PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR CLASSES
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This procedure manual describes the general procedures to be used for this class. Any changes to this manual for this term will be presented in class. The procedures outlined are designed to follow the material presented in the programmed unit, LEARN IT BEST. LEARN IT BEST is called by some people a mnemonic (a device to help learn). The letters LEARN IT BEST are the first letters of each general feature of Programmed Instruction and this course:

Little Steps - Unit I
Evaluation of Program Errors – Unit II
Active Responses – Unit III
Required Practice of Responses to Be Learned – Unit IV
Negative Reinforcement and Punishment Are Minimized - Unit V

Immediate Feedback – Unit VI
Teaching Technique - Not Testing Technique – Unit VII

Behavior Must Be Specified – Unit VIII
Environment Restricted to Increase Opportunity to Learn – Unit IX
Success Before Progressing – Unit X
Terminal Behavior (an Objective or a Goal) is Necessary – Unit XI

I. LITTLE STEPS (Shaping learned repertoires in small increments)

A. Introduction:

In this course we will use techniques which allow the content to be learned in relatively small steps. There are no real big steps with which to get a good grade. A good grade results from getting the job done each day in smaller steps. Various methods will be used to maximize small steps:

1. Daily reading assignments will be tested usually on a daily basis.

2. The Student Teacher Participatory Discussion (here after called STPD) should help work through problems on major content areas. STPD will be described immediately below.

B. STUDENT TEACHER PARTICIPATORY DISCUSSION (STPD)

1. Popularity vs. Learning to Respond to Questions:

To many students, the procedure described in this section is different from class procedures encountered in other courses. I realize this, and we will go slow at
the start to allow you familiarity with this new procedure. As you read this, you may need some demonstration to get rid of the confusion. As you read this, you may not be sure if you are coming or going. (If I do not tell the humorous story about coming or going in class early in the term, remind me. You may find some empathy with the character in the punch line.) I put this reminder here because of a favorite memory joke, "My memory is okay, my memory is okay." Yes, and the jokes don’t get much better.

Teachers are confronted with interesting issues as they plan courses. Should a teacher use an effective teaching technique that will probably never win a popularity contest? The procedure described in this section (STPD) is one such procedure. It is nice when an instructor can find fun and useful activities for students as well as for the instructor. Activities that build a certain useful behavioral repertoire may not be viewed by a student as the best thing since sliced bread. Various life situations require one to do what has been called “think on your feet,” that is, life frequently asks us to give an oral response immediately. The five minute speech in a speech class, where you prepare the talk as homework, has some different features compared to being called upon to respond at any given moment. Many questions asked of supervisors, workers, parents, social contracts, etc., are of this delayed sort. The behavioral repertoires to answer questions on the spot, like other behaviors, are learned by doing the behavior with feedback. Most college settings do not offer many, if any, chances to build this kind of skill. STPD is an attempt to build such a skill in a college classroom. When STPD functions adequately, it may expand on and clarify a segment of the course reading. It becomes a lecture and discussion combined. There is a teaching method called Direct Instruction (DI). I have seen DI described in the following way: It is a very structured exchange, it is planned, read from written format at times, and scripted. Yet with the right teacher and when it is done right, it doesn’t appear rigid at all. It appears almost like a verbal dance between the student and the teacher. And it's fun. We will see if STPD can be something like DI as it was described above; very interactive, a lot of correct answers, and fun. STPD has a lot in common with a discussion and a lecture combined.

This aspect of the course does not usually add to my popularity, but popularity is not by itself the test of the effectiveness of a teaching technique. I might add here, in the end of the course evaluation some students almost every semester list STPD as a favorite part of the course. STPD, as a descriptive term, has never made it in popular language. “Orals” is the most popular term used to refer to this segment of the course.

2. Students are Randomly Called On and It Serves as a Balance of "Hard" Questions:

The way this segment of the course works is that you are called on regularly and randomly to answer oral questions about the content of the course that you
should have read before the class session. These are graded with a specific number of points. Question difficulty is not always the same for all students. Since the questions are asked in a random order, your tough luck of getting a "tough" question should balance out over the term. As you will see, this may not be as dry or dull as it may first sound. Discussion, elaboration, examples expanding the new material, extending the implication, etc., takes place among the questions. It is like a lecture discussion with a lot of participant involvement on specific issues. Students have pointed out another benefit of testing in this course which is that being called on fairly frequently in this class has greatly reduced their fear response to being called on in other classes. Also, frequent written testing in this class has also reduced some students' test fear responses in other classes.

3. Permanent Product:

To have a permanent record of the class, after your oral response you will write down the question, answer, and correct answer to questions. (See sample format from an oral sheet below. An in class discussion of the sheet will also be given.)

Sample From Oral
Round # _______ Date _____________
Regular or Jump Question (circle one)
Your answer

Correct answer, circle (same) if you were correct. Points for your answer _____

4. No Speed Reading (condition of book during orals):

Books and notes should be closed during orals. You may want a blank sheet of paper to take notes on during the discussion as some concept may be presented that you might want to make a note of.

5. Preparation Can Make It More Fun:

We will break into this routine slowly. I realize that being called on and put "on the spot" can sound "scary" or "anxiety provoking". Of course, good reading and studying of the assigned materials should help. If you get the correct answer when called on, not so amazingly -- orals can be more fun!

6. Scoring Orals:

Points are given in the discussion/lecture sessions (STPD) for just being there for the session. Scoring for rounds of questions can vary, and this will be announced. The usual scoring we will use at the start of the semester is 2 points will be given for a correct answer, 3 points for being part of the oral discussion on
days of participation, (5 points total for a correct response). If you are absent, you lose the oral points if you are called on. Each day I like to find a random, or at least a different, sequence of asking questions. To encourage students to be to class on time, I like to start the sequence at an empty seat.

Later in the course, once the oral testing procedure is up and running, I implement a "3 strike rule" in this oral procedure. I will announce when this "3 strike rule" is to be implemented. The 3 strike rule states: three 3's in a row on orals means that the third miss will be worth 1 point. One gets out of this "3 strike" condition by getting a correct answer on orals (i.e., 5 points on an oral).

7. Jump Questions:

A "Jump Question" is a special type of oral question. A jump question is a question where the student answering the question may not be in the regular rotation that we have been using to ask oral questions at that time in class. I will state that the question to be asked is a jump question, then I will pick the first student with their hand raised that I see. If the first hand seen is out of the normal sequence, that student could get the jump question. If the jump question is answered wrong, it does not count against you. (If your answer is wrong, you do not write anything on your oral recording sheet.) If you do get the question right, circle "jump" instead of "regular" on your oral recording sheets to be handed out in class (Refer to sample format). You will treat jump questions as you would for a regular question by circling (same) and giving yourself 5 points.

Oral jump questions are usually questions that:

One, extrapolate beyond the material you have read.
Two, are based on points not emphasized in the reading.
Three, are based on more general knowledge not found in the text.
Four, cover more difficult material in the reading.

8. Posting Orals on the Scoring Sheet:

Each oral is 5 points and the highest point total that you put in any one column on the score sheet is 10 points. One should be able to see that we will only be recording scores for orals by adding your score on two rounds together (10 points for 2 rounds of 5 will be the maximum possible). I will announce when and where orals will be posted on the grade sheet.

9. Maximum Benefit of Orals:

Later in this procedure manual I suggest some ways a class can maximally benefit from orals. Certainly speaking at a volume that is loud enough for others to hear you is very important for all students to benefit from orals. Also, listening to all questions and answers is very important as many times the written test
covers similar material. To help this happen, I try to regularly repeat the question for the first person. If you don’t hear or understand the question, ask to have it repeated when the question is asked for the first time.

II. EVALUATION OF PROGRAM ERRORS (Finding what happens as students study).

One thing that is NOT news today is that disagreements exist on how college courses should be taught and evaluated. The literature referring to these problems is confusing enough to make some individuals give up on the attempt to improve and/or evaluate courses. A few of the many problems of course evaluation are stated below:

A. What Areas to Evaluate:

Many times there exists no agreement between students and faculty on the criterion to be met in a course or even the general areas to be evaluated. An alternative to this issue is through the generation of a behavioral contract.

B. Evaluation While Course Is In Progress:

Most course evaluations come back too late in the course and in a form not very useful for improvement. Methods suggested by single subject research design, immediate feedback, and a concept of mutual positive reinforcement appear to offer a viable means to evaluate a course. These concepts themselves will be looked at in greater detail later in the course. Just why should a student get involved in a course evaluation? Many methods of student evaluation of faculty/course appear non-productive or even counter-productive, e.g.:

1. "The Last Chance at Getting Even": The end of the course evaluation provides an opportunity for the student to "ventilate hostility" if things have not gone well in the course.

2. Evaluation and Letter of Recommendation Request in the Same Breath: This "subtle" method is characterized by the sentence, "I really found your course interesting and enjoyed it immensely. Oh yes, by the way, would you write me a letter of recommendation?"

3. Who cares: “I’ve got more important things to do than offer feedback.”

4. "The Make Them Feel Good": The "do-gooders" who wouldn't say crap if he/she was standing in the middle of it.

Can an instructor make a class evaluation part of the teaching aspects of the course? In this course, I will try. Suggestions for improvement on the techniques used in this course are sought after.
III. ACTIVE RESPONSES (Doing)

A. Learning Is Not by Osmosis:

So much of education consists of the teachers "practicing" the material one more time in his or her lecture to the class. In this course, we will attempt to change this order around. You (the student) should do the active responding. Daily learning exercises or demonstrations offer one means to get you actively involved.

B. Schedule:

You should take away from this procedure manual the nature of the active responses you will be asked to make in this course. Tests do make up a large percentage of points available in the course. It is important to know what is expected of you.

C. Oral or Written Tests:

Tests in this class can be in an oral or written form. Written tests can be short answer, essay, multiple choice, true - false, analogy or matching format. A 10% final is a possibility this Semester and I will make a decision regarding a possible final later in the Semester. My decision will be based on if students work and accomplish learning the content of the course. Most points for grades are based on daily work and tests. Later in the course I will introduce a concept of “intermittent grading.” This is used to vary the weight of a daily test.

D. Enrichment:

At times, small assignments are given which are intended to enrich other class Activities. These vary from reports, outlines, questions, summaries, lectures, shows, etc.

IV. REQUIRED PRACTICE OF RESPONSES BEING LEARNED:

A. Time Spent on Courses:

This course is designed on the premise that average students should study for two hours outside of class for each credit hour. For 3 hours a week in class, this means 6 hours outside of class or a total of 9 hours per week on the average. This is a verbally accepted standard in most college classes but is rarely observed in practice. It has been stated by Duvall, "Studies show, however, that less than 10 percent of American students work more than 30 hours a week." This would include homework, class lectures, individualized instruction, projects,
and all other aspects of the course. In certain cases this will be an estimated amount of time based on an average time spent by students in the past. Class periods are not the major learning medium in this class but rather working with, or the practice with, the materials as homework is where most of the learning takes place. The class time is the time to look at what has been learned.

V. NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT AND PUNISHMENT BOTH SHOULD BE MINIMIZED:

A. Open Door Policy:

The instructor has an "open door policy," that is come and see me if having any problems. However, I do keep myself busy and you may have trouble finding me at times so making an appointment is suggested. My office is:

Whitney House 11A (on 1st Ave. S. close to the bank of the Mississippi River across the street from Atwood Center & Garvey)

Office Phone: 320-255-2138 * Home Phone: 320-251-3134 * Secretary Phone: 320-255-4157

Email address: gcmertens@stcloudstate.edu

B. Confidentiality Option:

Grades may be posted by number, not name. If you desire this option, inform the instructor.

C. If Things Do Not Go Well (informal complaints):

The written word is better than the spoken word for complaints as well as for teaching content. If you have a complaint or suggestion in the course, please write it out and give it to me. The student has a right to talk to any university official.

D. Formal Complaints:

The University has an established way of submitting formal complaints on a course. This method is presented in the student handbook.

E. Student's Rights:

A student's rights should be protected so that they are not graded against too rough a criterion. Therefore, a guarantee you have in this course is as follows: All students who receive a grade percentage of 90% or higher will earn an A. If not more than 25% of the class earns A's, (hopefully they will,) then being in the
top 25% of the class' total points will give you an A. We will use that procedure which gives the larger number of A's. Hopefully more than 25% receive A's.

F. Loss of Points:

No procedure in this course will result in a loss of points per se -- i.e. you may not get the points (reinforcement is contingent), but they are not taken away if already earned. (See mechanics points later in this Procedures Manual.)

G. Cheating:

Cheating is punished with gusto. If it is a pure case of cheating, I will give an "F" for the course or worse.

VI. IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK TO THE STUDENT:

A. Printed Word vs. Spoken Word:

This course is based on a concept that the printed word has an advantage over the spoken word. These advantages center on individualizing to a student's learning speed. In printed material, if you don't grasp the material the first time through, you can stop and go back. Listening to a lecture does not allow one to do this. One of the reasons an emphasis in this course is given to the printed word is the advantage it has in terms of your individual learning.

B. You have an "A" Going:

All of you start with an "A" for the course for doing the work on the first day of the course (a 10 point get acquainted offer). Your daily effort throughout the term is needed to maintain this grade.

C. Grades:

Letter grades are based on percentage of points earned:

- 90% and above - A
- 80% but not 90% - B
- 70% but not 80% - C
- 60% but not 70% - D

D. Procedure for Test Scoring Machine:

A fast test scoring machine produced by National Computer Systems (NCS) provides feedback on tests before the student leaves the classroom that day. To do this, students need a supply of quick scoring answer sheets. If the instructor informs you that these need to be purchased, these sheets are available at the
bookstore. Check with the instructor before purchasing answer sheets since some semesters used answer sheets will be provided.

Have a supply of answer sheets with you if you are required to buy as I will not bring extras. (The entrepreneur may want to go into business selling sheets to those who do not have answer sheets.) Once you purchase a supply of answer sheets, try not to get them bent and mutilated as the machine has trouble reading mutilated sheets.

Below we have listed some points to know in use of the NCS Scoring Machine:

1. Put your sheet in the quick scoring machine head first, i.e. top of answer sheet is put in first and the side with the answers to be scored should be facing up.

2. Have the edge of your answer sheet along the guide rail at the front of the scoring machine and give your answer sheet a small push into the machine. The machine is sensitive to getting your sheet in straight against the rail. It is the most frequent reason for rejection of sheets.

3. Use a number 2 pencil with these answer sheets. (A #2 pencil is a commonly used pencil.)

4. The scoring machine is programmed so that if at any time you are told to omit a question on a test, you do not move the other answers up. Leave the omitted answer space blank and fill in the next answer so that the number on the test corresponds with the number on the answer sheet. If you move the answers up and fill in the omitted answer, all the following answers will be in the wrong sequence and will be scored as incorrect. Any exceptions to this policy will be emphasized at the time of the test.

5. At no time should there be more than one answer marked for a given number unless you are told of a change.

6. The score (number correct) is printed out at the bottom of the test and a small letter indicates which number items are incorrect and what the correct answer should have been. These letters are printed by the item in the middle of the sheet.

7. At the bottom of your answer sheet, you will see 3 numbers printed out. The first is # correct and the second is % correct. The other number (Roster number) is a number we will not use in this course.

E. Mechanics point (one point):

One point of the 10 points per column is lost if proper mechanics aren't followed.
The mechanics point includes:

a. Heading on material and tests handed in.

Class #, Your Name
Subject matter of test or material, e.g. "Mertens, Psych 999, Procedures"
Date/Period

b. Returning Materials

- The student should alphabetize answer sheets
- The student should return question sheets to numerical order

c. Correcting and Posting Test

F. One week (Maximum) preferably today:

You should be able to tell your grade at every moment in the course. I should be
told any posting corrections (your posting or mine) within a week. We will only
check back one week for errors you find. You share the responsibility of keeping
your records in order. (If I find your errors, I take the mechanics point off.) We
wish to keep records of score sheet changes so please hand in errors on a sheet
of paper. Please note on your sheet the error and the number/column of the
listing where the error took place. This procedure should keep you current on
what is happening on your score sheet.

G. Machine Scoring Pencil and Erasures:

Tests will be machine scored in class. Therefore, you should bring a #2 pencil to
class with you every day. If machine-scored tests are not marked with #2 pencils
the test will not always be scored correctly. #2 pencils are available at the SCSU
Bookstore. A bad erasure will be picked up by the sensor in the scoring
machine and a poorly marked item may be missed by the machine. Bad
erasures or poor markings are part of your grade. In developing responsible
students, we contend it is poor policy to change grades to compensate for poor
erasures or poor markings. Stray pencil marks will also be picked up by the
machine, so try to avoid putting extra pencil marks on the sheet.

VII. TEACHING TECHNIQUE

Programmed instruction (Learn It Best) refers to the original learning of the
material. Certainly, it does not exclude that you should be able to demonstrate
proficiency. Hopefully, the material is developed in such a way that if you are
putting in the effort, the material is providing small increments, feedback, etc., to
maximize your learning the material.
I do try to make tests a learning experience also.

VIII. BEHAVIOR SHOULD BE SPECIFIED

By using specific assignments over a relatively small amount of material, and with classroom materials, what is to be learned should be clear.

A. Change in Schedule:

Orderliness is sought after, but let us not fall a complete victim to a schedule. Any event could be canceled or postponed if another event came up that in the instructor's judgment merits replacing the scheduled event. The decision to cancel or postpone the scheduled event will be determined by scheduling considerations.

B. Classroom Seating:

We do have a set seating arrangement for this course. Seating charts are good memory devices to get to know you. You should take your assigned seat each class period. If for any reason you want to sit in a front seat, write your name on a sheet of paper stating you want a front seat. You will be informed of which seat to take. Inform the instructor by the second class session if you want a seat at the start of the alphabetical roster. At times you may be asked if you want a front seat during the first class session.

C. A Grocery Store:

A Model for University Education: Why the grocery store as a model? The grocery store metaphor serves as a useful aid in packaging community services as well as psychological courses. The grocery store displays the product with a description and the customer decides whether or not to buy the product. In Walden Two (Skinner, 1948), commercials with flashing signs were replaced with descriptive ads. This means of promoting college courses should also be used. A course should give the student, prior to registration, information to make the student a well-informed consumer. If you have not received this Procedure Manual earlier, at least now you will (early in the course) see a detailed specific description of the course procedures.

By specifying at the start of the course as best as one can, specific behaviors that are involved in the course, the student can weigh the course features better, i.e. select alternatives. The student selects this package not on the grocery shelf, but on the academic shelf if it is worth his/her effort. If the course sounds aversive, one might consider a course more in accord with his/her past learning history. However, with this course's effective learning procedures, there may be other factors that enter into taking the course aside from teaching method preferences, that is, good learning procedures. One definition of the term
"maturity" is a person who makes a decision and behaves in a way which indicates he or she learned the consequences of a decision and one is prepared to accept those consequences. Those students who do not like the educational package proposed should, like in the grocery store, pick up a different package (course).

"Why the content or procedures of this course?" "What if I don't like what is taught in the course?" To some students, questions like these have taken up as much time, if not more time, than learning the subject matter of the course. This is especially true in psychology where content definitions are not perhaps as explicit as in other disciplines. This handout hopefully helps show you where this course is at. You should shop around just like at the grocery store.

D. Alternative Approach to this Course:

After you have become familiar with the procedures for this class, you may develop a comprehensive personalized plan for accomplishing the objectives of the course. This plan must meet the following requirements:

1. Be mutually acceptable to both you and the instructor early in the semester.
2. Contain clearly developed and clearly stated criteria so that both you and the instructor will know what to judge your performance on.
3. Contain systematic procedures and activities for accomplishing the objectives of the specific course or event.
4. Select the level of competence you wish to strive for, and indicate levels of competence that would represent point levels.
5. You and your instructor systematically apply the criteria you have developed to ascertain to what extent you have met the objectives of the course.
6. You should have an overall evaluation of your approach. How effective was it?
7. The initiative for alternatives to the course rests with you.
8. You should write your proposal in a performance contract form.
9. Must be feasible in the time demand structure we live in.

E. Lack of Consideration for Others and Cheating:

Lack of consideration and cheating should be behaviors a teacher does not have to spend much time dealing with in a class. I have designed various procedures to minimize the possibility of cheating. I give F's for the course for cheating violations.

F. Cheating Results in My Giving You An "F" For The Course: (This list is not meant to be an exhaustive list.)

The student:
1. Gets answers (visually, being told, or any other mode) from other people during the test.
2. Has someone "sit in" to take a test for them.
3. Uses crib sheets of any form.
4. Etc.

G. No Points for a Given Test:

I also give 0 points for a test where noncompliance takes place with rules that are implemented to prevent cheating. Below are some samples:

1. Answer Sheets Out of Room: Completed test answer sheets taken out of the Room (accidental or for other reasons) are treated as not taking the test.

2. Talking: Conversations during a test, even if not about test material, should be eliminated. If you have a question, ask the instructor.

3. Pencils: Pencils should not be taken to the scoring machine. Finish the test before you leave your seat.

4. Assigned Seats: After designated seats have been assigned, they should be used. Control of test material is one reason for designated seats.

H. From the Grocery Store to Contracting:

The area of performance contracting offers a means where problems in the "grocery store" example can be confronted. In a contract, one can see advantages for making explicit the behaviors to be taught. Certainly, the grocery store analogy has problems, e.g., consider if one has never had a certain brand of peaches before. One does not know which brand is best suited to one's taste. You should be a "comparative buyer." In the introductory material for this course we attempted to answer the following questions so as to make you an informed buyer:

- In what way are the course procedures individualized?
- Is grading for this course on a curve? If not a curve, how is it graded?
- What does a grade mean?
- By design, how much time should be spent on this course?
- If a student doesn't like the procedures, is an alternative available?
- Test scores are given immediately after taking the test in class.
- What is the absence policy?
- What is the 4% rule?
- What exceptions exist to rules?
- What are the advantages to having the course centered on the printed word?
- How do you know your grade?
- What is the policy on cheating in this class?
- Why is specific identification needed on material handed in?
- What process is to be used to handle complaints?
- What are the procedures for machine scoring of tests?
- How is selecting a class comparable to a grocery store encounter?
- What is the oral quiz procedure?
- What is a typical day like?

IX. ENVIRONMENT RESTRICTED TO INSURE LEARNING:

A. Exceptions:

Exceptions to the policies stated in this handout will be considered on an individual basis. The policies themselves have many alternatives for problems, thus exceptions are rarely made.

B. Absence Policy:

The main effort in establishing an absence policy in the course is so the instructor doesn't have powers beyond God to judge the validity of an excuse. One way around it is to set up procedures so that all absences are equally excusable in terms of points in the course. Any absences from procedures should not "do one in" point-wise, but the absence also should not be reinforced. Showing up daily is highly recommended.

This absence policy encourages commitment to task. When one misses a grade by a point, it is easy to think of the one point and forget the other 40 - 60 points in a grade range. (For example, if this course had a total of 600 points, then the grade range would be 60 points.) I do not set an absolute point total that I have to get to in a semester. This leaves more flexible discussion time on any given day. The question comes up if your emergencies total more than the grade spread, plus the 4% absence bonus (discussed below), plus your total points. I contend if one does not get the letter grade they like, it may be better to take the course again. I believe this to be more helpful in learning the course content compared to some extra patch work to get a grade.

C. The system:

1. does not pass the buck to someone else to excuse you.
2. is fair to all, including those who come to class.
3. does not positively reinforce sickness or other behaviors resulting in absence and late work.
4. can be individualized to meet extreme situations. Note as defined here, extreme situations are not routine illnesses, funerals (your own or others), etc.

D. 4%:
One way my absence policy helps ease some emergencies is by giving some "freebie points." All students are given 4 percent of the total points for the course. For example, if there were a total of 200 points in the course, you would get an additional 4% of the 200 points which would be 8 points. If 400 points ended up to be the total, 16 points would be added to your grade. We add these in on the grade sheet during the course at times designated by the instructor. These "freebie points" are given even if you do not miss any days of class.

X. SUCCESS BEFORE PROGRESSING:

A. Curve-Grading Practices:

Certainly, one of the tragedies of modern education is the widespread practice of assigning letter grades on the basis of a distribution of examination scores and the related (and often admired) objective of generating an examination that will produce a "normal distribution." Normal distributions are produced by random events, and it is not clear why an instructor would strive for a level of mastery (his/her assigned letter grade) which is based on that distribution. There appears to be a strange paradox at work, those who have the task of teaching have in certain cases, a chance distribution criterion as an evaluator of their skills. The acceptance of curve grading by faculty members is very curious for it is an almost certain way to sacrifice excellence. If one grades students on a curve, the particular level of mastery demonstrated by a student does not determine whether he/she is certified as excellent ("A" grade), good ("B" grade), etc. What does determine the level of certification is how well other students perform.

To grade on a curve and assign some students grades of C or D is to say that the instructor is willing to give academic credit (C and D are not "failing" grades) to over half of the students in the class. This is true even though their performance is mediocre to poor. Also curious is the fact that some teachers pride themselves in giving a great many poor grades. Such instructors acquire a reputation for teaching "difficult" courses and for some reason they are often admired in comparison with the instructor who gives a great many higher grades (the latter is said to teach "easy" courses). Good grades should mean that students are meeting the instructor's criteria of excellence and poor grades should mean that students are not meeting those criteria. Unfortunately, grading on a curve usually means that those criteria have not been stated, and as a result it is a moot question as to whether courses are "easy" or "hard."

Rather than tolerating marginal performance (even expecting it), an instructor should insist on excellence from each of his/her students and should withhold academic credit until a passable level of excellence is demonstrated. In the typical university course the length of the course is fixed, for example, one semester, and the quality of student performance is allowed to vary. What is suggested here is that the acceptable level of student performance should be
fixed by the instructor, and because students may reach the required level of mastery at different rates, the time each student spends in the course might be allowed to vary. Adopting such a philosophy does not require that the quarter system or semester system first be abandoned.

B. Grades Based on Competency, not Curve:

In this course, the grading system is used to indicate adequate levels of academic performance. The grading system is also designed to maintain active study behavior throughout the quarter. The system functions in such a way that the student need not compete with her/his peers for a limited number of high grades. Everyone may earn a high grade.

Each student receives the grade he/she earns without resorting to a "normal curve distribution." Grades are assigned starting from mastery and not from an average. The system may be criticized because too many students receive high grades, but all students earn them through their performance. Any number of A's can be earned on the above system.

C. Being Correct at a High Rate is Worth Working On:

Most courses consequate the quantity of verbal responding by using percentage as the unit of measurement. A shortcoming of such a practice is that this ignores the time taken to make quality responses. In everyday life, e.g. discussion, answering questions, interviews, etc., we tend to evaluate what a person says and does by noticing not only the degree to which his/her statements are correct. Also very important is the time he/she takes to make those statements, usually considered in terms of pauses, hesitations, restatement needed (because of error), and the emission of other behaviors incompatible with fluent speech. Given two individuals saying the same words, we tend to be most impressed by learning and expertise, etc., with the one who does not pause, restate, etc. All behaviors occur in some quantity (amount) and over some period of time, and this is the defining feature of rate. Rate appears to be the most useful and sensitive unit by which to measure many kinds of behavior. Thus, in these instructional techniques, a student's rate was selected as the unit of response to be used. Likewise, the verbal behavior of those we define as experts is usually characterized by a high rate of correct responding. This is the same as saying that an expert emits a high rate correctly and a low rate of incorrect verbalizations. The rate we will use on tests will be well within the normal rate of reading speeds so that a change in your reading speed is not necessary. Problems with students trying to read very quickly rarely occur. The way to improve rates (decrease incorrect and increase correct) is to study the material so one will emit no incorrect responses. We will adjust the length and time of our tests to the difficulty of the questions.

XI. TERMINAL BEHAVIORS NECESSARY (What is the Objective?)
A. Audience this Course is Designed For:

This course is organized to influence the behavior of not only the psychologist-to-be, but also those students who will be taking this course as their only psychology course. In this course, psychology is defined as "the science of behavior." The major objective of the course is not about the mind, existentialism, mentalism, psychic phenomena, psycho-sexual development, or other non-observable "explanations" of behavior. Instead, principles are introduced which permit us to discuss issues with some degree of assurance based on data established through the use of scientific inquiry.

B. Possibly Reversing 20 Years of Training:

Most students have had approximately 20 years of traditional training in how to talk of the human experience. A course in the physical universe (say a course in Introduction to Physics) may open to you a new way to talk about the physical universe. Hopefully this course, for the first time (for most students) in 20 years of your daily life training will make you stop and take a more objective view of the explanations of behavior. This course is only a small proportion of the training in this area.

Hopefully this course is a small step towards a career (and a life) using, in some way, the concepts learned. In the same way, by good planning, hopefully all of your college work builds towards the terminal behaviors of your college education. Since getting letters or recommendations are part of some of your objectives, I have added to this section about terminal behaviors my own guidelines for writing letters.

The following section is an excerpt from a longer career planning book some students and I wrote.

----- My Criteria for Letters of Recommendation:

A. Before I write letters of recommendation for jobs or graduate school, I require a minimum amount of contact with a student. I need time enough to observe something worthwhile to write about. I require a minimum of four, 3 Semester Hour courses (or 12 Semester Hours) including an independent study course. This should hopefully give me something to write about. I require less contact for summer jobs, temporary employment, etc.

B. I do NOT write open letters or placement bureau letters of recommendation.

C. It has been stated elsewhere in this material, I will use the writing of a letter of recommendation as a mutual writing exercise. Together we will work through your draft of YOUR letter of recommendation to come up with a mutually agreed
upon letter.

D. As elaborated elsewhere in this material, give the writer of your letter of recommendation something to write about.

E. An elaboration on my reasons for working together with students on their letters of recommendation:

1. This venture will afford the student the personal experience of writing a letter of recommendation.
2. Hopefully, the experience will help the student come to grips with his/her strengths and/or shortcomings developed over the years.
3. The student can help write the letter at the target she/he is after. Your application form, resume, autobiography, and your letter of recommendation should compliment each other and work together for the job you are applying for. The letter can maximize your application.
4. The responsibility is shared by both of us to construct the true "masterpiece" that your letter of recommendation should be.
5. This writing exercise can lead students to take a look at their own future goals.
6. There are a number of tools available to help you with your part of the writing. These tools include the checklists and guides of this book, samples of letters of recommendations from past students, etc. These are available for you to read upon request.

XII. YOU CAN MAKE THIS GOOD EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM EVEN BETTER:
(Below are ways you can help a teaching system based on good learning principles.)

A. WORK HARD:

You should certainly work hard at the course material, but also work hard at the mechanics of the course system. The system we use necessitates more work for the faculty and others. You can help by working hard at helping with the little things, e.g. when handing in papers, help keeping the stacks of things handed-in neat and in order, etc.

B. MAKE SUGGESTIONS:

I realize that every suggestion may not be followed up on. The current system is based on many years of trying to make a good system based on what we know about learning. You may give me your suggestions in writing, in person, email, phone, etc.

C. HELP KEEP THE SYSTEM HONEST:
You must help keep the system honest first of all with your own behavior. Don't be part of behavior that is not helpful to honesty as a concept. For example:

To keep the system honest and make for a good working environment, there should be no talking during orals or tests. Help by NOT attending to such talk if it is aimed at you.

If you work hard to learn the material for class, seeing someone cheat is like a slap in your face and very hard to take. This is how one student worded it, “It is hard to accept when you see someone cheating and getting away with it, e.g. hiding behind the person in front of them, using notes or a crib sheet.”

I do not view information about cheaters as an evil tattletale. Rather, the student who reports bad behavior is simply helping to maintain a good learning system. I look at it as you trying to help your own teaching system. I view it as an important role you can play. If you do pass on information I will keep a closer eye on the situation. It can be as simple as a note without your name. You can stay anonymous. If everyone helps and does their part in making the system better, we can all benefit from an honest and fun learning environment.

4. BE COMMITTED TO THE COURSE

As a general rule, those who take this course just because they have to don’t enjoy it or do very well. This manual describes the methods used to teach the course material. After studying the manual, consider if you want to commit to the course. The course content and teaching methods are both different from those most of you have encountered.

APPENDIX A

A Model of Teaching Where an Objective of Classroom Time is Evaluation.

I. Introduction

A major objective of my classroom contact time with students is for it to be a period of evaluation. Many other things happen during my class, but the usual model in all of the courses I teach is for the student to read and hopefully learn a set of materials outside of class. When the student comes to class I attempt to assess what the student learned from the set of materials. In class, the material read by the students may be clarified, questioned, added to, extended, looked at from an alternate perspective, etc., but the major emphasis is to assess what the student has learned on a day-to-day basis.

II. A "Normal" Class Period
Let me illustrate a "usual" day in my class (assuming a 50 minute class period):

A. 10 Minutes of the Class -- Critical Analysis Repertoire Development:

The students see a fake psychic event presented as a supposed psychic event and they write a critical analysis of this event. The students' task is to analyze the scene in terms of real world variables, or in other words, determine how this supposed "psychic" event can be explained in real world terms.

B. 20 Minutes of the Class -- STPD (Student Teacher Participatory Discussion) Oral Quizzing (Orals):

Students, as part of a lecture - discussion, are asked oral questions about the reading material assigned in the class and the students answer the questions orally. This segment of the course is technically referred to as: STPD (Student Teacher Participatory Discussion). I developed this acronym back when Shell Oil Company advertised using STP in their gasoline. Over the years the more popular term for STPD has become the shorter term, "orals." I systematically grade these orals on a 0-5 point base. Orals make an excellent test system where immediate feedback is available to the instructor on how accurately the students learned the material. The instructor does not have to wait until the end of a test, or later, to see how students learned the material. While the test is in progress the instructor sees what the students have learned and what material still needs to be clarified, restated, etc. Once students have demonstrated that the reading assignment has been learned via correct oral quiz performance, the concepts that were covered in the readings can be extended.

Recently, in counseling and therapy, there has been a push by some in the field to use "relationship" as a motivational variable.

One may see this in a variety of areas. Friendships, where for example, dishonesty becomes a reason for break-ups in a relationship. One can see this at work in:

1. Some religious leaders current discussion of sin.
2. Marriage counseling on infidelity.

Let's look at one and two above one at a time.

1. In current religious circles, the concept of a broken relationship vs. the older religious issues of sin, hell, damnation, etc., are focused on by some in the religious area.
2. In marriage counseling, such things as adultery, legalistic discussions, etc., may be replaced with a discussion of what might be lost in a relationship.

This same motivation factor is used here to attempt to get students to increase
their study behavior. To the student, a benefit of studying hard to get through the basics is so that they can go on to more interesting extensions of the material. This may add a new motivating factor for students to study the material before class. That is, the student seeing his/her relationship to other class members as a reason to study, "If I do my share to get right answers to the basic material, we as a class can get to other more important and more interesting things."

C. 5 Minutes of the Class -- "Putting the Course Together," Announcements and Clarification, Homework Issues, Next Assignment, "Trouble Shoot" Problems, Enrichment Activities, Questions, etc.

D. 10 Minutes of the Class -- Daily Quiz:

These quizzes are usually multiple choice and are graded immediately on scoring machines in the classroom. This immediate feedback of the correct answers to questions makes the quiz taking, both oral and written, even more an active part of the learning process.

E. 5 Minutes - Student Posting Grade Sheet etc.:

A few minutes of each class usually involves the student posting the points earned that day, cumulating the points, finding their cumulated current grade for the course, and posting it on his/her grade sheet. This way, students know their grade every moment of the course.

Students also pick up materials for the next class period or leave material to be handed in.

APPENDIX B

ENRICHMENTS

The enrichment is an activity for class points. The student has the option of attending enrichments in exchange for attending class at another designated time. The student receives 10 points for attending the enrichment in or out of the scheduled class time. The instructor will announce which class period the student can replace by attending an out of class enrichment. To get credit for the enrichment, the student should be on time, take notes, and turn his/her own notes in at the end of the enrichment session.

1. Enrichments During Your Class Period:

If an enrichment activity takes place during the student's regularly scheduled class period, attendance and notes are counted as class credit as long as notes are taken and handed in at the end of the enrichment. If you do not attend the
enrichment (if it meets in your class hours) you do NOT get the points.

2. Enrichments Outside of Class Periods:

Those students who do not attend an out of class enrichment should attend the enrichment activity during a class period that the instructor has designated. During this designated class period, students complete enrichment exercises (not tests) assigned by the instructor.

Here are some things you should do so that you get those almost automatic points for enrichments:

1. Be on time for the enrichment activity.
2. Hand in adequate notes at the end of the enrichment activity. (Notes should cover the major issues presented by the speaker.)
3. Hand in your OWN notes at the end of the enrichment event.
4. Notes handed in must follow the usual heading format.