

# Fair and Defensible Grading

Strategies for Enhancing Student Learning and Assessment



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## Overview

1. Introduction
2. Learning First
3. Instructional Design & Grading
4. Syllabus Design & Grading
5. Course Embedded Assessments/Learning Assessments
6. Conclusion

## Anticipation Guide

1. Grades are, and always have been, useless.
2. Grading should be based on achievement, performance, and attendance.
3. Students' learning is best determined by their ability to "do," not their ability to "know."

What's in a Grade?

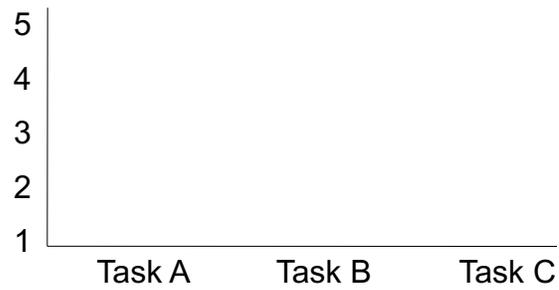
**A**

# Learning First

The processing of knowledge, experience, and self.



# Results



## Multitasking and Research

“The truth to multitasking is evident in the empirical studies... humans lack the cognitive, behavioral, and cortical structures necessary to multitask effectively.”

-- Watson, Terry, & Doolittle (2012)

## Multitasking and Research

“fMRI technology found that multitasking is not actually a concurrent process, but a sequential one that involves task-switching.”

-- Charron & Koechlin, 2010

## Multitasking and Research

“There is no evidence that multitasking is a new phenomenon exclusive to digital natives ... there is a clear mismatch between the confidence with which [digital native] claims are made and the evidence for such claims.”

-- Bennett, Maton & Kervin, 2008

Cognitively

Behaviorally

What we process  
we learn.

Affectively

Socially

# Instructional Design & Grading

Integrating grading into the design of effective instruction.

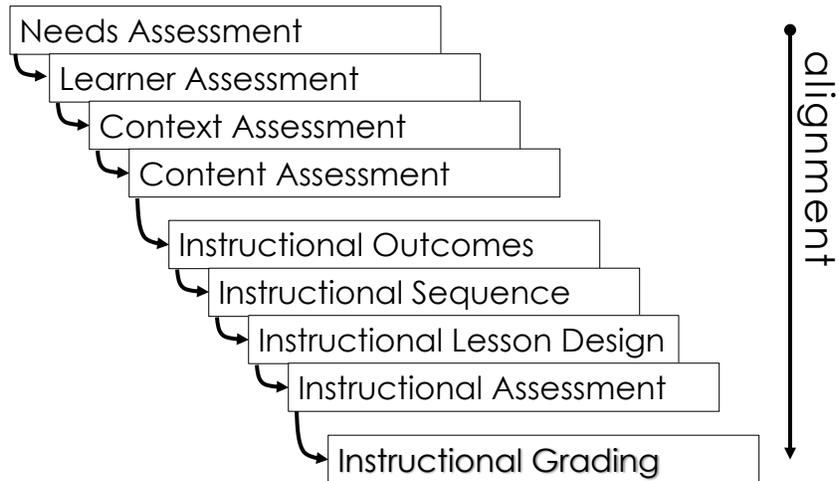


# Instructional Design & Grading

Instructional design involves systematically  
planning,  
developing,  
evaluating, and  
managing  
the instructional process, based on principles of  
learning and instruction.

**Proactive Teaching**

# Instructional Design & Grading



# Instructional Grade

Academic Achievement & Performance

Attendance & Participation

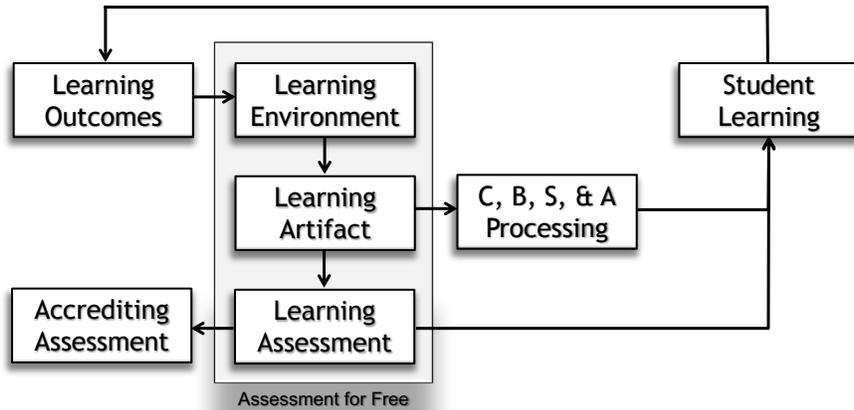
Extra-credit & Bonus-points

Effort & Labor

Growth & Improvement

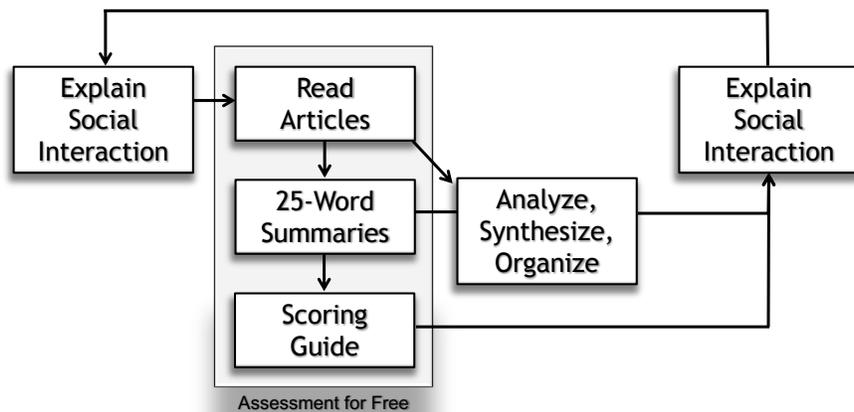
Conduct & Manners

# Design, Assessment, Grading

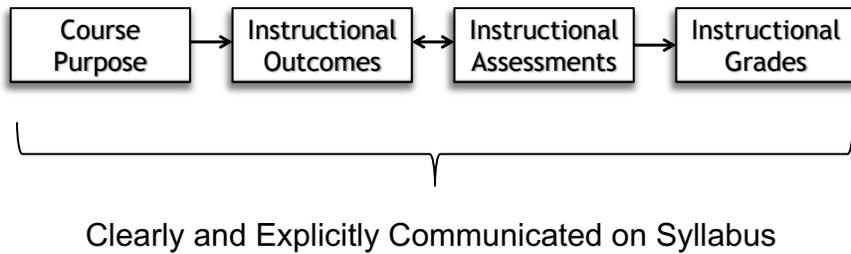


Course embedded assessment is not magic, it's by design.

# Design, Assessment, Grading



## Design, Assessment, Grading



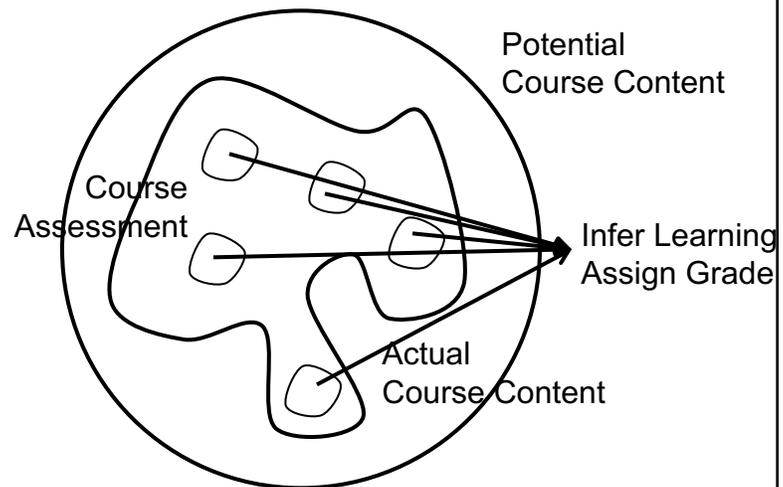
## Grade Principles

1. Grades should be a natural extension of good instructional design.
2. Grades should be based on academic achievement and performance.
3. Grades should emerge from course embedded assessments.
4. Grade determination should be clearly explained on the course syllabus.

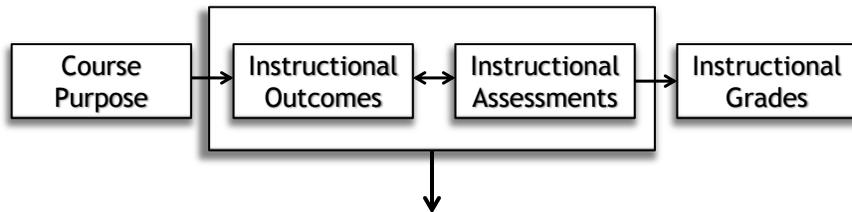
## Grading in the Weeds



## Assessing is Sampling



## Sampling is Aligning



Align the assessments with the outcomes.

Create assessments, rather than selecting them.

## Types of Assessments

Generate a list of two (2) assessments that are not "standard."



## Aligning Assures Validity

How might we assess the following indicator?

The student will be able to *explain* relevant course terms and concepts.

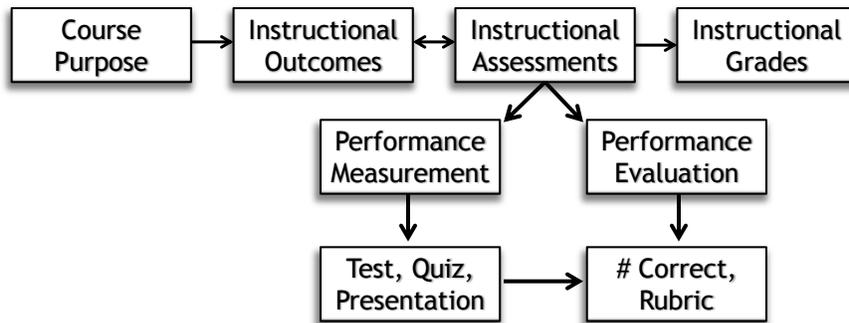
## Aligning Assures Validity

How might we assess the following indicator?

The student will be able to *analyze* historical primary source materials using the SCIM strategy.



## Aligning Includes Evaluations



## Rubrics vs Scoring Guides

Rubrics and scoring guides are designed to

- reduce the variability in evaluating
- decrease the time it takes to grade
- provides foci for student performance

# Rubrics

	Missing (0 pts)	Poor (2 pts)	Good (4 pts)	Excellent (6 pts)
Dimension 1	Description	Description	Description	Description
Dimension 2	Description	Description	Description	Description
Dimension 3	Description	Description	Description	Description
Dimension 4	Description	Description	Description	Description

# Scoring Guide

1. Dimension 1 6 points

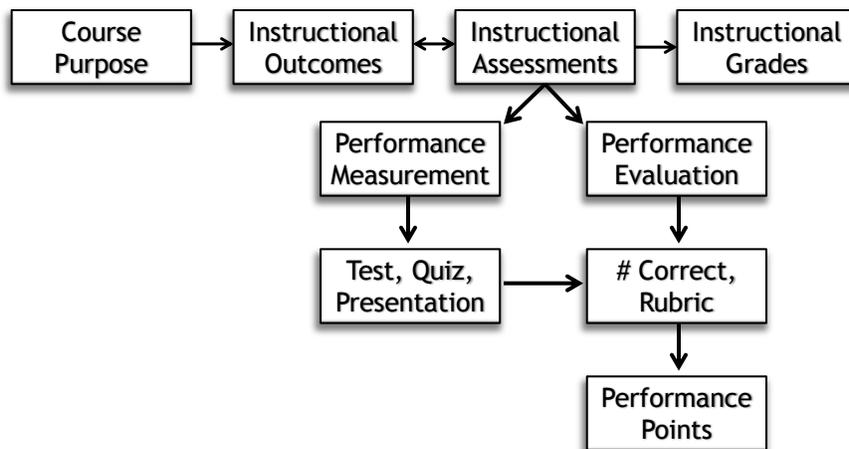
- Attribute 1.1
- Attribute 1.2
- Attribute 1.3

2. Dimension 2 6 points

- Attribute 2.1
- Attribute 2.2
- Attribute 2.3

\_\_\_/12 points

## Points are Feedback



## Points are Feedback

- Performance evaluation points should represent students' achievement and performance on a specific performance measure.
- Performance evaluation points should reflect the c, s, b, & a processing importance of the learning activity/artifact.

## Points are Feedback

Microteaching	400 pts
Oral Explanations	200 pts
Scholarly Reading	200 pts
Teaching/Learning Philosophy	200 pts

Most points =  
Most important c, s, b, & a processing  
in order to fulfill the course purpose

## Points and Motivation

### The 7 C's of Motivation

1. Challenge
2. Choice
3. Control
4. Curiosity
5. Caring (interest/value)
6. Competence
7. Collaboration/Connectedness

Keep in mind that points are not the same as grades.  
Points are performance and performance is processing.

## Grading on the Curve

Just say no.

## Guidelines for F & D Grading

1. Discuss with students the basis of all grading – make grading transparent.
2. Make grading explicit through the syllabus and activity guides.
3. Base grades on achievement and performance only.
4. Return evaluated assessments promptly and with feedback.

## Guidelines for F & D Grading

5. Align assessments with course outcomes, instructional strategies, and purposes.
6. Base grades on a composite of several aligned assessments.
7. Assign course points based on which learning assessment activities are most important in achieving the course purpose.

The End