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The Grading of Men's Physical Education Activities in the Small Four-Year Colleges of Oregon, Washington and California

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21

THE GRADING OF MEN'S PHYSICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES
IN THE SMALL FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES OF OREGON,
WASHINGTON AND CALIFORNIA

A Thesis
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
John A. Beck
August, 1970

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Significance of the Study to the Physical Education Field	3
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	5
Changes in Grading Modes	5
Grading Methods for Activity Courses	8
Pros and Cons of Grading Methods for Activity Courses	10
III. PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION	12
Purpose of the Study	12
Definition of Terms	12
Limitations of the Study	13
Procedures for the Study	14
IV. RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE	17
Prevalent Grading Methods	17
Trends in Grading	18
Decisions for Grading Policy	19
Student Needs in Regard to Grading	20
Factors Considered in Administering Grades.	21
Treatment of Various Grading Methods When Transferred	22

CHAPTER	PAGE
V. CURRENT FACTORS OF GRADING AS SHOWN BY THE STUDY VS. GRADING FACTORS OF EARLIER TIMES	24
"Pass or Fail" Grading vs. Standard Grading in Regard to Student Needs	25
VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	28
Summary of the Study	28
Conclusions	31
BIBLIOGRAPHY	34
APPENDIX	36

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

In 1949 the prevailing philosophy was that physical education departments could function more effectively if regular grades were given for activity classes. Also, it was believed that grades should be given on an educational basis. In other words, if the student fulfilled the set objectives, that student would receive the best grade.

In the early 1950's the ideas shifted, and some authorities thought that the student should have a share in planning the basis to be used in determining relative importance of each objective for the unit work.

By 1960 there were so many ways to grade physical education activity courses that colleges were uncertain which way best met the needs of the students. Some of the ways now in use are as follows: Grades on the percentage basis, letter grades, number grades, and descriptive words, i.e. "outstanding," "strong," "poor," "pass-fail."

Today, with the changes that are involved in our society, students want to be aware of how they as individuals compare. Also, it is the job of the physical education instructors to evaluate the student in a fair and concise way.

Failure to disqualify students who are below average will lower the status of physical education. Conversely, if below-average students are given grades higher than they may actually deserve, the response of competition is removed from the class activities. In the same manner, encouragement has been given students to go into the physical education field in which they may fail upon being out on their own. It is this writer's belief that there are several reasons why grades have become such a concern. One reason is that instructors do not gather enough facts in determining grades. For example, they grade on skill or fitness rather than taking an overall look at the total objectives in the grading process. There are also those instructors who feel that they do not want to be the only one to give a particular student a poor mark.

It is this writer's opinion that if we are to upgrade the physical education profession, we must use reliable and valid methods of evaluating students. If this is consistently done, then grading of activity courses can become meaningful to everyone connected with the physical education program.

This writer's experience has been that students want standard grading. They base their reasoning on the fact that a "pass or fail" cannot be averaged into their grade point. Further, they feel they should receive a grade in return for the fees paid in connection with an activity course. When the writer was affiliated with Mt. Angel College, the physi-

cal education program was instituted and steadily grew under the A, B, C, D or F grading system. A few years later, when the administration removed the standard grade from activity courses and replaced this with "pass or fail" grading, the program was boycotted by most students. Three classes that had previously had a total enrollment of 80 students abruptly dropped to a total enrollment of nine students. As a result, the physical education program was dropped from the curriculum. It is this writer's belief that the grading system was one of the basic factors in the decline of the program.

Statement of the Problem

What grading method of activity courses in small colleges is best meeting the needs of the students involved? What is the most prevalent method used? Is grading outmoded--a thing of the past? These are the basic questions to be answered by this study.

Significance of the Study to the Physical Education Field

There has been a great amount of study done on how one should grade physical education activities, but nothing states as to what effect this has had on grading in the various schools. In this study, such influential people as Mr. Delbert Oberteuffer, P. B. Johnson, L. W. McCraw, etc. give the guidelines to follow, but do not relate how efficient these programs have been. At this time, the writer feels research should be done to determine whether or not

objectives and goals are being met in physical education activity classes in regard to grading. In these times, our classes seem to be changing. Through the scope of this research, it is hoped that we may be able to come to a point of agreement in dealing with grading in activity courses. In doing this, it is hoped that physical education departments will strive for a more efficient operation. Today, more than ever, physical education is playing an important role in our school society, and it is up to the physical education instructors to give the utmost to their chosen profession. If the physical educators have a common bond in a grading method that is effective, it can only up-grade the total program of physical education to better meet the needs of the student.

It is this writer's belief that through meaningful evaluation of the grading system, the physical educators will be able to arrive at the best method to commonly employ. In this way physical educators can only continue to improve their departments both in relevancy to life and academically. Grading of activity courses can again become meaningful to all concerned.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Changes in Grading Modes

Grading in general has long undergone criticism by administration, teachers and students. Those educators most concerned with changing the present systems have mainly aimed their efforts at simplification and elimination of the significance of the "D" grade, their feeling being that the unsatisfactory "D" grade is too easily offset by a "B" grade in another area when many "D" grades are actually a failing mark.

Although deep concern has been felt in the area of grading for sometime, very few changes have actually been made due to the problems created by lack of provisions by enough institutions for acceptance of transfer grades of varying types, faculty inertia and motivation of the average student. The fact that this particular issue is under consideration by many of today's educators is evidenced by the fact that 52 institutions were represented at the Conference on College Grading Systems held in 1963. The fact that the effort was made towards a meeting of minds and better and more universally accepted grading methods is indeed a step in the right direction. One bright light of hope shines from the existence of a committee at University of California

at Berkeley whose duties include the investigation and possible establishment of a better system of grading to be implemented cooperatively with other institutions.

Some colleges have attempted a change within their own institution. One such attempt was made by Whitman College of Walla Walla, Washington. Being wholly unhappy with the letter grading system of A, B, C, D or F which had been in effect at their school since the percentage system was abandoned around 1930, Whitman instituted a new system in 1947-48. This new system consisted of three levels of achievement shown by P, H and HH, HH representing highest honors, H representing honors, and P representing passing. In connection with these marks, however, points were also assigned. In other words, those students with an average percentage of 70 through 84 received P; 85 through 94 received H; and, 95 through 100 received HH. Faculty members were allowed the prerogative of assigning any number of points within the range of each letter. For example, P might be accompanied by 73 points, 81 points, 77 points, etc. Although this system seemed to work quite well within the walls of Whitman, the problems arose in the interpretation of grades when Whitman students transferred to graduate or other institutions. Such were the student hardships created that Whitman felt compelled to return to the old system of A to F which it still employs in connection with a limited "pass or fail" system (11:60-1).

In effect, attempts at change by individual undergraduate schools such as Whitman are futile in that they are immobilized and impeded until the larger institutions are able to establish more closely related improved grading methods which allow for transfers of less rigid systems with fewer connected problems.

Other attempts at upgrading the system of marking student achievement are constantly being made. In 1968 Morris A. Shirts devised a new concept of grading called "The College Grade Contract." This method allowed the students a choice of whatever grade they wished to select with a set of standards prescribed for each mark. Shirts (13: 456-8) found that nearly all students contracted for an "A" grade, but some could not complete it. Those contracting for "A" grades were lively participants in the discussions, and those contracting for lesser grades lost enthusiasm. Many students appeared to work harder in library study and readings when the possibility of the "A" grade seemed within their grasp. As time passed by the pressure began to show and the students thought the assignments burdensome. However, Shirts observed that most of the students showed indications of fine learning through the experience.

The contract grading program appears to bear merit in the opinion of this writer. Further refinement and experimentation in this area would seem likely to bear worthwhile results. However, a program of this type can be very demanding of the instructor and at no time should be viewed

as a "work-saver" for the teacher.

One may wonder whether or not it would be possible to establish a grading system wherein students and teachers could agree on a grade. This may, indeed, be a difficult task. However, according to a study conducted by George Mannello, Jr., such an agreement is within the realm of possibility. By allowing self-evaluation by students in addition to assigning a grade himself, Mr. Mannello was able to effect such an agreement. It is noted by Mr. Mannello, however, that students have a tendency to over-rate themselves. The educational value of this procedure was felt to be superior to the standard grading policy (8:60-61).

It would seem to this writer that change in grading is inherent. All of the necessary factors are present-- concern, motivation and need. Although major changes are generally slow in arriving, the trends toward improvement are apparent.

Grading Methods for Activity Courses

Today, more than ever, students, faculty and administrators are recognizing the existence of and looking at the problem of grading of activity courses. They are beginning to question whether or not the methods used are meeting the needs of our students and fulfilling the requirements necessary for physical education. In the following quotations, the thinking on this matter which has evolved during the

past few years is evident. Clayne Jensen states that,

Grades can be assigned on an absolute or a relative basis. An absolute grade is assigned solely on the basis of achievement, without regard for potential, while a relative grade is assigned on achievement in reference to potentiality. McCloy recommends that in all physical education service courses absolute grades be kept on record but that grades relative to the potentiality of the pupil be assigned as a final grade. He emphasizes that a boy who performs at his present potential, even though it may be low, should receive an A, while one who actually performs better, but does not approach his potential should receive a lower grade (6:97).

Although many authorities insist that a student's potential should not be a factor in grading and the class performance is the sole consideration, the unfairness of this method is obvious. When this manner of grading is put into use, those students who possess the most ability will receive the high grades even though their effort may not compare with that put forth by students of a much lesser ability.

Positive arguments may be assigned to either of the above grading methods. A teacher must make a decision as to the method to be followed and implement that mode consistently.

A later writer, Mr. Perry B. Johnson, had a different view in regard to grading of activity courses:

The course grade is based primarily upon lectures, examinations and laboratory reports. Fitness and skills are not essential elements in the grading plan; the student's conduct as he goes about his laboratory work (in all phases) is far more meaningful. (We all know that it is not difficult to "make" every student become reasonably fit in order to pass a course in physical education, but this motivational technique and the results of such a

grading system are highly suspect and do not fit into our philosophy of college health and physical education.) (7:25).

The grade distribution in such courses is justifiably normal. Fairness is of the essence of this method. All students have an equal opportunity for success as willingness and ability to study and learn are the only requirements. Those students who fail are only those who refuse to participate.

Pros and Cons of Grading Methods for Activity Courses

There is no set pattern for grading in physical education. The one point upon which educators would seem to be in agreement is that physical education grading should be in accordance with the rest of the academic classes of an institution. However, the controversy between specific grading and "pass or fail" still exists.

Those physical educators who tout the standard mode of grading cite some of the following reasons: (1) grades are an aid to the instructor in fitting his program to student needs; (2) grades aid the students in remedying their deficiencies through illustrating strong and weak points; (3) grades are the evaluation of performance thus stimulate interest in student improvement; (4) physical education is on the same plane as the remainder of the academic world and should, therefore, be equally treated; (5) as aids to experimentation and research grades are necessities; and (6) students may judge their group standing through grades. (10: 426)

Conversely, there are those authorities who argue that the "pass or fail" method of evaluation is the only fair judgment. They argue that objectives cannot be fairly equated among students and, therefore, the unsatisfactory grade does not exist. Further, with no existing agreement as to the weights allowed or priority allotted to the common physical education objectives, grades are of no value to comparative scholastic records. "Pass or fail" enthusiasts are also quick to point out that student attention should be focused entirely on the course expectations rather than achieving a particular grade. Their crowning argument is that grades are an evaluation of knowledge and totally unsuitable for a field involving behavior changes or creative expression as a portion of its learning process (10:427).

CHAPTER III

PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

Purpose of the Study

It was the purpose of this study to survey the department heads of men's physical education departments of selected small colleges, utilizing the questionnaire method. These instructors expressed their reactions by responding to the various questions contained in the questionnaire as to the type of grading presently used by them, their desired type of grading, the basis for their grading systems, and their personal evaluation of the system in use.

Further, it was the purpose of this study to gather evidence to support or reject the following hypotheses:

(1) That the trend in grading of activity courses is toward the "pass or fail" basis; (2) That although the trend is toward "pass or fail" grading, the standard grading system of A, B, C, D or F is still most prevalent; (3) It is the general concensus of opinion of those department heads polled that the standard grading system better meets the needs of the students; and (4) Grading is not based merely on fitness and ability, but is based on tests (both knowledge and skill), participation and written work.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following terms

will apply:

1. Physical Education. That part of physical activity which serves as a medium for man's total education, intellectual, emotional, developmental, using experiences centered in movement (9:3).
2. Small College. Those four-year colleges that have a full-time enrollment of 7,000 or less and have an established department in physical education.
3. Activity Classes. Those classes in which physical activities are taught.
4. Grading. The process of evaluating the student who has participated in an activity class.
5. Physical Education Department. A body which administers health, physical education and recreation.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to (1) colleges of 7,000 students or less; (2) four-year colleges; (3) one year in time; (4) men's activity classes; (5) Washington, Oregon and California; (6) questionnaire and library research; and (7) opinions of department heads of men's physical education divisions providing pertinent information useful in this study. (8) Identification of colleges or universities was not requested. (9) Responses of members of the faculties were not included.

It was assumed that (1) the department heads of the schools contacted would respond to the questions presented

on the questionnaire, and (2) that bias would be limited through adequate preparation and careful wording of the questionnaire.

Procedures for the Study

The main source of gathering data for this research was through construction and mailing of a survey-questionnaire. Help was sought from authorities at Central Washington State College in construction of the questionnaire. Also, library research on construction of questionnaires compiled by nationally known authorities was employed in the preparation of a questionnaire.

Prior to the preparation and mailing of the questionnaire, a perforated two-part card form was prepared and mailed to each prospective respondent requesting their permission to be polled. Each department head receiving the card was asked to mark and return the lower portion of the card indicating whether or not their participation could be expected. When all of the return portions of the card form had been received, the writer then duplicated and prepared the three-page questionnaire for mailing to those indicating a willingness to participate. Also included in this mailing was a self-addressed return envelope for their convenience. Of the 30 questionnaire forms forwarded to the respondents, 28 were duly marked and returned for tabulation, being a 93 percent response.

The questionnaire was objective in form and approxi-

mately three pages in length. As the purpose of the questionnaire was the acquisition of quantitative information, the questions were carefully and concisely stated to avoid any misinterpretation on the part of the respondent. Particular attention was paid to correct mechanical form. The respondent was offered several choices which could be marked with a simple check mark, thus enabling one to easily tabulate the results. Due to the simplicity of the questionnaire, the demands upon the respondent were not unreasonable.

All questions were tabulated separately, and each result was converted to a percentage. When the percentages were determined, a table was set up so that the results were readily apparent.

As a means of checking the areas from which the responses were received, a wall pin map was utilized, i.e. a pin was placed in the map at the point from which each response was received. In this manner, it was readily ascertained whether or not the sampling was truly representative of the area polled.

Data was gathered from library research, as well as questionnaire response. The questionnaire data came from a sampling of 30 colleges in Oregon, Washington and California. In order to meet the needs of this study, 70 percent of the questionnaires mailed had to be returned. To find if the grading of activity courses follows standard, "pass or fail" or other methods, there had to be a 25 percent agreement on the various means of grading. All ways of grading

were tabulated, with significant differences being noted.

A systematic search of all relevant available literature was made. Although a good deal of time was invested, the writer found that very little research has been conducted in this particular area of physical education. Virtually nothing has been written in regard to grading of men's physical education activity courses on the college level. Accordingly, this study was based primarily on raw research unearthed by the questionnaire method.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Prevalent Grading Methods

The results of the questionnaire study made it apparent that the letter grading system of A, B, C, D or F is still the most widely employed by small colleges in the evaluation of men's physical education activity courses.

In reply to Question No. 1, "What type of grading system does your department presently employ for men's physical education activity courses?", twenty-one or 75 percent of those responding to the questionnaire reported letter grading as the method of grading they are now using. The remaining seven respondents or 25 percent listed the "pass or fail" method as their present system of grading. Although several methods were offered as possible choices, the only methods of grading shown to be employed by the respondents were those of letter grading and "pass or fail" as illustrated by Figure 1.

It would be well to note, however, that approximately 29 percent of the institutions polled who presently employ letter grading as their predominant grading policy noted that in addition to the letter method they also allowed students the option of "pass or fail" grading for any given activity course. Although the "pass or fail" option

allows the student credit towards graduation, it does not allow any specific number of hours which may be averaged in the student's grade point.

<u>Factors</u>	<u>No. of Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
A, B, C, D or F	21	75%
A, B or F	--	--
Pass - Fail	7	25%
Other	--	--
Total	28	100%

Figure 1

Grading Systems Presently Employed
By Respondents

Trends in Grading

To find out whether or not there was a trend toward the "pass or fail" grading method, the department heads polled were questioned as to the length of time their present method of grading had been in use. From the reports of the respondents it was learned that there existed a positive correlation between the prevalence of the letter grading system and the length of time that system had been employed by an institution. This was illustrated by the responses to Question No. 2 which asked, "How long has the present system of grading been employed by your department for men's physical education activity courses?" Fifteen subjects or 60 percent of the respondents indicated that their system had been in use for ten years or more, and ten subjects or

40 percent indicated that their method had been employed five years or less. The writer found that those indicating a shorter period of employment for their grading system were those institutions now employing the "pass or fail" method. Hence, there is a definite trend toward the "pass or fail" grading system for men's physical education activity courses.

In response to Question No. 3, "Do you foresee any changes in the grading method employed by your department for men's physical education activity classes in the near future?", twenty-one or 77.7 percent replied "no" while six or 22.3 percent replied "yes", four of the six anticipating a change to the "pass or fail" system. Thus, it can be concluded that the most widely used system of A, B, C, D or F is currently the choice of the majority, allowing that there is an obvious trend towards "pass or fail." Although the percentage of institutions now using the "pass or fail" method of grading is very small, those who now use this method seem to be quite well-satisfied with it. This was illustrated by the responses to Question No. 4 which stated, "Would you like to see a change in the grading method presently employed by your department?" Eighteen or 78.2 percent answered "no," and only five or 21.8 percent answered "yes."

Decisions for Grading Policy

Where does the decision lie with regard to what

method of grading will be employed by an institution's physical education department?

The replies to Question No. 5 which stated, "Who decides the grading method to be employed by your department for men's physical education activity courses?", were varied. Eleven or 44 percent indicated that their policy was the decision of a total concensus of department members, nine or 36 percent indicated a policy decision by the administration, and five or 20 percent indicated their policy to be a result of the combined decision of Department Head, department members and administration.

Student Needs in Regard to Grading

In reply to Question No. 6 which asked, "How well do you feel the present system of grading employed by your department for men's physical education activity courses meets the needs of the students involved?", ten or 37 percent felt that their present mode met students' needs fairly well. However, seventeen or 63 percent of the respondents indicated that they felt their present method of grading was meeting the needs of the students very well.

When answering Question No. 7 which asked, "What method do you feel would best meet the needs of the students involved?", thirteen or 46.5 percent chose letter grading (A, B, C, D or F); seven or 25 percent chose "pass or fail;" two or 7 percent chose A, B or F; and, six or 21.5 percent chose various other methods not listed. These results are

component as revealed by the study are shown.

<u>Factors</u>	<u>No. of Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Skill tests	18	64.2
Knowledge tests	17	60.7
Ability	15	53.5
Fitness	8	28.5
Attitude	8	28.5
Written work	8	28.5
Attendance	4	14.2

Figure 3

Factors Considered and Prevalence of Consideration
in Grade Determination

Although twenty or 70 percent of the respondents to Question No. 8 stated that they used a particular set of factors when administering a grade for men's physical education activity courses in their particular department, there was no indication as to the different weights assigned to each factor by the various physical educators. Eight or 29 percent of the respondents stated that they had no standard grading policy.

Treatment of Various Grading Methods When Transferred

What happens to the transfer student who brings with him a transcript showing "pass or fail" grading when he enters an institution employing the letter grading method? Of those institutions polled as to their method of handling

such a situation, seventeen or 74 percent replied that they give hours toward graduation, and five or 22 percent award the student a blanket "C" for each activity course. The remaining 4 percent of the respondents now employing standard grading listed various methods of treatment for the transferred "pass or fail" grade. A few suggested a combination of hours and credit, and one even suggested individual treatment based on a particular student's grade point average.

The same question was asked in reverse of those institutions now employing the "pass or fail" system. Their replies revealed that ten or 71.5 percent awarded hours toward graduation or other type of credit. One or 7 percent of the institutions treats the transferred grade as a blanket "C" and three or 21.5 percent were undecided or indicated that such matters were "now under consideration" at their particular school.

CHAPTER V

CURRENT FACTORS OF GRADING AS SHOWN BY THE STUDY VS. GRADING FACTORS OF EARLIER TIMES

How refreshing to observe that the old ways of grade determination have been nearly eradicated and replaced by new standards. Note that the leading factors in grade administration are no longer fitness and attendance, but are now skill, knowledge and ability. Those factors considered with lesser frequency but in equal proportions are fitness, attitude and written work, and the least considered factor is now attendance. This does not indicate to the writer that attendance has become unimportant, but merely that it is an expected thing and is no longer considered a major factor in the basis for grading. That fitness in earlier times had been one of the most important factors in grading and is now one of the smaller factors also shows a very definite decline in its relative importance in assigning merit. It is, indeed, encouraging that written work has become an added facet to the process of grading. This particular aspect has too long been overlooked. The attitude factor, although infrequently considered by the majority of the physical educators polled, is an indication that a new trend toward total student evaluation is beginning.

What is currently needed is further consideration to the education of the total person through physical education. Physical educators need to place more emphasis on written work, thereby educating the student as to the background of activities as well as to the future personal value of these activities. This knowledge might well serve to alleviate some of the problems created by the increasing amount of leisure time facing adults. Background knowledge in addition to an understanding makes for more avid spectators and adds to their enjoyment of sports events.

If the methods of assigning the grades could be more standardized among institutions, i.e. a standard set of factors to be considered when awarding grades, a valid evaluation would be represented by the grade given. Physical educators need to work toward the establishment of this set of guidelines in assigning grades. The factors to be considered and the various weights attributed to each should be more closely coordinated. A suggested solution would be a series of conferences among representatives from physical education departments of the various colleges where a general consensus could be formed. This might well be conducted by one of the various physical education organizations to which most physical educators belong.

"Pass or Fail" Grading vs. Standard Grading in Regard to Student Needs

There does not appear to be a great surge toward change in grading systems although the trend toward "pass or

fail" cannot be denied. As to what method best meets the needs of the student, it is a difficult matter to decide when student needs are so varied. Thus, we have the case of the skilled student versus the non-skilled. The method best meeting the needs of the skilled student may very well be entirely different from that mode best serving the non-skilled student. The basic needs of the skilled student would appear to be a challenge, an opportunity for attainment and credit for participation in the form of a grade. Conversely, the most obvious need of the non-skilled student would appear to be freedom to participate without fear of failure in terms of a grade. While letter grading would seem to provide the answers to the needs of the skilled student, "pass or fail" grading would provide the atmosphere of freedom necessary for the non-skilled student. This freedom afforded by "pass or fail" grading would allow less talented students to experience activities they might otherwise shun. Perhaps this student would experience an activity that would become an enjoyment in later life, and hence further one of physical education's goals. In this respect physical educators might be able to reach those not now particularly skilled and create an outlet that would be physically invigorating to that particular person. Physical educators are not particularly concerned with the physically skilled person's maintaining an active interest in activities. Their reasoning for this is well-explained by the old adage that "one does the things at which he is proficient." None-

theless, in grading the skilled person's activity courses, we cannot ignore his needs in favor of those of the relatively non-skilled person. It follows that the combination grading mode whereby standard grading is employed and the "pass or fail" with credit toward graduation option is offered to those not majoring in the physical education field is the best solution presently available.

Further study as to what the basic needs of students actually are is indicated. Perhaps a questionnaire study on needs including student response would be helpful.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the Study

The research of this paper has dealt with the problems involved in grading men's physical education activity courses in the small colleges of Oregon, Washington and California. The writer endeavored to learn what method of grading was best meeting the needs of the students involved. Was the grading system outmoded--a thing of the past? Also it was hoped that the most prevalent method now in use could be established.

The questionnaire method was utilized in surveying the department heads of men's physical education departments of selected small colleges in an effort to learn the answers to the above-stated questions. Through the questionnaire, the writer gathered evidence to support or reject the following hypotheses:

1. That the trend in grading of activity courses is toward the "pass or fail" basis.

2. That although the trend is toward "pass or fail" grading, the standard grading system of A, B, C, D or F is still the most prevalent.

3. It is the general consensus of opinion of those department heads polled that the standard grading system

better meets the needs of the students.

4. Grading is not based merely on fitness and ability, but is based on tests (both knowledge and skill), participation and written work.

The study was limited to (1) colleges of 7,000 or less, (2) four-year colleges, (3) one year in time, (4) men's activity courses, (5) Washington, Oregon and California, (6) questionnaire and library research, and (7) opinion of department heads of men's physical education divisions providing pertinent information useful in this study. (8) Identification of colleges or universities was not requested. (9) Responses of members of the faculty were not included.

The results of the questionnaire made it readily apparent that the standard grading system of A, B, C, D or F is yet the most widely employed method by those institutions polled. Seventy-five percent of the respondents named standard grading as the method now in use by their department. The remaining 25 percent of those polled listed "pass or fail" as their present mode of grading. Approximately 29 percent of those polled noted that, although they currently employed the standard method of grading as their main mode of grading, they also offered students the option of "pass or fail" for no credit. Of those schools so indicating, several were careful to note that this option was limited to those students who were not majoring in the physical education field.

The correlation between the prevalence of the stand-

ard method and the length of time it had been employed at the colleges was direct. Standard grading was found to have been in use at most of the schools currently using that method for more than ten years. Conversely, "pass or fail" grading at those institutions currently employing that method as their predominant grading policy had been in effect for five years or less in most instances. Thus, a trend toward "pass or fail" is indicated.

Twenty-five percent of the respondents stated a need to change their present system of grading and of this 25 percent, 80 percent indicated that they would favor the "pass or fail" method as the one to be inaugurated. In the same vein, the remaining percentage of those polled did not wish a change in the method of grading presently employed. Thus, the most widely used method of standard grading remains the most popular at this time.

As to the question of who decides the grading policy of an institution in regard to the physical education department, the responses of the department heads polled indicated that this decision was made 52 percent by the department members, 44 percent by the administration and the remaining 4 percent by a combination of the administration and department members.

The majority of those polled felt that their present system of grading met the needs of the students very well, i.e. standard grading is felt to be the best in this regard by a majority of those polled. Some question was raised as

to what student needs include. This would bear further consideration.

The most prevalent factors considered in the awarding of grades were ability, knowledge and skill. Also considered were the factors of fitness, attitude, attendance and written work. The considerations attributed to each factor were in the following percentages:

Skill Tests	64.2%
Knowledge Tests	60.7%
Ability	53.5%
Fitness	28.5%
Attitude	28.5%
Written Work	28.5%
Attendance	14.2%

Conclusions

From the results of the questionnaire, it was apparent that the letter method of grading is still the more prevalent and widely used system at this time. Further, the "pass or fail" method is the only other method now in use by those institutions polled. Some do employ a combination of the two methods whereby a student is given an option of standard grading for a specific number of credit hours or "pass or fail" with credit given toward graduation but no specific number of hours awarded. This combination method appears to be the best that is available at the present time.

The trend is definitely towards the "pass or fail"

method of grading in those institutions who have just undergone or are anticipating a change. However, there does not seem to be a general feeling of unrest among department heads as to the need for a change in grading methods. Most of the respondents felt that their present system of grading was meeting the needs of the students very well, i.e. standard grading is felt to be the method whereby a student's needs are best served.

In conclusion, the writer offers the statement that physical educators as a whole have failed in one basic area, that area being the consideration and evaluation of the total student. In the past grading has been based mainly on the physical aspects of a student. The mental aspects have been almost totally ignored. Although this is no longer entirely the case, it is still far too true. However, it is most encouraging to note that there are now seven factors in consideration by the various colleges and universities. Nonetheless, until a standard policy insuring the consideration of all factors by each physical educator can be established, appraisal of the total student cannot be assured in all cases.

There is a definite need for physical educators to come together and formulate a standard set of guidelines for use in the evaluation of the total student. Perhaps this could be done through a series of conferences enlisting the time and talents of representatives from physical education departments of the various colleges and universities. This

might serve as a good project for one of the national physical education organizations.

At present, the best method of grading now offered is the combination standard with "pass or fail" option. Whether this option should be handed out freely to all participants bears some reflection. To this writer, it would seem that those majoring or minoring in physical education should be required and would naturally prefer to participate in the various activity courses for credit. In that instance, standard grading would apply.

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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

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Please answer all questions with a simple check mark opposite one of the given choices, unless otherwise indicated.

1. What type of grading system does your department presently employ for men's physical education activity courses?

1. A, B, C, D or F _____

2. A, B or F _____

3. Pass or Fail _____

4. Other _____ Explain: _____

2. How long has the present system of grading been employed by your department for men's physical education activity courses?

1. Less than three years _____

2. Less than five years _____

3. Ten years or more _____ If so, has the present method been employed since the creation of your department?

Yes _____ No _____

3. Do you foresee any changes in the grading method employed by your department for men's physical education activity classes in the near future?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, to what system?

1. A, B, C, D or F _____

2. A, B or F _____

3. Pass or Fail _____

4. Other _____ Explain: _____

4. Would you like to see a change in the grading method presently employed by your department?

Yes _____ No _____

5. Who decides the grading method to be employed by your department for men's physical education activity courses?

1. Department Head _____
2. Total concensus of department members _____
3. Administration _____

6. How well do you feel the present system of grading employed by your department for men's physical education activity courses meets the needs of the students involved?

1. Very well _____
2. Fairly well _____
3. Not well _____

7. What method do you feel would best meet the needs of the students involved?

1. A, B, C, D or F _____
2. A, B or F _____
3. Pass or Fail _____
4. Other _____ Explain: _____

8. Is there a standard grading policy for men's physical education activity classes in your department?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, upon which factors is the grading based?
(May check more than one)

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Fitness _____ | 4. Knowledge tests _____ |
| 2. Ability _____ | 5. Written work _____ |
| 3. Attitude _____ | 6. Skill tests _____ |

9. If your department now employs the Pass or Fail basis for grading, is the physical education department the only department in your institution employing this method?

Yes _____ No _____

10. If your department presently employs the Pass or Fail method of grading for men's physical education activity courses, how do you treat standard grading (A, B, C, D or F) from another institution as in the case of transfer students?

1. Blanket C _____
2. Hours given toward graduation _____
3. Require student to repeat classes _____
4. Other _____ Explain: _____

11. If your department presently employs the Standard method of grading (A, B, C, D or F) for men's physical education activity courses, how do you treat Pass or Fail grading from another institution as in the case of transfer students?

1. Blanket C _____
2. Hours given toward graduation _____
3. Require student to repeat classes _____
4. Other _____ Explain: _____