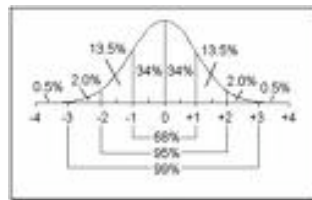


Motivation = High Expectations & Accurate Standards

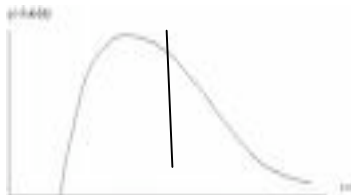
The lament from students when they earn their first “B” or “C” in college is something like, “But I was an honor student!” The next few pages reflect ACT trends for our school. In the ’09-10 academic year, thirty percent (80/269) students carried a 4.0 average. Given a traditional delivery, this number is a statistical impossibility, and comparatively, the relatively average ACT results confirm a disproportionate “As” earned. A traditional “normal” distribution has most students, approximately 68% falling into “average” territory, and about 16% in “A/B” range and “D/F” range, respectively. The “normal curve” is a fairly reliable ruler; it suggests that given any population, performance will typically follow a distribution of fewer “As and Fs, with the largest number of grades “Cs” nested in the middle:



Normal Distribution

Application of mastery learning principles (which argues that given enough time and application of alternative learning devices, students can master the material) is the one teacher driven variable that may skew the curve. However, time constraints and state edicts (which favor volume or coverage rather than depth of thinking) is an obstacle to the practical use of mastery techniques. What’s pragmatically or realistically possible? We expect teachers at a minimum to assess their students learning and reteach if necessary (that is, if a disproportionate number don’t “get it”), but time and the comprehensive curriculum grade level expectancies outlined by the Department of Education dictate that at some point the teacher must move on. Basic pedagogical principles, such as differentiated learning, student centered learning, individualization (all of which are different from lecture as primary delivery method) may also move students grades higher, as do students applying more study time, participating in class, and using tutors.

However, our grade distributions are fall disproportionately higher. That is our standards must be raised so that students grades more accurately reflect their true level of performance



Hanson’s Grade Distribution, “A”s & “B”s to the left

Here's an interesting challenge from Douglas Reeves, chairman of the Leadership and Learning Center:

1. Calculate the final grade for a student whose 10 assignments during the grading period received the following scores: **C, C, MA (missed assignment), D, C, B, MA, MA, B, A.**
2. If you had to describe the difference between those students who earn As and Bs and those who earn Ds and Fs, what would you list as key variables?

Reeves says the answer to the question resides in grading practice that is **Accurate, Fair, and Effective.**

ACCURACY: On a 10 interval point scale, a missing assignment actually weighs, from D to zero, as a 60 point deduction. A-D are 10 point increments, but a missing paper is 60? Does your grading accurately measure outcomes? Accordingly, with respect to formative means and then summative results, Reeves asks, "**Is our task to evaluate where students started or where they finished?**"

FAIRNESS: Reeves asks, "Are we confusing quiet compliance with proficiency?" Regardless of effort—some students, depending on their level of expertise and skill, must work harder, others seemingly effortlessly, to demonstrate excellence— have students truly produced outstanding ("A") work? Generally speaking, **the quality of work produced should be graded**, not the effort. Do we confuse behavior with competence? Are bonus points designed to "curve" grades? If so, they aren't fair—besides, we know that the A students always strive to earn the most bonus points, so nothing changes, really, except, perhaps that A students disproportionately regress—are actually, comparatively, rewarded less. How well does the student reach the goal? Measure the outcome. If one wants to disguise *REAL* quality points as "bonus" points, ok, but any points that are designed to artificially curve the grade should be eliminated. This is the first step to eliminate grade inflation.

EFFECTIVENESS: **Do the grading policies lead to improved student performance?** Are students more engaged, responsive, and successful? (Reeve suggests that there's a direct correlation to students being disrespectful, inattentive, disengaged, and unresponsive to a teacher's instructional and testing choices.) This is really a rhetorical question asking teachers to continually assess performance (self/teacher's and learner/student's).

Composite

	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
National	20.8	20.8	20.9	21.0	21.0	21.0	21.0	21.0	20.8	20.8	20.9	20.9	21.1	21.2	21.1	21.1
Diocese	20.2	20.6	20.5	20.8	20.8	20.8	21.2	21.0	21.3	21.4	21.5	21.7	21.5	22.0	22.0	22.1
State	19.4	19.4	19.4	19.4	19.5	19.6	19.6	19.6	19.6	19.6	19.8	19.8	20.1	20.1	20.3	20.1
Hanson				20.1	19.0	19.3	19.5	20.4	20.9	20.8	21	19.9	19.6	20.3	20.3	20.8

Benchmark Scores ('06-'09), the minimum score to indicate a 50% chance of obtaining a "B" or 75 % chance of obtaining a "C" in college courses:

Content Area	ACT Test	Benchmark
English	English	18
Algebra	Mathematics	22
Social Sciences	Reading	21
Biology	Science	24

	English			Mathematics			Reading			SH	SS	SN	CH	C	CN
	EH	ES	EN	MH	MS	MN	RH	RS	RN						
02-03	20.8	19.7	20.3	19.7	18.9	20.6	21.3	19.8	21.2	20.6	19.6	20.8	20.8	19.6	20.8
03-04	21.1	19.9	20.4	20.4	19.2	20.7	21.0	19.9	21.3	21.3	19.7	20.9	21.0	19.8	20.9
04-05	19.8	19.9	20.4	19.4	19.2	20.7	19.6	19.8	21.3	20.2	19.7	20.9	19.9	19.8	20.9
05-06	20.0	20.3	20.6	18.5	19.4	20.8	20.1	20.1	21.4	19.0	19.9	20.9	19.6	20.1	21.1
06-07	20.7	20.3	20.7	20.1	19.5	21	20.5	20.2	21.5	19.7	19.9	21	20.3	20.1	21.2
07-08	20.9	20.5	20.6	19.7	19.7	21	20.5	20.5	21.4	19.5	19.5	20.8	20.3	20.3	21.1
08-09	21.4	20.3	20.6	19.9	19.6	21	21.3	20.2	21.4	20.2	20.0	20.9	20.8	20.1	21.1