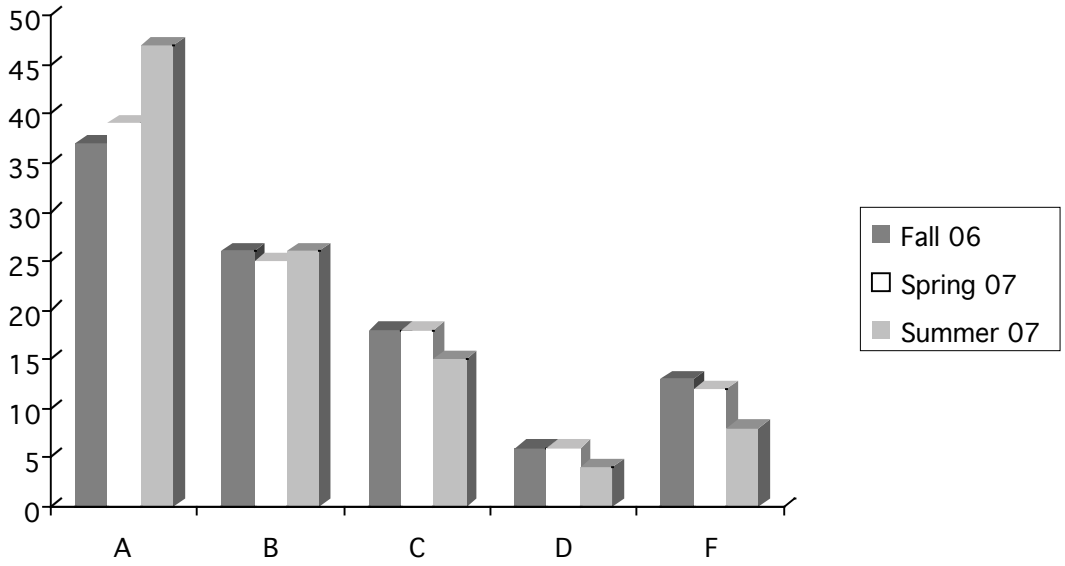

Figure 2. System Level Grade Distribution-All Disciplines (Year 2006-07)

Alternatively, at many colleges Program Review is an excellent process by which data is routinely gathered and analyzed. In the context of reviewing the success of the program, individual discrepancies in grading practices can be discussed while respecting the authority that each instructor has to grade according to her/his professional expertise and standards. The Program Review process can stimulate conversations leading to professional development opportunities where grading options, standards, student learning outcomes, and other measures can be discussed.

Once the data is provided to local senates or discipline faculty, one task becomes making the determination whether grade inflation exists. No benchmarks have been established for determining that grades have reached the point of being inflated. Local senates can assist faculty by working with research personnel to help develop criteria for determining any changes in grades over time. If the faculty set a standard, it will be easier to assess changes within departments or disciplines. It is possible that discipline faculty may wish to set independent measures for determining a differential that is acceptable. Even if there appears to be no grade inflation at a college or within a department or discipline, professional conversations about grading and standards are always appropriate.

Promoting Conversations About Grade Distributions

Community college faculty are governed by regulations in Title 5 regarding standards for grading. Many of the other influences that can also impact a grade distribution will be discussed in the following sections. This section will address the standards to which faculty are held when assigning grades, and discuss those influences which can be managed by faculty. The subsequent section of the paper will discuss factors outside of faculty control.

Background Regulations

To begin a conversation about grading, faculty should recall the requirements set forth by Title 5 Regulations, especially §55002, "Standards and Criteria for Courses." In addition to grading per se, the regulation addresses not only quantity of work, but also rigor by including proficiency, intensity, difficulty, and level appropriate to credit courses. In addressing quantity, the regulation specifies how much work should be required of students in a degree applicable or non-degree applicable course. This regulation indicates that our courses should "require students to study independently outside of class time." A minimum of three hours of student work per week for each unit of credit includes class time and outside study time." This is the Title 5 reference that most faculty know as the "Carnegie unit," though that phrase does not appear in the regulation.[4]

In addressing rigor, the regulation specifies a "scope and intensity" requiring students to study independently outside of class. It also specifies a course "level" that requires learning skills and a vocabulary that the curriculum committee deems appropriate for a college course. And finally it specifies a course "difficulty" that calls for critical thinking, understanding, and application of concepts.

While there is no explicit indication that faculty must grade students on the basis of work performed outside of class, common sense would suggest that there should be some connection between the work conducted during class meeting times, the work students perform *outside* of class, and the evaluation tools (homework, quizzes, exams, essays) used by faculty to evaluate student subject mastery.

> "Course outlines should be clear in requiring that students demonstrate mastery of subject matter and are evaluated on a range of learning activities which take place both within and outside the classroom."

This regulation further indicates that essays (or, for non-degree applicable courses, "written expression that may include essays") should be used as one of the methods of evaluation where the local curriculum committee deems written work appropriate to the subject matter. "[P]roblem solving exercises or skills demonstrations" may also be used where they would be more appropriate to the subject matter.

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[4] The expectation that students will invest an additional two hours per week outside of class for each hour of in-class lecture is applicable to both degree applicable Title 5 §55002(a)(2)(B) and non-degree applicable courses Title 5§55002(b)(2)(B).

Title 5 §55002 states directly that students should be graded "in terms of the stated course objectives… The grade is based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency…" Thus it would appear that "effort" without resulting mastery should not be used as a large component of student evaluation. Regular in-class activities can be useful to encourage participation, while major non-attendance early in semester may prompt the instructor to consider dropping the student for unexcused absences (Title 5 §58004).

The curriculum process should establish rigorous courses in which students are properly placed and properly evaluated. Course outlines should be clear in requiring that students demonstrate mastery of subject matter and are evaluated on a range of learning activities which take place both within and outside the classroom. Evaluation should be based on a range of testing vehicles, including essays, problem solving exercises, or skills demonstrations. Once this has all been achieved, faculty will still assign a range of grades to students who have approximately equal mastery of subject matter. At this point, professional faculty conversations and program review are the appropriate vehicles to monitor grade data and to discuss potential changes in practice.

Influences on Grade Distributions–Beyond Faculty Control

Many factors that affect grade records are beyond the direct influence of faculty. A particularly eye-catching example has been the subject of a series of recent media reports about one northern California college. It graphically illustrates the stakes that students perceive in receiving high grades and the potential negative impact on the entire college.

Diablo Valley College found its way into the press when lax security measures allowed as many as 100 unauthorized individuals access to electronic grade records. Between 2001 and 2006, student employees used this access to change (presumably to raise) their grades, and did so for other students, for a price. One student is reported to have paid $4,000 for an enhanced transcript. While the scheme was eventually uncovered and the process halted, the consequences for the reputation of the college can't have been good. Contra Costa County Deputy District Attorney Dodie Katague observed, "This case affects so many people, especially the innocent students at Diablo Valley College."[5] Some of those presumably less innocent faced the prospect of having their admission to UC revoked, as "UC spokesman Ricardo Vazquez said, the university is investigating at least a dozen UC students who may now face expulsion.

Neither faculty actions nor grade inflation was at issue here, but the story reveals the *very* high stakes that grade integrity involves for both students and institutions, and the tendency of the media to highlight the negative and sensational.

Anomalies aside, the grade process generally works well and exhibits substantial integrity. Faculty use professional judgment to determine the best grade for each student, based upon multiple forms of assessment and the performance of the student on stated course objectives and learning outcomes. Occasionally, there are influences, both positive and negative, that may impact the awarding of grades and thus change the distribution of grades for an individual instructor or a whole department. In this section, those influences beyond the control of faculty will be discussed. When faculty converse about grades, it is important to consider the impact of these influences on student performance. These issues are listed in no particular order.

What influence do enrollment procedures have on grade distributions?

Enrollment in California community colleges has a long history of oscillation, with lower enrollment in economic good times and higher enrollment when the economy declines and students more clearly perceive their need for higher skills and abilities as a means of being economically competitive. When enrollment declines, administrators face considerable pressure to maintain funding by maintaining enrollment, and some administrators may be tempted to encourage faculty to relax prerequisite standards and to act in a more "student-friendly" fashion in order to help maintain Full-time Equivalent Student (FTES) levels and thereby stable funding. While the best administrators will resist those temptations, the challenge of maintaining funding when state support declines and student demand increases is a daunting one and local solutions may impact grade distributions. Grade distributions may vary for all these and other procedural reasons, without any innate difference in the learning achieved by students.

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[5] Thirty Four Charged In Diablo Valley College Grade Scam, Retrieved March 17, 2008, from http://cbs5.com/topstories/local_story_205184633.html

What influence does the final withdrawal date have on grade distributions?

Purely procedural considerations can alter the grade distribution likely to result in specific course sections. California community colleges enforce a locally determined Withdrawal (W) deadline. Many instructors advise students to withdraw themselves if they decide to stop attending a course, but many students fail to do so. Instructors often find students, who have long since stopped attending, still on their final grade rosters when the only remaining appropriate grade option is "F." Other faculty members proactively purge their rosters prior to the W deadline and thus probably assign, on average, fewer Ds and Fs. It is interesting to note that most UC campuses allow students to withdraw up until the final week of a course; some allow withdrawal up to the day of the final exam. By contrast, California community college students are disallowed from dropping beyond 75% of the way through a class.[6] Given the fact that UC restricts admission to the top 1/8th of California high school graduates, it is interesting that its student population is afforded a much more *lenient* drop policy, which presumably allows students to maintain a correspondingly higher grade point average (GPA). California community college campuses vary on the setting of the W deadline. Some require an early W deadline to compel students to be "serious," while others allow a late W deadline in order to provide students a sense of security, and chance for improvement, throughout more of the term. This policy difference alone might lead one to expect a relatively higher GPA at UC that is based, not on the higher achievement of UC students, but on more flexible policies that allow students to walk away from lower quality work later in the term.

What influence does student shopping have on grade distributions?

Students have always engaged in some degree of shopping for the ideal class. While some students may use day and time as the most important criteria for class selection, students are not unmindful of the benefits of taking professor X, if professor X has a reputation for being an easy grader. In the past, the physical boundaries of selection, however, have probably curtailed the degree to which students could use lax grading as their primary selection criteria. But with the enormous growth of online instruction—both within California community colleges as well as among private proprietary institutions like the University of Phoenix—"informed" students have more resources to help them identify "easy" graders and to find their way into those "easy" course sections. While online enrollments remain a minority of section offerings in California community colleges, their rapid growth suggests that it may not be long before many students take half or more of their coursework in online sections, selected from a wide variety of institutions. Or if one college in a multi-college district requires 5,000 words of formal writing in college composition and another college in the district requires 10,000 words, will students discover the discrepancy, and if they do, which course will they enroll in? If they enroll in the course that requires less work, will the faculty at the sibling institution feel compelled to require less work to maintain the "competitive" quality of their courses? The risk of colleges finding themselves in the position of competing for the most "attractive" (read, *easy)* curriculum is not hard to imagine. One online faculty rating service allows students to rate faculty both with regard to "Overall Quality" and "Average Easiness." From a pedagogical perspective, the "ideal" response would probably be for students to rank a faculty member low on the easiness scale and high on the quality scale, suggesting that students had to work hard but recognized the value of the work they performed relative to the education they received. Some students *will* seek out demanding but rewarding classes, while others (or perhaps those same

6 Title 5 §55023 (formerly §55758)

students in other areas of study) will choose classes strictly on the easiness scale. A more ominous discovery would be that enrollments shift over time toward sections that online rating services suggest provide a higher grade distribution.

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One of these online rating services, *Rate My Professor*, includes anecdotal reactions of students to faculty on whom they choose to comment. Unlike institutional student course evaluations, *Rate My Professor* can't gather evaluations from all students, and thus the comments gathered will probably come from students who were especially pleased or especially disgruntled with a particular course or instructor. Among other criteria, *Rate My Professor* asks students to comment on the *difficulty* of the courses that they have taken with individual professors. If students are looking for a path to the least work, *Rate My Professor* will help them to find it.

More troubling is a second service, *Pick-A-Prof*, which began as a student project at Texas A&M University in 2000. Among other services, *Pick-a-Prof* provides grading distribution information obtained from college records. When *Pick-a-Prof* sought records for students at UC Davis, the University initially declined to provide the information, and *Pick-a-Prof* sued the University in Yolo County Superior Court, arguing that grade distribution data is public information. Several community colleges were also approached and are currently featured on the *Pick-a-Prof* website. There have also been legislative attempts to declare that such blanket grade information is not public information because of the potentially harmful side effects of its release. The perceived stakes for grades are probably higher in UC than in community colleges, though one might guess that faculty in both institutions are equally skeptical about the uses to which the information is put. In the words of the website,

> Pick-a-Prof has posted the number of A-Fs given by EVERY professor in EVERY course at most campuses and lets you compare the grade histories in the courses you are about to register for. We are the ONLY website that obtains these grading records directly from universities.
>
> That means before you register, you can look up the courses you are thinking about taking and see the number of A-Fs each professor historically gives in that course–straight from the official university records.[7]

If students are looking for a path to the highest grade, *Pick-a-Prof* will help them find it. It can't, of course, guarantee students that they will earn a high grade, but if used widely over time, it would probably lead

[7] *Pick a Prof*, Retrieved March 17, 2008, from http://cal.pickaprof.com/index.php?hid=&switch=74.1478

students to instructors whose grade distributions skew the highest. Over time, this trend might lead to under-enrollment and canceling of sections by more demanding instructors. There are at least some faculty across the state who believe that the enrollment pattern for individual instructors has already been driven down by the perception, supported by *Rate My Professor* and *Pick a Prof*, that those individuals grade more stringently.

What influence do state or federal licensing requirements have on grade distributions?

Faculty teaching in some vocational programs have additional challenges because their students must not only pass their courses to complete their certificates and degrees, but must additionally pass an external licensing exam, in programs as diverse as cosmetology and nursing. System data mentioned earlier shows there does not appear to be grade inflation in the system as a whole. But there are pronounced differences in grade distributions awarded in different occupational programs (Appendix B). In the period between Spring 1992 and Fall 2006, 30% of General Auto students and Nursing students received As in courses in those Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) codes while 38% of Computer Information Systems (CIS) students received As and 44% of Dental Hygiene students received As (again restricted to courses in those TOP codes[8]). Both Nursing and Dental Hygiene have external licensing requirements.

In spite of what appears to be fairly clear evidence of *generally* consistent faculty practices in grading, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (a division of the Federal Department of Education) has proposed that institutions wishing to qualify for certain federal grants utilize a three-tiered standard to migrate from a "bronze" to a "silver" or "gold" standard. Grading and assessment in bronze programs is based on local faculty-determined processes. Silver institutions rely on state developed or approved standardized tests, while gold institutions rely on external third-party created standardized examinations, preferably in place by 2010. While this particular proposal has yet to be implemented, faculty may wish to examine local data from vocational programs and compare it to the proposed federal standards.

What influences does the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) have on grade distributions?

The ACCJC 2002 Accreditation Standards make broad reference to Student Learning Outcomes and require that "In every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning objectives consistent with those in the institution's officially approved course outline."[9] Additionally, the ACCJC requires that faculty should be evaluated on the basis of these student learning outcomes: "Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes."[10] This suggestion has been challenged by faculty unions who assert that it interferes with the collective bargaining nature of formal evaluation. Though the first ACCJC suggestion has also been controversial at some campuses, the requirement that students receive a syllabus informing them about the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) of the course[11],

[8] Chancellor's Office Taxonomy of Programs.
[9] Standard IIa6, *Introduction to the Accreditation* Standards, p. 8.
[10] Standard IIIA1c, *Introduction to the Accreditation* Standards, p. 15.
[11] Notice that Title 5 §55002 specifies objectives rather than SLOs.

and the criteria upon which they will be evaluated, seems more reasonable. The suggestion, however, that faculty are to be evaluated on the basis of their students' mastery of course objectives is considerably more problematic. Most faculty *like* students to come to class, but have limited recourse if they don't show up. Many faculty are inclined to accommodate setbacks in students' personal lives (loss of job, change in family or other personal circumstance), but an evaluation process that penalized faculty for students' failings would probably incline faculty to be less sympathetic to student setbacks and to be more proactive in dropping students whose attendance is substandard. The result might simply be a higher average GPA precisely because instructors drop low achieving students more aggressively.

Yet another possibility is suggested by one other reaction to accreditation: "performance based budgeting." The 2002 Accreditation Standards have as a broad theme the notion that planning and budgeting are based on "evidence." While it's *very* clear that the ACCJC believes that a high grade is *not,* in itself, evidence of effective student learning, there are many faculty who continue to believe that grades on essays and exams are the best evidence of student learning. In such an academic environment, it's not hard to imagine the argument that more resources should go to more "effective" faculty, understood to be those faculty with higher average GPAs and fewer resources to those "ineffective" faculty, whose grade distribution skews more toward the middle and lower range of grade options. Thus faculty who "perform" well get resources and faculty who do not go lacking. While it's easy to see why such a system might be attractive, since it provides a simple mechanism for funding allocations, it would probably be a disaster for maintaining academic rigor and integrity. And, to be fair, there is nothing in ACCJC guidelines that would recognize this as an appropriate interpretation or application of its accreditation standards. A similar temptation lies in the relatively newly created Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC, established by California State Assembly Bill AB1417), which provides baseline data and will provide over time a way to quantify institutional improvement (or slippage) in a variety of student metrics, including retention, success and persistence, all disaggregated into basic skills and English as a Second Language (ESL), occupational and workforce, and degree and transfer level curriculum.[12] Here again it is possible to imagine institutional pressure to seek "improvement" as measured by grades but divorced from discussion about the quality of instruction provided and learning accomplished.

One fear that faculty frequently express is that the desire to have students complete courses with a common skill set will lead to standardized tools for student evaluation. If students need common and higher skills, why should faculty not embrace standardized methods of evaluation? Because if in fact it is the *skill* that we want students to achieve, faculty can use many means of helping students acquire such skills. While standardized testing may seek to measure common skills, the very fact of standardization means that texts will need to be wedded to measuring students' command of content. Where Title 5 clearly advocates that the goal of degree applicable instruction is to convey critical thinking abilities, standardized objective testing can often reduce the focus of learning and evaluation to mastery of a narrowed core of facts. The Academic Senate stated this concern in a June 2007 letter to federal legislators:

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[12] Scrutiny of data in the Chancellor's Office regarding the reporting of data regarding online instruction suggests that there is room for improvement in collecting accurate data. It should go without saying that any meaningful discussion of grade distribution data has to begin with accurate data.

> While standardization and detailed accountability dovetail well with corporate and manufacturing models, such is not the case where multiple academic missions of access and support concern the needs of diverse populations of students.
>
> We believe that the overall effect of excessive standardization would be to diminish the capacity for schools and colleges to meet the particular needs of diverse student populations.
>
> We urge you to do all that is within your power to safeguard the dynamism that has made America's public education system a model for the world.

Faculty can't teach *King Lear* if the standardized test on English skill is focused on *Hamlet*. Thus while standardized testing may sound appealing in principle, using standardized testing as the only means of evaluation effectively narrows the curriculum and can reduce the opportunities to develop critical thinking skills. An additional concern is that the profit motive of the standardized testing industry can unduly influence both assessment and curriculum.

What influence does funding have on grade distributions?

Given widespread concern with "accountability," it is not difficult to imagine suggestions that districts be funded on the basis of some formula which includes increased "outcomes." Early conversations with the California Department of Finance regarding funds for the 2007-08 Basic Skills Initiative at one point looked as if they might be tied to some simplistic measurement such as "increased number of A grades in basic skills courses." If colleges perceive that their funding is dependent on awarding more certificates or degrees, then faculty may feel increased pressure to award passing grades to students who are on the verge of completing a program of study and need only one or two more passing grades to be done. Or equally inappropriately, faculty may feel pressure to improve outcomes by restricting admission and access in exactly the ways used by the selective portions of higher education. California community colleges have precisely the opposite mission–open access for all who can benefit. Similarly, faculty have had many conversations speculating on the consequences of the decision to increase graduation requirements in English and mathematics for students entering community colleges beginning in Fall 2009. It was partly as a result of those concerns that the System adopted the Basic Skills Initiative to improve success in foundation courses and to ensure that the new graduation requirements do not simply become yet another barrier.

Influences on Grade Distributions–Within Faculty Control

A different set of factors that affect grades is directly controlled by individual faculty. Once again an unusual case was the subject of a recent news article. Not only did this faculty action and the resulting publicity affect perceptions of the college, but remedial actions severely impacted innocent students.

In February 2007, the *Los Angeles Times* reported on an interaction between Los Angeles Trade Technical College (LA Trade Tech) and the University of Southern California (USC). In the summer of 2007, 25 students, many of them USC athletes, enrolled in a Spanish 3 summer section at LA Trade Tech. The grade distribution for the class included 20 As and 5 Bs. The *Times* cited the instructor's grading policy in her own words: "I see some lazy ass, coming late all the time, acting like he doesn't care, I won't give him an A. I'll give him a B." [13] Alas, that grading policy prompted USC to disallow transfer credit after students had paid their fees, completed the course, and received their grades. This case *does* suggest that faculty should be concerned about grading practices that lead to grade inflation. While this is an isolated case it might have been prevented by increased professional conversations about grading practices and data.

Though faculty think of the grade as an application of their *individual* professional judgment, a variety of authorities circumscribe the breadth of the field within which faculty can assign grades. These authorities lie in the area of curriculum regulations, discipline-based professional standards, and external authorities or processes provided by bargaining agreements and accrediting bodies, as has been described. It can also be argued that letter grades reflect the consensus of faculty as professionals both in a discipline and as teachers.

Conversations about grading and grade distributions can focus greater attention on those elements within the purview and control of faculty, and identify possible areas of improvement. Listed below are several such elements, again in no particular order.

What influence does +/- grading have on grade distributions?

Student perceptions about grading may affect whether a district has adopted +/- grading or the "FW" grade. Both options are authorized in Title 5 Regulation but must first be adopted by the local governing board. Although grading policy is an academic and professional matter requiring collegial consultation with the local academic senate, at some colleges, students have asked faculty or governing boards not to adopt +/- grading, since there is no A+ to offset the A- grades that would be permissible in a +/- system. Both faculty and students are perhaps unaware that Title 5 §55023 (formerly §55758) also disallows the awarding of a C- grade, so that, in the larger picture, the lack of an A+ would be offset by the lack of the C-. A study in the Foothill-DeAnza district found no significant impact on GPA with the adoption of +/- grades.[14] The

[13] Retrieved March 17, 2008, from http://chronicle.com/news/article/1602/southern-cal-disallows-athletes-grades-in-gut-summer-course

[14] Retrieved March 17, 2008, from http://research.fhda.edu/researchreports/file_library/Plus%20Minus%20Grading%20Pilot%20Results%20Final%202-1-06.pdf

availability of the "FW" grade on a campus could also affect faculty and student perceptions about grading.[15] Student perceptions of grading are relevant because of the concern that students will select course sections based on their perception of the grade they are likely to receive.

What influence do prerequisites have on grade distributions?

Some faculty may lament the way that pressure for enrollment has caused them to ease the burden of their courses to match the skills possessed by their increasingly under-prepared students. This issue is again addressed by Title 5 §55002: "If success in the course is dependent upon communication or computation skills, then the course shall require… as prerequisites or corequisites eligibility for enrollment in associate degree credit courses in English and/or mathematics."[16] Thus, for faculty who find that students do poorly in a course due to lack of skill, the appropriate remedy is not to boost grades by grading on a curve, or to adopt easier methods of evaluation, but to use the curriculum process to establish pre- or co-requisites that will provide students the skill or appropriate knowledge for them to succeed in courses. This topic is currently part of the larger discussion of assessment initiated by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.[17]

If prerequisites are appropriately assigned to a course, then students should have comparable preparation, and students should, in principle, be equally capable of doing well in the course. Providing a range of evaluated activities would be important to enable students with a range of learning styles to provide evidence of their mastery of course objectives. Students who have met appropriate prerequisites are more likely to pass classes in higher percentages and thus indirectly likely to increase the average GPA for their courses.

What influence does the term "rigorous" have on grade distributions?

Everyone can feel the tension when one instructor, or an entire department, division, or institution, gains the reputation for being less or more rigorous than another. Students do not automatically select the "easy" choice. Whether deserved or not, there are several community colleges across the state that attract a significant number of students from outside of their district boundaries because students believe they will get a better education there, than at a closer school that is perceived to be less serious. This would also imply that the student population served by the districts which they leave is also thereby skewed. Individual faculty will probably always try to impress upon their students the value of actual learning, but their task is more difficult in those settings where students perceive gaining an education as secondary to gaining their *primary* objective: a good grade or sometimes just a passing grade.

In discussions among faculty, it is common to try to define rigor. This challenging exercise is not a waste of time, but useful in choosing which textbook to adopt, developing student learning outcomes for courses and

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[15] The "FW" grade allows faculty to assign this grade to students who may have been in good standing at the W deadline but disappear subsequently and fail the course because of incomplete work rather than substandard work. Use of this grade should not change the grade distribution for a section (because it is assigned a point value of 0) but it may affect the reputation of the instructor who assigns it in place of an F. See the Academic Senate's Spring 1997 position paper *Towards Accurate Student Performance Evaluation: Symbol for Unofficial Withdrawal*

[16] This language comes from Title 5 §55002(a)(2)(D) on degree applicable courses; the language for non-degree applicable courses is more permissive, and prerequisites *may* be required.

[17] Retrieved March 17, 2008, from www.asccc.org/events/sessions/fall2007/materials/AppendixE_F07.doc

programs, and aligning curriculum. The definitions in Title 5 stated previously can be used to motivate and initiate dialogue.

What influence do grade distributions have on job security and evaluations?

Many observers assume that if grade inflation does exist, it is more common among part-time faculty. Those faculty who are hired from semester to semester, the thinking goes, award generally higher grades in the hopes that they will be popular and that the need for their services the following semester will be better assured. If this were the case, one would expect to see lower average GPAs from not just full-time but *tenured* full-time instructors. However, data from the Biology department at one southern California college suggests this assumption may be too simple. When biology faculty began to scrutinize data for a specific course (Biology 3, *Introduction to Biology,* a course for non-majors), they discovered an average success rate of 61%; however, four of six instructors had success rates between 47% and 48%, and the average of 62% derived in large part because one part-time faculty member—"Professor X"— had a success rate of 77%, which raised the average for the others. However, when faculty looked at the average GPA by section, the faculty member with the high success rate—" Professor X"—did not stand out as having the highest average GPA (he was second, with an average of 2.26). The highest average GPA was 2.41 and the average among the six was 2.01. As noted earlier, the pattern of student drops affects grade distribution, and when these six faculty members were examined on this criteria, the instructor with the highest average GPA also had the highest percentage of students dropping the course: 36% against an average for this cohort of 19%, which suggests that as the number of students dropping a class increases, so will the GPA. The instructor with the highest success rate also had the lowest percentage of students dropping, at a very low 4%.

The effect of grading on a faculty member's perception of his or her job security can also be seen, probably indirectly, in the role played by student evaluations—the "grades" which students give faculty— in the larger framework of instructor evaluation. Perspectives vary interestingly, with some faculty considering students the best judges of the quality of instruction they receive while other faculty discount students out of hand as being an easy mark for a high grade. It's especially interesting to reflect on how instructor evaluation goes when a "traditional" faculty member—one who views lecturing as the stock in trade of college instruction—evaluates a more "innovative" faculty member, one who uses more small group discussion, class discussion, and active learning. Should that faculty member award higher grades, is it because he or she is indulging students' self-centeredness, or because those less-traditional teaching methods actually result in superior student learning?

Students themselves, at least collectively, are often very effective judges of what they have learned in a class. Students may be the best judge of how much effort they have put into a course. Institutions that question the degree to which assigned grades accurately reflect student learning might consider polling students to ask them whether the grades they received were the grades they earned.[18] More and more community colleges are administering the "Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire" (CCSEQ) and might wish to include additional questions regarding students' perceptions of grade inflation.

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[18] See J. Fredricks Volkwein, "On The Correspondence Between Objective And Self-Reported Measures Of Student Learning Outcomes," http://www.ed.psu.edu/cshe/abet/pdf/Self_Reported.pdf

Ideally, faculty conversations about grade distribution would remain collegial conversations among peers. At some colleges, however, administrators may feel themselves under some pressure to shepherd faculty into more consistent patterns of assigning grades. One, at first, plausible place for this conversation to take place is during faculty evaluation. On reflection, however, it is more likely that the evaluation process is precisely the *wrong* environment for substantive conversations about grades because it creates counterproductive anxiety centering on individual job security. Better environments might include professional development activities or discipline-controlled program review.[19] Some collective bargaining contracts limit the way in which this topic may be raised. Thus one contract reads, "After completion of the formal [evaluation] report, the committee may review, *for informational purposes only*, the contract faculty member's grade distribution and retention statistics."[20] In general, it's probably safe to generalize and suggest that faculty contracts will want to exclude retention and grading information from faculty evaluation, since most faculty recognize the difficulty of interpreting such data unambiguously.

What influence does extra credit or other such offerings have on grade distributions?

A related question is whether faculty engage in practices that make it possible for students to recover from academic missteps, or demonstrate improvement throughout the semester. Many faculty subscribe to a variety of practices that suggest that this is a good thing. Some faculty provide the opportunity for students to earn extra credit points, making it possible to recover gracefully from a poor exam performance. Other faculty will administer three or four exams and drop the lowest score. Some faculty go so far as to provide twice as many possible points as would be necessary to earn an A in a course, thus making the assigned grade as much a measurement of *volume* of work as it is of *quality*. All of these practices may be appropriate, especially as means of acknowledging different learning styles, but they can create inconsistencies within departments or disciplines and need further discussion.

Broader Questions

There remain broader philosophical questions about grades that might best be asked in a prolonged discussion out of the spotlight. For example, should "effort" or improvement be a factor in assigning a grade? If a student has worked very hard in a class but not *quite* achieved all the course objectives, should their *effort* be relevant in tipping a borderline grade (especially for those faculty who leave a small percentage or number of points for less quantifiable measures such as "participation")? Might a borderline performance more readily be tipped in a general education course or in an area in which the student has less interest? Does the answer to this question differ for an A grade or a C grade? How does "extra effort" compare to the use of extra credit assignments?

Another example is what influence does team grading or common rubrics have on grade distributions? Some disciplines have longstanding practices that involve an attempt to articulate criteria for work that corresponds to letter grades: excellent, good, satisfactory, etc. Perhaps the most significant effort in California higher education involves UC Analytical Writing Examination (formerly known as the Subject A Exam). Students

[19] Program Review provides an especially appropriate setting to discuss grade distribution. The Academic Senate's 1996 paper, *Program Review: Developing a Faculty Driven Process* mentions grades only once, but that paper is subject to revision as a result of a Fall 2007 resolution 9.05 and one might hope that grade distribution will receive more attention as a result of the SLO movement which has arisen since the initial adoption of the paper.

[20] Riverside Community College District Contract, 2004-2007, p. 27, emphasis added.

write an essay in response to a prompt that is used statewide, and faculty gather to agree upon criteria to use in evaluating those essays. In part because many community college faculty come through the UC System, many local English departments have adapted the format of these conversations to establish local criteria for evaluating student achievement at various levels of pre-collegiate and transfer English.

It is probably easier for faculty in English to discuss shared grading standards than in many other disciplines. Most English composition courses are sequential and the need for a shared understanding about the intended learning outcomes of the various levels is important. The work of establishing a course outline that all faculty support is probably also easier in English, which is a relatively large discipline in most colleges, and thus many voices contribute to the conversation and can perhaps more easily arrive at consensus, though not unanimity, because there is less sense of individual ownership of a course. And because English faculty share a substantial burden in reading and evaluating student writing, a more keen sense of esprit de corps creates the potential for productive conversations about grading among English faculty members.

The other discipline with sequential courses in which students need significant mastery at one level to succeed at the next is mathematics. Like English, mathematics departments are often larger. Like English, mathematics faculty need to agree on the topics to be covered at various levels of mathematics, and conversations about the content of the course outline can lead to productive conversations about grading. The mathematics department at Glendale College has had an extremely interesting experience creating and administering a common final exam for Elementary Algebra. The final exam consists of 25 objective questions: faculty in the department—both full time and part time—work together to develop the exam; the exam is comprehensive and covers all major topics stipulated in the course outline. All students take the exam simultaneously so that the exam questions aren't leaked to students with a later exam time. Students take the exam in a different classroom and under the supervision of a different faculty member so that any influence of the course instructor is removed at exam time. Faculty agree to a percentage range for which the final exam may count toward the course grade.

Once students have taken the final exam and term grades are assigned, the department chair has a body of data that provides a snapshot of a wide range of grading practices. Some faculty have students who consistently do well on the comprehensive final exam and yet assign course grades fairly conservatively. Other faculty members have students who collectively do less well on the final exam and yet go away from the class with high grades. Early in its experience of using a common final exam, the discrepancy between apparent mastery of course material on the final exam and the grade received from the individual instructor could be quite broad. Over time, conversations within the department and between the department chair and individual faculty have narrowed the gap between exam grades and course grades. Glendale has also experienced an interesting pair of probably related phenomena. The success rate in Elementary Algebra has declined even while the success rate for students in the subsequent class has increased. The likely explanation is that faculty with more generous grading habits have become a bit more firm on the need for student mastery of course material, thus depressing student success (grade of C or better), while those students who do pass have a less ambiguous mastery of the course material and a stronger foundation for success in the subsequent course.

All of these examples suggest the legitimate need for rich, active faculty conversations about grading as a normal part of our everyday professional responsibilities to constantly examine our knowledge of our own practices–as suggested so eloquently by Confucius.

> ***The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom, first ordered well their own states.***
> ***Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families.***
> ***Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons.***
> ***Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts.***
> ***Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts.***
> ***Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge.***
>
> ***Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things.***
>
> ***Confucius, The Great Learning***

Conclusion

So, is dialogue about grading a conversation faculty should embrace locally, or will concerns about grading practices simply go away? A wide range of factors, from *Rate My Professor* and *Pick-a-Prof* to the Federal Department of Education, to ACCJC and our own system ARCC reporting suggest that the issues around grades will probably not go away and that it would be wise for faculty to engage the issues on their own terms. Moreover, they will continue to appear in media stories that affect public perception, as illustrated by several of the examples in this paper.

The impetus for such conversations will probably be most graciously received if it originates peer to peer or from the local academic senate. While conversations on grading practice might fruitfully begin under the faculty evaluation microscope, as mentioned earlier, there are various drawbacks to this environment. Such conversations are unlikely to develop very productively for faculty who fear that their employment status might be threatened by the course of such conversations. This is particularly true of part-time faculty whose job security is non-existent in many districts. Since these same part-time faculty teach a large percentage of sections–particularly in the basic skills areas–it is vital that institutions find a way to successfully involve them in this conversation. Professional development, departmental course level SLOs and program review conversations are likely to be more successful venues.

This paper began with a series of questions: (1) is there a grade inflation problem in California community colleges? (2) how can a college decide if there is grade inflation within the college or within a discipline? (3) what factors influence grade inflation? (4) what threats are posed to faculty autonomy over grading from accrediting agencies and federal regulators? and (5) what should faculty do in light of these findings? The answers are summarized below.

- There is **not** an overall pattern of awarding higher grades in California community colleges generally; however there is substantial evidence of very different grade distribution patterns between entire programs, and among individual faculty. These differences may be entirely justified, but their appearance raises questions and leads us to suggest that faculty should wonder and inquire about why such variations exist.
- In order to successfully engage in a local conversation about grade inflation, senates and faculty need to seek the assistance of the college or district researchers in providing and analyzing the data. Each college, as well as each department or discipline, should have access to such data on a regular basis so that faculty can consider appropriate responses. In all cases, it is recommended that the data be viewed carefully to protect the academic freedom and individual authority of faculty to assign grades based on their professional judgment.
- Both Title 5 and Accreditation Standards provide very clear guidelines on the parameters within which grades are assigned, but these parameters apply in another way in different disciplines. The triad of "written expression," "problem solving," and "skills demonstrations" will be deployed in another way in different disciplines, and it is not possible in this paper to suggest how these criteria should be used in a case-by-case way. Similarly, the SLO movement has tried to make clear the

difference between assessing learning and teaching, and the assigning of grades. There may be some emerging agreement on what authentic grading would look like, but that also is beyond the scope of this paper.

- While the standards are clear, it is readily acknowledged that there exist factors beyond the control of faculty, and some factors within the control of faculty, that influence grading and thus grade distributions. It is worthy to consider all the influences, even those not typically within the control of faculty, as local senates may be able to affect change in local policy or practice to diminish those factors.
- The ACCJC has subjected colleges to increasing scrutiny and pressure.[21] Some of this pressure is focused on meaningful peer review while some elements seem to represent the degree to which the ACCJC itself is under pressure from federal authorities who would like to replace regional peer-review accreditation altogether. It would be extremely unwise to ignore the threat to faculty autonomy from the larger nexus of accreditation pressures, and faculty should be able to clearly demonstrate that the grades they assign are based in sound pedagogical theory and professional practice.

In closing, it is clear that there is the potential for immense benefit to students, faculty and institutions from an open, ongoing, serious dialogue about the effects of different grading practices and the interpretation of the resulting grade distributions. Beyond these specific questions and answers, it is very clear that there is a need for immediate faculty-initiated conversations about grading data and practices. Faculty are urged to begin and continue these discussions locally (See Appendix A for possible conversation starter questions), and to begin to explore at the state level the theories and debates about assessment, student learning, faculty self-assessment, and grading. There should also be additional work on best practices involving the value and integrity of grades as a tool for assessing SLOs, and for suggesting useful pedagogical interventions to benefit students.

[21] After its January 2008 meeting, 15 California Community Colleges were in either Warning or Probation.

Recommendations

- Local senates should create a campus environment that encourages regular professional discussions of grading practices and data as an important part of professional development and/or program review.
- Local senates and researchers can facilitate data collection and analysis for distributions college-wide and for individual departments or disciplines.
- The purpose of discussions about grading should be assessment of professional practices that may lead to improved educational success for students.
- Such discussions should not be part of the faculty evaluation process.
- Local senates should initiate periodic discussions of the factors which lead to significant variations in grade distribution.
- Local senates should work with local bargaining agents to ensure that review of grade distribution does not take place in an arbitrary or evaluative manner.
- Faculty department or division chairs should convene periodic discussions of current data regarding grade distribution, and seek to involve part time faculty in these discussions as colleagues and fellow professionals.
- Local senates should make certain that their local curriculum process requires that course outlines of record document compliance with Title 5 §55002.
- Local senates should reiterate that Education Code assigns legal authority over grades to the instructor of the course and that Title 5 requires collegial consultation on grading policies.
- All faculty members should ensure that the grades they assign are consistent with Title 5 regulations and accepted standards of good practice.
- Faculty should consider exploring in more detail best practices for formative and summative assessment and grading at both the state and local level.
- The Academic Senate should consider the creation of a follow-up paper that:
    - analyzes the role of grades as a credible, valid and reliable measure of student achievement and success;
    - shares effective practices in grading, in the light of external pressures from federal and accreditation bodies;
    - can be used to promote a positive public perception regarding the integrity of grades; and
    - can be used to oppose the replacement of traditional grades with third-party, off-the-shelf testing.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Conversation Starters

Some of the following questions may be helpful in initiating conversation on your campus:

- how do grade distribution trends at your college compare to statewide trends?
- what does it indicate if one section has a higher retention rate than another?
- what does it indicate if one section has a higher success rate than another?
- what does it indicate if one section has a higher grade variability than another?
- what does it indicate if one section has a higher average GPA than another?
- what does it indicate if one *instructor* has a higher retention rate than another?
- what does it indicate if one *instructor* has a higher success rate than another?
- what does it indicate if one *instructor* has a higher grade variability than another?
- what does it indicate if one *instructor* has a higher average GPA than another?
- what should you do if significant variations in grade distribution seem to be mainly attributable to an instructor's personal style?
- to what extent is "participation" a component of grading?
- to what extent are opportunities for recovery and improvement, such as extra credit, made available?
- should grading practices differ for general education courses and courses in a major?
- are there significant variations in grade distributions between part time and full time instructors?
- are there significant variations in grade distributions between tenured and non-tenured instructors?
- is the grade distribution for short term sections (e.g. summer session) different from full semester sections of the same course?
- what is the deadline for final withdrawal from a course?
- are part time faculty included in dialogue around curriculum development or revision, program review, assessment, or accreditation?
- are students involved in curriculum committee or senate discussions of grading policies?
- should a department consider a common final exam, or a final with some common questions?
- does adoption of a common final require additional validation?
- is data from your college available on *Pick a Prof*?
- do individual faculty monitor or react to their rating on *Pick a Prof*?
- do individual faculty drop students for non-attendance–or leave it up to the student?

Appendix B: Systemwide grades assigned, 1992 - 2006

This section includes system grades assigned from 1992-2006. The data set was provided by Vice Chancellor Patrick Perry from the Chancellor's Office, and has been edited to remove all grades other than A, B, C, D, and F. Averages and percentages have been calculated from the remaining data.

In addition to systemwide data, grade data for six occupational programs are included, selected by TOPS code: CIS, Cosmetology, Culinary, Dental Hygiene, General Auto, and Nursing. Three of these are subject to external licensing exams (Cosmetology, Dental Hygiene, and Nursing).

System Grades	A	% A	B	% B	C	% C	D	% D	F	% F	A-F Assigned	Average GPA
Fall 1992	860,611	37%	665,023	28%	488,029	21%	145,897	6%	196,980	8%	2,356,540	2.78
Fall 1993	805,753	36%	632,373	28%	468,328	21%	142,148	6%	189,402	8%	2,238,004	2.77
Fall 1994	795,274	36%	615,493	28%	456,490	21%	141,432	6%	204,818	9%	2,213,507	2.75
Fall 1995	782,751	36%	604,461	28%	446,310	20%	139,570	6%	204,698	9%	2,177,790	2.74
Fall 1996	817,583	37%	607,442	27%	447,729	20%	141,959	6%	218,056	10%	2,232,769	2.75
Fall 1997	844,403	37%	618,192	27%	453,769	20%	145,381	6%	238,574	10%	2,300,319	2.73
Fall 1998	882,425	37%	636,631	27%	466,140	20%	148,905	6%	240,245	10%	2,374,346	2.75
Fall 1999	903,621	37%	642,772	26%	466,515	19%	150,909	6%	265,953	11%	2,429,770	2.73
Fall 2000	950,214	38%	648,436	26%	465,381	19%	149,472	6%	283,533	11%	2,497,036	2.73
Fall 2001	1,011,177	38%	690,510	26%	489,560	18%	156,619	6%	298,430	11%	2,646,296	2.74
Fall 2002	1,071,647	39%	732,729	26%	518,057	19%	167,048	6%	275,883	10%	2,765,364	2.78
Fall 2003	1,015,549	38%	718,118	27%	516,675	19%	169,525	6%	278,795	10%	2,698,662	2.75
Fall 2004	1,008,683	37%	719,012	26%	516,710	19%	171,067	6%	319,163	12%	2,734,635	2.70
Fall 2005	992,194	37%	695,320	26%	501,931	19%	168,341	6%	336,781	12%	2,694,567	2.68
Fall 2006	1,003,529	37%	693,437	26%	495,713	18%	168,554	6%	343,643	13%	2,704,876	2.68
Spring 1993	824,551	37%	623,797	28%	450,821	20%	132,499	6%	173,657	8%	2,205,325	2.81
Spring 1994	812,241	37%	611,700	28%	444,695	20%	134,026	6%	186,448	9%	2,189,110	2.79
Spring 1995	793,883	37%	590,837	28%	426,670	20%	130,705	6%	189,440	9%	2,131,535	2.78
Spring 1996	815,008	38%	587,430	27%	423,070	20%	130,351	6%	200,571	9%	2,156,430	2.78
Spring 1997	847,653	38%	594,177	27%	425,826	19%	131,744	6%	211,023	10%	2,210,423	2.79
Spring 1998	875,286	39%	604,160	27%	431,399	19%	134,067	6%	219,303	10%	2,264,215	2.79
Spring 1999	916,602	39%	623,008	26%	444,678	19%	137,807	6%	239,395	10%	2,361,490	2.78
Spring 2000	923,655	39%	620,933	26%	438,847	18%	137,893	6%	263,497	11%	2,384,825	2.76
Spring 2001	979,506	39%	643,044	26%	447,340	18%	138,357	6%	272,402	11%	2,480,649	2.77
Spring 2002	1,062,393	40%	691,271	26%	479,058	18%	149,750	6%	287,901	11%	2,670,373	2.78
Spring 2003	1,062,828	40%	705,470	26%	491,826	18%	158,187	6%	266,485	10%	2,684,796	2.80
Spring 2004	1,019,388	39%	696,656	26%	490,294	19%	156,362	6%	267,721	10%	2,630,421	2.78
Spring 2005	998,591	38%	682,819	26%	481,321	18%	155,129	6%	303,761	12%	2,621,621	2.73
Spring 2006	988,785	38%	662,381	26%	466,437	18%	154,478	6%	314,623	12%	2,586,704	2.72
Spring 2007	1,028,123	39%	673,644	25%	468,256	18%	154,154	6%	319,962	12%	2,644,139	2.73
Summer 1992	183,899	45%	111,760	28%	72,301	18%	17,796	4%	20,289	5%	406,045	3.04
Summer 1993	188,855	45%	116,605	28%	75,383	18%	19,213	5%	21,600	5%	421,656	3.02
Summer 1994	188,472	45%	114,177	27%	74,222	18%	19,082	5%	23,069	6%	419,022	3.02
Summer 1995	189,010	45%	114,658	27%	74,985	18%	19,591	5%	24,107	6%	422,351	3.01
Summer 1996	213,813	46%	124,761	27%	80,041	17%	21,109	5%	27,043	6%	466,767	3.02
Summer 1997	263,692	47%	144,467	26%	91,457	16%	24,002	4%	33,293	6%	556,911	3.04
Summer 1998	288,477	48%	153,071	25%	97,397	16%	25,357	4%	36,959	6%	601,261	3.05
Summer 1999	317,639	49%	162,307	25%	103,165	16%	26,967	4%	41,706	6%	651,784	3.05
Summer 2000	337,491	49%	166,944	24%	104,875	15%	28,185	4%	46,106	7%	683,601	3.06
Summer 2001	373,091	50%	181,155	24%	111,937	15%	29,927	4%	49,215	7%	745,325	3.07

Summer 2002	414,327	50%	199,662	24%	122,788	15%	32,001	4%	52,085	6%	820,863	3.09
Summer 2003	300,545	47%	166,091	26%	101,683	16%	27,091	4%	39,035	6%	634,445	3.04
Summer 2004	303,402	46%	172,187	26%	105,752	16%	28,526	4%	46,579	7%	656,446	3.00
Summer 2005	322,066	46%	179,464	26%	111,601	16%	30,135	4%	52,647	8%	695,913	2.99
Summer 2006	327,750	46%	179,683	25%	111,604	16%	31,946	5%	57,475	8%	708,458	2.97
Summer 2007	124,255	47%	67,077	26%	39,676	15%	11,552	4%	19,669	8%	262,229	3.01
Winter 1993	50,773	43%	33,169	28%	21,766	18%	6,077	5%	6,806	6%	118,591	2.97
Winter 1994	52,216	43%	33,971	28%	21,340	18%	6,012	5%	6,956	6%	120,495	2.98
Winter 1995	30,190	45%	18,927	28%	11,971	18%	3,330	5%	3,401	5%	67,819	3.02
Winter 1996	30,149	48%	17,494	28%	10,384	17%	2,184	3%	2,563	4%	62,774	3.12
Winter 1997	31,075	47%	18,618	28%	11,211	17%	2,298	3%	2,672	4%	65,874	3.11
Winter 1998	31,810	46%	18,217	26%	11,454	17%	3,241	5%	4,033	6%	68,755	3.03
Winter 1999	34,743	47%	19,595	27%	12,128	16%	3,127	4%	4,005	5%	73,598	3.06
Winter 2000	35,648	46%	20,330	26%	12,933	17%	3,726	5%	4,910	6%	77,547	3.01
Winter 2001	44,555	48%	23,530	25%	15,150	16%	4,306	5%	5,420	6%	92,961	3.05
Winter 2002	57,079	47%	32,260	26%	20,597	17%	5,553	5%	7,252	6%	122,741	3.03
Winter 2003	59,583	47%	33,110	26%	21,294	17%	5,884	5%	6,293	5%	126,164	3.06
Winter 2004	60,002	46%	34,418	26%	22,693	17%	6,572	5%	6,644	5%	130,329	3.03
Winter 2005	68,845	44%	41,259	27%	27,173	18%	7,408	5%	10,359	7%	155,044	2.97
Winter 2006	73,051	44%	42,841	26%	29,140	18%	8,437	5%	10,928	7%	164,397	2.97
Winter 2007	83,121	45%	48,041	26%	31,157	17%	8,316	5%	12,359	7%	182,994	2.99

CIS	A	% A	B	% B	C	% C	D	% D	F	% F	A-F Assigned	Average GPA
Spring 92	3,464	38%	2,207	24%	2,161	24%	444	5%	823	9%	9,099	2.77
Fall 92	3,615	39%	2,274	24%	2,094	22%	467	5%	918	10%	9,368	2.77
Spring 93	3,416	36%	2,222	24%	2,161	23%	450	5%	1,115	12%	9,364	2.68
Fall 93	3,690	39%	2,283	24%	2,044	22%	465	5%	947	10%	9,429	2.77
Spring 94	3,722	38%	2,370	24%	2,263	23%	482	5%	965	10%	9,802	2.76
Fall 94	4,036	39%	2,452	24%	2,284	22%	470	5%	1,013	10%	10,255	2.78
Spring 95	4,103	38%	2,645	25%	2,293	21%	545	5%	1,209	11%	10,795	2.73
Fall 95	4,623	41%	2,633	23%	2,428	21%	542	5%	1,188	10%	11,414	2.79
Spring 96	4,526	39%	2,724	24%	2,381	21%	659	6%	1,262	11%	11,552	2.74
Fall 96	4,950	41%	2,757	23%	2,499	21%	518	4%	1,290	11%	12,014	2.80
Spring 97	5,466	37%	3,416	23%	3,066	21%	734	5%	1,956	13%	14,638	2.66
Fall 97	5,578	39%	3,148	22%	3,185	22%	640	4%	1,888	13%	14,439	2.68
Spring 98	5,636	36%	3,390	22%	3,669	23%	794	5%	2,145	14%	15,634	2.61
Fall 98	5,951	38%	3,341	21%	3,768	24%	694	4%	2,034	13%	15,788	2.66
Spring 99	5,268	34%	3,354	22%	3,810	25%	765	5%	2,213	14%	15,410	2.56
Fall 99	5,614	37%	3,271	22%	3,543	23%	668	4%	2,101	14%	15,197	2.63
Spring 2000	5,869	37%	3,558	23%	3,405	22%	766	5%	2,134	14%	15,732	2.65
Fall 2000	5,661	38%	3,188	21%	3,237	22%	716	5%	2,112	14%	14,914	2.64
Spring 01	5,276	38%	3,076	22%	2,967	21%	705	5%	1,920	14%	13,944	2.65
Fall 01	5,138	40%	2,742	21%	2,665	21%	557	4%	1,743	14%	12,845	2.70
Spring 02	4,682	39%	2,724	23%	2,450	20%	582	5%	1,659	14%	12,097	2.68
Fall 02	4,597	41%	2,321	21%	2,279	20%	520	5%	1,472	13%	11,189	2.72
Spring 03	4,216	38%	2,475	22%	2,264	21%	581	5%	1,492	14%	11,028	2.67
Fall 03	3,961	39%	2,180	21%	2,135	21%	494	5%	1,469	14%	10,239	2.65
Spring 04	3,870	38%	2,244	22%	2,050	20%	556	5%	1,535	15%	10,255	2.62
Fall 04	3,726	40%	1,963	21%	1,825	19%	418	4%	1,445	15%	9,377	2.65
Spring 05	3,377	37%	2,027	22%	1,747	19%	479	5%	1,588	17%	9,218	2.56
Fall 05	3,432	38%	2,011	22%	1,747	19%	399	4%	1,394	16%	8,983	2.63
Spring 06	3,047	36%	1,901	22%	1,679	20%	443	5%	1,424	17%	8,494	2.55
Fall 06	2,998	36%	1,943	24%	1,649	20%	375	5%	1,269	15%	8,234	2.61
15 year average		38%		23%		21%		5%		13%		2.68

Cosmetology	A	% A	B	% B	C	% C	D	% D	F	% F	A-F Assigned	Average GPA
Spring 92	1,766	27%	2,385	36%	1,831	28%	402	6%	269	4%	6,653	2.75
Fall 92	1,779	29%	2,297	37%	1,553	25%	308	5%	216	4%	6,153	2.83
Spring 93	1,563	25%	2,570	42%	1,580	26%	288	5%	167	3%	6,168	2.82
Fall 93	1,751	27%	2,551	40%	1,594	25%	322	5%	207	3%	6,425	2.83
Spring 94	1,862	30%	2,330	38%	1,458	24%	290	5%	199	3%	6,139	2.87
Fall 94	1,818	31%	2,160	37%	1,453	25%	293	5%	139	2%	5,863	2.89
Spring 95	1,900	32%	2,124	35%	1,535	26%	259	4%	188	3%	6,006	2.88
Fall 95	1,830	31%	2,158	37%	1,385	24%	218	4%	239	4%	5,830	2.88
Spring 96	1,718	31%	1,997	36%	1,352	24%	193	3%	302	5%	5,562	2.83
Fall 96	1,627	29%	2,116	37%	1,554	27%	208	4%	202	4%	5,707	2.83
Spring 97	2,011	32%	2,426	38%	1,467	23%	216	3%	231	4%	6,351	2.91
Fall 97	1,971	29%	2,487	36%	1,858	27%	234	3%	268	4%	6,818	2.83
Spring 98	1,856	29%	2,421	37%	1,669	26%	238	4%	284	4%	6,468	2.82
Fall 98	1,833	28%	2,425	37%	1,832	28%	249	4%	293	4%	6,632	2.79
Spring 99	1,708	29%	2,124	36%	1,716	29%	197	3%	210	4%	5,955	2.83
Fall 99	1,989	30%	2,366	36%	1,660	25%	265	4%	279	4%	6,559	2.84
Spring 2000	2,293	33%	2,513	36%	1,630	23%	247	4%	308	4%	6,991	2.89
Fall 2000	2,494	34%	2,547	34%	1,831	25%	248	3%	306	4%	7,426	2.90
Spring 01	2,554	33%	2,673	34%	1,972	25%	283	4%	304	4%	7,786	2.88
Fall 01	2,803	31%	3,005	33%	2,428	27%	363	4%	392	4%	8,991	2.83
Spring 02	3,067	34%	3,064	34%	2,155	24%	297	3%	311	3%	8,894	2.93
Fall 02	3,129	32%	3,283	34%	2,639	27%	284	3%	322	3%	9,657	2.89
Spring 03	2,793	32%	3,234	37%	2,310	26%	240	3%	252	3%	8,829	2.91
Fall 03	2,903	31%	3,343	36%	2,528	27%	255	3%	296	3%	9,325	2.89
Spring 04	2,812	31%	3,259	36%	2,358	26%	252	3%	309	3%	8,990	2.89
Fall 04	2,981	32%	3,203	35%	2,367	26%	297	3%	401	4%	9,249	2.87
Spring 05	2,878	33%	3,077	35%	2,077	24%	301	3%	366	4%	8,699	2.90
Fall 05	2,891	32%	3,250	35%	2,349	26%	343	4%	332	4%	9,165	2.88
Spring 06	2,812	31%	3,285	37%	2,300	26%	285	3%	311	3%	8,993	2.89
Fall 06	3,031	33%	3,027	32%	2,421	26%	313	3%	528	6%	9,320	2.83
15 year average		31%		36%		26%		4%		4%		2.86

Culinary	A	% A	B	% B	C	% C	D	% D	F	% F	A-F Assigned	Average GPA
Spring 92	1,470	40%	1,086	29%	808	22%	135	4%	193	5%	3,692	2.95
Fall 92	1,462	40%	1,140	31%	732	20%	145	4%	147	4%	3,626	3.00
Spring 93	1,444	39%	1,176	32%	694	19%	188	5%	154	4%	3,656	2.98
Fall 93	1,608	40%	1,276	32%	790	20%	163	4%	186	5%	4,023	2.98
Spring 94	1,477	39%	1,140	30%	742	20%	166	4%	219	6%	3,744	2.93
Fall 94	1,659	40%	1,271	31%	770	19%	218	5%	207	5%	4,125	2.96
Spring 95	1,510	38%	1,190	30%	736	19%	205	5%	296	8%	3,937	2.87
Fall 95	1,629	40%	1,293	32%	697	17%	156	4%	262	6%	4,037	2.96
Spring 96	1,691	39%	1,309	30%	852	20%	161	4%	292	7%	4,305	2.92
Fall 96	1,788	40%	1,332	30%	908	20%	223	5%	248	6%	4,499	2.93
Spring 97	1,898	39%	1,510	31%	958	20%	221	5%	257	5%	4,844	2.94
Fall 97	2,048	42%	1,467	30%	994	20%	187	4%	238	5%	4,934	2.99
Spring 98	1,983	40%	1,446	29%	1,080	22%	191	4%	286	6%	4,986	2.93
Fall 98	2,002	39%	1,527	30%	1,054	21%	189	4%	322	6%	5,094	2.92
Spring 99	1,987	40%	1,452	29%	1,024	21%	168	3%	314	6%	4,945	2.94
Fall 99	2,255	43%	1,413	27%	1,049	20%	169	3%	317	6%	5,203	2.98
Spring 2000	2,207	42%	1,365	26%	1,103	21%	182	3%	352	7%	5,209	2.94
Fall 2000	2,344	42%	1,374	24%	1,257	22%	207	4%	436	8%	5,618	2.89
Spring 01	2,419	42%	1,542	27%	1,134	20%	212	4%	447	8%	5,754	2.92
Fall 01	2,712	43%	1,599	25%	1,259	20%	188	3%	518	8%	6,276	2.92
Spring 02	2,766	40%	1,848	27%	1,427	21%	297	4%	512	7%	6,850	2.88

Fall 02	3,408	44%	1,994	26%	1,478	19%	284	4%	598	8%	7,762	2.94
Spring 03	3,092	43%	1,910	27%	1,280	18%	269	4%	595	8%	7,146	2.93
Fall 03	3,210	43%	1,968	26%	1,384	19%	276	4%	598	8%	7,436	2.93
Spring 04	2,927	39%	2,026	27%	1,496	20%	306	4%	727	10%	7,482	2.82
Fall 04	2,929	40%	1,900	26%	1,524	21%	330	4%	690	9%	7,373	2.82
Spring 05	3,173	39%	2,159	27%	1,668	21%	319	4%	744	9%	8,063	2.83
Fall 05	3,290	42%	1,887	24%	1,659	21%	265	3%	781	10%	7,882	2.84
Spring 06	3,493	40%	2,029	23%	1,803	21%	317	4%	995	12%	8,637	2.78
Fall 06	3,431	42%	1,961	24%	1,635	20%	266	3%	825	10%	8,118	2.85
15 year average		41%		28%		20%		4%		7%		2.92

Dental Hygiene	A	% A	B	% B	C	% C	D	% D	F	% F	A-F Assigned	Average GPA
Spring 92	929	44%	878	42%	297	14%	6	0%	4	0%	2,114	3.29
Fall 92	1,048	51%	651	32%	345	17%		0%	1	0%	2,045	3.34
Spring 93	1,062	48%	847	38%	288	13%	4	0%	2	0%	2,203	3.34
Fall 93	1,100	50%	697	31%	410	19%	5	0%	3	0%	2,215	3.30
Spring 94	1,249	50%	962	39%	263	11%	2	0%	7	0%	2,483	3.39
Fall 94	1,307	54%	778	32%	319	13%	7	0%	2	0%	2,413	3.40
Spring 95	1,070	45%	1,041	44%	257	11%	8	0%	4	0%	2,380	3.33
Fall 95	1,239	51%	760	31%	437	18%	4	0%	4	0%	2,444	3.32
Spring 96	959	39%	1,122	45%	393	16%	11	0%	5	0%	2,490	3.21
Fall 96	1,088	45%	877	36%	451	19%	4	0%	8	0%	2,428	3.25
Spring 97	1,283	44%	1,180	41%	412	14%	23	1%	4	0%	2,902	3.28
Fall 97	1,242	40%	1,003	32%	813	26%	32	1%	3	0%	3,093	3.12
Spring 98	1,294	43%	1,252	42%	421	14%	20	1%	12	0%	2,999	3.27
Fall 98	1,578	51%	989	32%	491	16%	13	0%	5	0%	3,076	3.34
Spring 99	1,416	46%	1,309	42%	349	11%	25	1%	11	0%	3,110	3.32
Fall 99	1,633	49%	1,195	36%	512	15%	16	0%	9	0%	3,365	3.32
Spring 2000	1,436	41%	1,595	45%	447	13%	26	1%	22	1%	3,526	3.25
Fall 2000	1,536	46%	1,272	38%	531	16%	17	1%	2	0%	3,358	3.29
Spring 01	1,299	37%	1,608	46%	535	15%	15	0%	9	0%	3,466	3.20
Fall 01	1,717	50%	1,068	31%	621	18%	19	1%	14	0%	3,439	3.30
Spring 02	1,362	38%	1,595	44%	577	16%	36	1%	16	0%	3,586	3.19
Fall 02	1,638	48%	1,191	35%	548	16%	15	0%	4	0%	3,396	3.31
Spring 03	1,273	34%	1,720	45%	737	19%	29	1%	32	1%	3,791	3.10
Fall 03	1,567	44%	1,299	36%	678	19%	18	1%	2	0%	3,564	3.24
Spring 04	1,393	34%	1,796	44%	835	20%	32	1%	34	1%	4,090	3.10
Fall 04	1,443	43%	1,302	39%	551	17%	16	0%	20	1%	3,332	3.24
Spring 05	1,490	36%	1,762	42%	848	20%	31	1%	20	0%	4,151	3.13
Fall 05	1,736	46%	1,414	37%	615	16%	6	0%	12	0%	3,783	3.28
Spring 06	1,533	36%	1,873	43%	837	19%	31	1%	35	1%	4,309	3.12
Fall 06	1,784	46%	1,364	35%	675	18%	13	0%	14	0%	3,850	3.27
15 year average		44%		39%		16%		0%		0%		3.26

General Auto	A	% A	B	% B	C	% C	D	% D	F	% F	A-F Assigned	Average GPA
Spring 92	4,550	28%	4,870	30%	4,227	26%	1,053	6%	1,645	10%	16,345	2.59
Fall 92	4,512	29%	4,697	30%	3,913	25%	963	6%	1,378	9%	15,463	2.65
Spring 93	4,219	28%	4,790	31%	4,059	27%	897	6%	1,272	8%	15,237	2.64
Fall 93	4,339	28%	4,676	30%	4,132	26%	1,147	7%	1,361	9%	15,655	2.61
Spring 94	4,401	27%	4,802	29%	4,501	27%	1,086	7%	1,599	10%	16,389	2.57
Fall 94	4,586	28%	4,890	30%	4,239	26%	1,031	6%	1,424	9%	16,170	2.63
Spring 95	4,512	27%	5,167	31%	4,458	27%	1,097	7%	1,355	8%	16,589	2.63
Fall 95	4,791	28%	4,953	29%	4,589	27%	1,029	6%	1,455	9%	16,817	2.63
Spring 96	4,580	28%	4,823	30%	4,201	26%	1,085	7%	1,541	9%	16,230	2.60

Fall 96	4,754	29%	4,901	30%	4,325	26%	1,017	6%	1,555	9%	16,552	2.62
Spring 97	4,892	31%	4,579	29%	4,001	25%	946	6%	1,484	9%	15,902	2.66
Fall 97	4,854	30%	4,734	29%	4,073	25%	891	6%	1,550	10%	16,102	2.65
Spring 98	4,425	29%	4,572	30%	3,805	25%	964	6%	1,485	10%	15,251	2.62
Fall 98	4,611	29%	4,671	29%	4,090	26%	933	6%	1,683	11%	15,988	2.60
Spring 99	4,439	30%	4,140	28%	3,564	24%	876	6%	1,641	11%	14,660	2.60
Fall 99	4,590	31%	4,083	28%	3,588	24%	907	6%	1,654	11%	14,822	2.61
Spring 2000	4,339	30%	3,923	27%	3,784	26%	813	6%	1,555	11%	14,414	2.60
Fall 2000	4,748	31%	3,935	26%	4,279	28%	790	5%	1,606	10%	15,358	2.61
Spring 01	5,003	31%	4,298	26%	4,214	26%	1,046	6%	1,717	11%	16,278	2.60
Fall 01	5,247	30%	4,656	26%	4,843	27%	923	5%	1,949	11%	17,618	2.59
Spring 02	5,412	30%	5,111	28%	4,668	26%	1,069	6%	1,771	10%	18,031	2.63
Fall 02	6,113	32%	5,089	27%	4,998	26%	1,036	5%	1,809	9%	19,045	2.66
Spring 03	5,448	31%	4,861	28%	4,322	25%	1,052	6%	1,699	10%	17,382	2.65
Fall 03	5,659	32%	5,113	29%	4,352	24%	1,032	6%	1,764	10%	17,920	2.66
Spring 04	5,509	30%	5,258	29%	4,476	24%	1,190	6%	2,004	11%	18,437	2.60
Fall 04	5,500	31%	4,895	27%	4,533	25%	1,053	6%	1,993	11%	17,974	2.60
Spring 05	5,280	30%	4,727	27%	4,306	25%	1,041	6%	2,073	12%	17,427	2.58
Fall 05	5,099	31%	4,496	27%	4,161	25%	987	6%	1,836	11%	16,579	2.61
Spring 06	5,191	31%	4,538	27%	3,965	24%	934	6%	1,886	11%	16,514	2.62
Fall 06	5,400	32%	4,560	27%	4,340	26%	855	5%	1,694	10%	16,849	2.66
15 year average		30%		29%		26%		6%		10%		2.62

Nursing	A	% A	B	% B	C	% C	D	% D	F	% F	A-F Assigned	Average GPA
Spring 92	7,522	28%	11,890	44%	5,908	22%	840	3%	603	2%	26,763	2.93
Fall 92	7,826	29%	11,855	44%	6,022	22%	665	2%	469	2%	26,837	2.97
Spring 93	7,825	30%	11,609	44%	5,748	22%	756	3%	525	2%	26,463	2.96
Fall 93	7,672	30%	11,256	44%	5,659	22%	716	3%	553	2%	25,856	2.96
Spring 94	8,254	30%	11,634	43%	5,793	21%	810	3%	664	2%	27,155	2.96
Fall 94	7,930	30%	11,286	43%	5,502	21%	753	3%	578	2%	26,049	2.97
Spring 95	7,827	30%	11,392	44%	5,510	21%	706	3%	657	3%	26,092	2.96
Fall 95	8,145	31%	10,843	42%	5,559	21%	803	3%	692	3%	26,042	2.96
Spring 96	7,535	29%	10,757	42%	5,779	23%	748	3%	744	3%	25,563	2.92
Fall 96	7,886	31%	10,636	42%	5,591	22%	719	3%	760	3%	25,592	2.94
Spring 97	7,202	28%	10,838	43%	5,804	23%	802	3%	716	3%	25,362	2.91
Fall 97	7,619	30%	10,582	42%	5,517	22%	821	3%	646	3%	25,185	2.94
Spring 98	7,354	29%	10,765	42%	5,616	22%	792	3%	807	3%	25,334	2.91
Fall 98	7,658	31%	10,131	41%	5,566	22%	833	3%	711	3%	24,899	2.93
Spring 99	6,953	28%	10,501	42%	5,747	23%	813	3%	812	3%	24,826	2.88
Fall 99	6,791	28%	10,489	43%	5,651	23%	846	3%	864	4%	24,641	2.87
Spring 2000	7,306	29%	10,712	42%	5,824	23%	917	4%	838	3%	25,597	2.89
Fall 2000	7,402	29%	10,531	42%	5,775	23%	840	3%	791	3%	25,339	2.90
Spring 01	7,824	28%	11,473	42%	6,257	23%	904	3%	1,020	4%	27,478	2.88
Fall 01	8,553	30%	11,908	42%	6,219	22%	951	3%	1,003	4%	28,634	2.91
Spring 02	9,188	30%	12,717	42%	6,792	22%	1,017	3%	909	3%	30,623	2.92
Fall 02	9,509	31%	12,754	41%	6,685	22%	1,013	3%	937	3%	30,898	2.93
Spring 03	9,929	30%	13,805	42%	7,107	22%	1,161	4%	964	3%	32,966	2.93
Fall 03	10,012	30%	14,069	42%	7,204	22%	1,126	3%	933	3%	33,344	2.93
Spring 04	10,502	30%	14,822	43%	7,243	21%	1,051	3%	1,011	3%	34,629	2.95
Fall 04	10,012	30%	14,617	43%	6,897	21%	1,069	3%	1,033	3%	33,628	2.94
Spring 05	10,932	30%	15,895	44%	7,136	20%	1,071	3%	1,140	3%	36,174	2.95
Fall 05	11,089	31%	16,048	44%	7,038	19%	1,127	3%	1,015	3%	36,317	2.97
Spring 06	11,974	31%	16,843	43%	7,538	19%	1,237	3%	1,145	3%	38,737	2.96
Fall 06	12,229	31%	17,400	44%	7,523	19%	1,146	3%	1,136	3%	39,434	2.97
15 year average		30%		43%		22%		3%		3%		2.93