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AN INVESTIGATION OF GRADING PROCEDURES FOR
SECONDARY SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES
IN SELECTED VIRGINIA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

by

Ellen V. Parker
B.S. January 1973, Old Dominion University

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN EDUCATION

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
July, 1979

Approved by:

Charles W. Jackson (Director)

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ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF GRADING PROCEDURES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES IN SELECTED VIRGINIA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Ellen V. Parker
Old Dominion University, 1979
Director: Dr. Charles W. Jackson

The purpose of this study was to investigate the grading procedures used for secondary school physical education classes in selected Virginia school districts.

A questionnaire was sent to one hundred and sixty-one physical education teachers who were listed as members of the Virginia Association For Health, Physical Education and Recreation. One hundred and seventeen questionnaires (72.5 percent) were returned.

The authors of recent literature in grading practices point out that teachers base course grades on dressing out in gym uniform, skill, effort, participation, and written tests. The data gathered in this study reflect a similar situation in Virginia schools.

Effects of variables such as sex, age, grade level taught, years of teaching experience and type of grade plan utilized resulted in some notable differences in the grading practices used by the teachers surveyed.

Frequencies and crosstabulations were computed, and one-way frequency distribution tables, and two-way crosstabulation tables were used to arrive at the results of the study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere appreciation and admiration is extended to Dr. Charles W. Jackson for his advice.

Appreciation is also extended to Ms. Betsy Gravely of the Virginia Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation and to the teachers who participated as subjects in this study.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Grading stands among the persistent problems in education seeking an adequate solution. Part of nearly every teacher's job is the assigning of marks, or grades. In a study conducted by James S. Terwilliger (1966), it was found that over half of the teachers of one hundred and twenty-nine different schools in the United States attached either moderate or major importance to grading. Bartholomew (1976), however, found that teachers rated the difficulty in evaluating student achievement as a "serious problem".

In physical education, grading is indeed a serious problem. There are many divergent views concerning grading, a fact recognized by several authorities. Robert Singer (1967:38) stated that, "There is no consistency in grading by members of the profession..." Bucher (1975:571) also concluded, "There seems to be no set formula or procedure."

To demonstrate the lack of consistency in physical education grading, the results of the following study should be mentioned. Lowman (1972) investigated grading systems employed in girl's physical education classes in secondary schools of Northern California. Of the fifty-nine responding schools, she found that no two schools constructed their grading systems in the same manner.

Gustafson (1963), while admitting to the fact that grading plans will vary somewhat according to program emphasis, stated that

it would be reasonable to assume that members of the profession would be able to distinguish between criteria that are legitimate and those that are not. This researcher found controversy existed concerning the criteria to be used in determining grades. Moriarty (1954), Broer (1959), and Liba and Loy (1965) agreed that the final mark should reflect only one factor, degree of attainment. Bookwalter (1936), LaPorte (1955), and McCraw (1964) recommended the inclusion of other factors such as attendance, citizenship, and improvement. Members of the teaching profession utilize many such factors.

Several physical educators believe that since physical education is a part of the regular academic school program, it should be graded the same as other classes such as history and mathematics (Liba and Loy, 1965; Fabricius, 1967). Others believe that physical education is unique from other disciplines and, therefore, the grading approach should also be unique (Singer, 1967).

Controversy also exists concerning the need for, and the utilization of testing in physical education. Physical fitness tests are used by some, while others disagree entirely with basing the grade on fitness scores. Other types of performance tests considered are standardized skill tests and knowledge tests.

Grading in physical education, a major concern of many teachers, is a perplexing problem. This area of concern needs more investigation, and it is hoped that as a result of this study, new insights into possible solutions may be made.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate the grading procedures used for secondary school physical education classes in selected Virginia school districts.

Significance of the Study

Because the present educational system demands a reporting of student achievement, it is necessary for the teacher to assign a grade for each student in physical education classes. More research and investigation is needed concerning the basis of physical education grades, as there appears to be too wide a gap in grading procedures among physical educators.

The importance of an in-depth study into grading practices of secondary schools in Virginia school districts was justified on the following points:

1. To the researcher's knowledge, there has been no investigation of the grading practices utilized in Virginia school districts.
2. An in-depth study of the grading practices currently in use may demonstrate what needs to be done to upgrade the procedures.
3. A direct relationship exists between the curriculum and the marking system. Many improvements have taken place in the area of curriculum content over the past several years, but there has not been a corresponding improvement in the system of marking (Kindsvatter, 1969).
4. An in-depth study of grading practices would be helpful to physical education majors preparing to teach, to both novice and

experienced physical education teachers, and to supervisors of physical education.

Delimitations

The scope of this study was a random selection of teachers of secondary physical education classes. The Virginia Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation membership list was the criteria for the random sampling.

Limitations

The limitations placed on the outcome of this study were identified as follows:

1. The investigator was unable to control the honesty with which the subjects responded to the questionnaire.
2. The investigator was unable to control the conditions under which the respondents completed the questionnaire.
3. The investigator was unable to control how the respondents perceived the questions of the survey.

Definition of Terms

Most terms used in this paper are explained when they are used if they are ones which would not be found in common usage. However, a few generally used terms shall be defined as to how they are used specifically in this work.

1. Attribute. A characteristic.

2. Grading. A periodic and systematic massing of information regarding pupil status in developmental areas sought in the activities of the program (Solley:35).

3. Marking. A term used interchangeably with grading.

4. Secondary School. A school which includes grades seven through twelve.

Methodology

A questionnaire was utilized to collect data from secondary school physical education teachers in selected Virginia school districts. Items concerning current grading practices and desired grading practices were included, as well as general information regarding years of teaching experience, age, and sex of the respondents. This information provided a picture of how teachers in this area graded their students, how they would like to have graded their students, and allowed the researcher to determine what, if any, significance sex, age, and teaching experience had on grading practices.

The questionnaire was mailed directly to the individual subjects. Before mailing, it was given to several physical education departmental chairpersons to ascertain its clarity and the ease with which it could be scored.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature will be divided into two sections: Purposes of Grading, and Basis for Determining Grades.

Purposes of Grading

In order to evaluate the success or lack of success of any marking system, it is necessary to first examine the purposes of marking. Once the reasons for marking have been determined, one may study the nature of marks in light of the stated purposes.

Over thirty years ago, Wrinkle (1947:33) listed the following four functions of marks:

1. Administrative Functions. Marks indicate whether a student has passed or failed, whether he or she should be promoted or required to repeat the grade or course, and whether he or she should be graduated. They are used in transferring a student from one school to another and in judging candidates for admission to college. They may be used by employers in evaluating prospective employees.

2. Guidance Functions. Marks are used in guidance and counseling in identifying areas of special ability and inability, in deciding on the advisability of enrolling the student in certain courses and keeping him or her out of others, and in determining the number of courses in which he or she may be enrolled.

3. Information Functions. Marks are the chief means employed by the school in giving information to students and their parents regarding the student's achievement, progress, and success or failure in his or her schoolwork.

4. Motivation and Discipline Functions. Marks are used to stimulate students to make greater effort in their learning activities. They are used for the same purpose in determining eligibility for honors of many different kinds, such as participation in group activities, eligibility to play on the team, and membership in selected groups.

Ebel (1972), reporting twenty-five years after Wrinkle, described basically the same purposes of marking. Included were the use of marks in reporting a student's educational status to himself, to his parents, to his future teachers, and to his prospective employers. Another purpose described was to provide a means for stimulating, directing, and rewarding the educational efforts of students.

In an extensive survey conducted by Terwilliger (1966) in which marking practices and policies in public secondary schools were studied, evidence was cited that emphasized the use of marks in determining a student's future educational career. Administrators were asked to respond to questions concerned with practices relating to the computation of rank in class. Rank in class, as explained by Terwilliger, is often used as a summary indication of total achievement during the career of a student, and is the most widely single indicator for college admission. It was found that ninety-five percent of the participating schools computed rank in class. It was also found that thirty to forty percent of the schools used all of the students' marks in computing rank, as opposed to using only those marks of subjects known as "academic".

Barrow and McGee (1971) reported several purposes of physical education grades to four groups of individuals: students, parents, teachers, and administrators. To a student a grade indicates how he ranks in his group with respect to the attainment of stated objectives. To parents, grades indicate the status of their children, but also serve as a means of informing them concerning the purposes and objectives of physical education. To the teacher, the purposes of grades include

the means of providing data to be used to evaluate the efficiency of his program and the quality of his teaching. To administrators, physical education grades, in addition to other subject grades, are used as a basis for graduation, promotion, honors, and college entrance.

Jensen (1962), in his article, "Improve Your Marking System in Physical Education", cited the same four purposes of physical education marks as did Barrow and McGee.

It is evident from the cited purposes, that marks are necessary. They serve many important functions to many different individuals. Physical educators, however, while accepting the importance of marks, find difficulty in determining what specific attributes to base the marks on in order that they will achieve the stated purposes. The following research review will demonstrate the problem and the controversy surrounding it.

Basis For Determining Grades

Barrow and McGee (1971) stated that there is no standard method of grading in physical education. They reported that a system of grading will reflect the basic beliefs and philosophy of the grader. They offered factors of the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective domains that may be considered in grading an individual depending on the program emphasis. Among the psychomotor factors employed for grading purposes were skill in the activity, fitness, motor ability, and game performance. Grading procedures for these factors included skills tests, results of tournaments in individual sports, and subjective analysis of the student's ability to play the sport. Cognitive factors offered included knowledges and understandings pertaining to

rules, performance, strategy, techniques, history, and information concerning physiology, fitness, and conditioning. The use of standardized and teacher-made tests were recommended as methods of measurement. In the affective domain, the authors recommended that a student's grade be based on subjective evaluation of social behavior, which included such factors as attitude, appreciation, sportsmanship, cooperation, citizenship, and leadership. A rating scale or check list was offered as an effective technique to employ for measurement in this area.

Barrow and McGee (1971:542) also reported on the use of other questionable factors in determining a student's grade. They stated that items such as effort, improvement, attendance, showers, uniforms, interest, and punctuality, "...should be considered as matters to be covered by departmental policies and not as a part of grading procedures." The authors further stated that "...grades based on these items would be entirely misleading to both parents and administrators."

Many physical educators, however, do utilize such factors in determining grades. An examination of the literature available pertaining to these factors will follow.

Attendance

The practice of basing a grade on attendance is not an uncommon approach. Several studies have been conducted that will demonstrate this occurrence.

In an early investigation by Fox (1959), it was found that ninety-four percent of fifty Oregon senior high school physical education teachers utilized attendance in determining grades.

Terwilliger (1966) surveyed two hundred and seventy-nine

physical education teachers as part of his study designed to explore marking practices used by individual teachers in public secondary schools. In response to a question concerned with consideration given to absences and tardiness in determining course grades, fifty-five percent of the teachers gave moderate or major consideration to this factor.

Harvey D. Heartley (1968) surveyed high schools in North Carolina to study marking systems. He found attendance to be a high ranking factor in computing final marks.

James R. Morrow (1978) conducted a study using data collected from twenty-nine student teachers at a major university. The student teachers were asked to indicate which of a list of attributes were utilized when determining physical education grades in the junior and senior high schools in which they were completing the student teaching experience. Attendance was used by sixty-six percent of the schools, and was ranked as the fourth most used attribute.

Although the studies cited are not inclusive, and more research is needed in this area, it is evident that attendance, in many cases, has a direct influence on the physical education student's mark.

Several authorities have presented grading plans which include attendance as a consideration. For example, Bookwalter (1936), in his marking scheme, gave considerable emphasis to attendance. A student who was absent nine or more days in a grading period received an "E" for an attendance mark. This mark, which accounted for twelve percent, was then averaged together with other attributes to arrive at a single grade. Bookwalter felt that attendance was of vital importance in

physical education because as an activity subject, a situation missed due to an absence, could not be made up.

Gustafson (1963) stated that this argument is not without substance, but he suggested that if attendance influences attainment of class objectives, the evaluation should then be made of the latter factor, not of the former.

Ralph W. LaPorte (1955) recommended in his grading scheme that attendance be included as ten percent of the final grade.

Lynn W. McCraw (1964) also included attendance in his grading plan, and weighted it as five to twenty-five percent of the final grade.

Other educators, however, concluded that attendance should not be considered in the grade. Mathews (1958) reported that defending the inclusion of attendance in a grading scheme is difficult because the school administration, in most cases, has a policy which requires a valid excuse for absences. Therefore, attendance becomes an administrative function, not a grading one.

Johnson and Nelson (1969) concurred with Mathews in that attendance is an administrative detail. They suggested that rather than grading on the number of absences, it would be wiser to require students to repeat any course which had been missed a certain number of times.

Barrow and McGee (1971) also agreed that attendance could be viewed as an administrative problem. They stated that it has no connection with the objectives of physical education, and therefore, should have no direct influence on the student's grade.

Hanson and others (1967) reported that attendance grading is ridiculous. They stated that those in the profession sell physical

education short by giving the impression that such an attribute was an important goal of our field.

Improvement

Some instructors attempt to base marks on the amount of improvement the student has made during the unit of study, rather than on the level of achievement he has reached. Improvement may be defined as "...the difference in the change from a lower level to a higher level in a specific ability." (Kirby, 1970:150).

Heartley (1968), in his survey of marking systems in physical education in high schools in North Carolina, found improvement to be one of the grading attributes highest ranked in determining final marks.

Terwilliger (1966) found that over twenty-five percent of the physical education teachers surveyed gave either moderate or major consideration to improvement.

Of the research investigated, however, the majority of authors disagreed with the inclusion of improvement as an attribute to be considered in grading.

Kirby (1970) stated that it is true, from a psychological point of view, that improvement can be an excellent means of motivation for the poorly skilled or beginning student. However, he continued to state that it is detrimental to the highly skilled student. This point of view was further explained by VanHuss and others (1959:50) when he stated:

...the more fit individual is closer to maximum performance and consequently cannot achieve the dramatic improvements in measurement units... For example, an improvement of ten seconds in running the mile is easy to achieve for the 6:00 miler but obviously very difficult for the 4:10.

Those who favor improvement grading suggest that a weighted scale be developed where a larger amount of improvement by the less

skilled be equated with a smaller amount of improvement by the highly skilled (Kirby, 1970). Another author, however, stated that "...if the scale is arbitrarily rather than scientifically set up, this system can be more unfair to more students..." (Broer, 1959:27).

Another suggested method for giving consideration to improvement is to administer an initial skills test at the beginning of the unit of instruction, and then a final test at the end. The evaluation is then based on the gain from the initial to the final test. The major objection to following such a procedure is that the danger exists for students to deliberately do poorly on the initial test, and thus, show great improvement on the final test (McCraw, 1964; Ebel, 1972).

Singer and others (1967) stated that difficulty already exists in evaluating students' achievement in skill, knowledge, and attitude, let alone improvement. They recommended, therefore, that the inclusion of improvement grading be abolished or minimized.

Liba and Loy (1965) advocated that if improvement must be considered, it should be included as a separate mark. They agreed that the determination of the amount of improvement is an extremely difficult task, and its inclusion would present further complications in the grading problem.

Effort

Effort is another common attribute frequently utilized for grading. Terwilliger (1966) found that forty-nine percent of the physical education teachers he surveyed gave "major consideration" to effort in assigning course grades, while thirty-nine percent gave "moderate consideration".

Susan Moore (1970) conducted a study of grading practices in senior high schools in Ontario. Based on her findings, she concluded that too much emphasis was placed on certain attributes, such as effort, for arriving at final grades.

Morrow (1978) found twenty-eight percent of the subjects in his study included effort as a determinant for grades.

Again, this researcher found that although using effort as a grading factor is frequently done, most members of the profession disagree with its inconclusion. For example, Bovard and Cozens (1949) stated that the mark in physical education which represents the teacher's evaluation of effort, is entirely inconsistent with present day thought and should be discontinued. It is interesting to note that Bovard and Cozens made this statement in 1949.

Liba and Loy (1965) suggested that a student's display or lack of display of effort are important factors to observe, record, and report to parents, but they believed that effort failed to reflect competence in the activities of the physical education program. Therefore, the authors noted that effort should not be included in the grade.

Hanson and others (1967) also reported effort as being an inappropriate attribute for consideration in grading. If effort was considered, they noted that rather than learning or showing evidence of achievement, a student would only have to come to class, complete the requirements, and try hard. If effort was then subjectively graded by observation, the teacher would have to accurately determine effort status for all the three to six hundred students taught weekly. This practice would require a tremendous amount of time and bookkeeping.

To further demonstrate how unrealistic this approach could be, consideration was made of the impossibility of determining the "effort level" of students. It was pointed out that an aspect of this difficulty exists in the knowledge that skilled performers use less effort in performing tasks than do the unskilled. Therefore, should a skilled performer be penalized for being efficient? Another questionable aspect would be, if a self-conscious, introverted student was not able to show maximal effort or enthusiasm, should he also be penalized (Hanson and others, 1967).

Barrow and McGee (1971) recognized that often the idea behind using effort as a grading factor is that it serves to motivate students to expend greater effort. The problem, however, again becomes one of determining the "effort level" of the student. A beginning learner, for example, in order to accomplish a little, must expend a great amount of effort, but as noted earlier, as the learner becomes more proficient, he is able to accomplish more with less effort. Therefore, it becomes almost impossible to attach a value to such levels of effort.

Participation

This researcher found evidence that suggested the utilization of participation as a grading determinant. For example, Fox (1959) found that four percent of the senior high schools he studied used participation as a factor in determining grades.

Terwilliger (1966) found forty-six percent of the physical education teachers he surveyed gave major consideration to class participation.

Morrow (1978) found that seventy-nine percent of the schools included in his study based part of the final grade on participation

In addition, this attribute was ranked as the second most frequently used grade determinant.

Bayless (1978) conducted a study to determine what types of evaluation were being carried out in physical education programs throughout Oklahoma. He found that forty percent of the students' grade was based on daily participation.

Several persons in the field have expressed opinions regarding the consideration of participation as a grading attribute. Liba and Loy (1965), who advocated the only basis for determining a grade as skill achievement, stated that measuring participation was a questionable bases for grading in physical education classes. They recommended the use of a commendation to the student, but noted that participation was irrelevant to the course grade.

McCraw (1964) recommended in his grading plan that participation be included as five to twenty-five percent on the final grade. He suggested that although a major portion of the grade should be based on skill, other factors, such as participation, should be included and weighed according to the emphasis given in the instruction.

Lindeburg (1978) suggested that participation be included in a "citizenship" grade which resulted from the students' social behavior and emotional responses as participants in class. The author stated that physical education classes, unlike any other high school subject classes, offered excellent opportunities to judge social and emotional behavior. Conforming to the requirement of participating in class, according to the author, indicated social and emotional growth.

Dressing Out In A Gym Uniform

Several studies indicate the prevalence of including the attribute of dressing out in a gym uniform as a grade determinant. Coker (1972), when he investigated Louisiana public schools, found dressing out in a gym uniform as one of the most common grading factors.

Morrow (1973) studied a Colorado school district and concluded that dressing out was one major factor upon which grades in boys' physical education classes were based.

In his later study which involved data collected from practicing student teachers, Morrow (1978) found that ninety-three percent of the supervising teachers used dressing out as a grading determinant. Furthermore, this attribute was ranked as the number one most frequently used factor.

Bayless (1978) in his study of the grading practices in Oklahoma schools, found that from fifty to seventy percent of the students' grade was based upon dressing out for class.

Of the research this author studied, it could be concluded that those persons in the field disagreed strongly with the utilization of dressing out as a grading factor. For example, Gustafson (1963) stated that the factor of dressing out was not a legitimate evaluative criteria. He stated, however, that rather than this factor being disregarded by the instructor, it should be considered in the determination of the final mark only as it affected attainment of legitimate program objectives.

Johnson and Nelson (1969) stated that physical educators should be primarily concerned with measuring education objectives, not

administrative objectives such as the number of times the student failed to dress out.

Barrow and McGee (1971) agreed with Johnson and Nelson in that this attribute constitutes administrative details and should not be considered as an important grading factor.

Showering

This author found some evidence that indicated the use of showering as a grading determinant. Fox (1959) found in his study of Oregon senior high schools that ninety-eight percent of the schools utilized personal hygiene as a grading factor. This author has assumed the inclusion of showering in the category of personal hygiene.

In Morrow's (1978) study, only three percent of the teachers utilized showering as a grading factor, and it ranked as number fourteen of the fourteen items presented for consideration.

Quite a few persons in the field have expressed an opinion regarding the consideration of showering as a grading attribute. Broer (1959) suggested that this element, if considered in grading, be weighted proportional to the importance attached to it in class objectives. She stated that only if an instructor actually taught such behavior, would he be justified in evaluating this factor.

Gustafson (1963) stated that the factor of failing to take a thorough shower is not a legitimate evaluation criteria. He reported that if the profession attempts to use threats of lower grades as a disciplinary whip, then it will continue to be subjected to the criticism that its programs are vague as to purpose.

Liba and Loy (1965) stated that observation by the teacher of students' health practices are not proper bases for assigning grades in

any class. They believed, therefore, that the practice of recording the number of showers taken (or missed) by students and making this a part of the physical education grade to be a questionable procedure.

Several authors stated the belief that taking showers constituted an administrative objective rather than an educational objective, and therefore this attribute should not be considered as an important grading factor (Johnson and Nelson, 1969; Barrow and McGee, 1971).

Hanson and others (1967) reported that conforming to basic requirements such as taking showers often constitutes a major portion of the grade. They likened this practice to using grades as punishment. The authors also asked their readers just how are showers graded. What constitutes an "A" shower as compared to a "C" shower? The authors admitted, however, that in actuality, the "A" is awarded to the student who does shower and who does not therefore have points subtracted from his ledger.

Performance Testing

Performance testing can be accomplished in the areas of skill achievement, knowledge, and physical fitness. Tests in the area of skill achievement include the teacher's ranking of the students in the techniques of the activity, and the employment of standard skills tests available. Knowledge testing, while relating to the material covered in the unit, includes etiquette, history, rules, techniques, safety aspects, and strategy. Physical fitness achievements are often based upon some standard test with which student's scores are compared to state or national standards (Lindeburg, 1978).

Terwilliger (1966) found in his study of grading practices that when asked what amount of consideration was given to test scores in

determining grades, forty percent of the responding physical education teachers gave moderate consideration, and forty percent gave major consideration. No explanation, however, was given concerning exactly what type(s) of test(s) was/were under consideration.

Heartley (1968), in his survey of North Carolina high schools, found written knowledge of fundamental rules and skills to be one of the high ranking factors used in determining grades. The author also found, on the other hand, scores on standardized tests to be among the low ranking factors.

Bair (1969) conducted a study to survey the extent of testing and the uses made of tests in physical education programs in sixty-two Chicago high schools. He made the following conclusions based on an analysis of the findings:

1. The male respondents favored and administered physical fitness tests more than any other type of test.
2. The female respondents utilized knowledge and activity skill tests most often.
3. More female than male respondents administered knowledge tests for the activities offered.
4. A larger percentage of women than men used test results in determining final grades.

Coker (1972) investigated high school programs in Louisiana, and found skills tests to be a most common grading factor. He also found the American Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation Youth Fitness Test to be the most commonly utilized physical fitness test. Another result of the author's study was the sixty-five percent of the responding teachers administered written tests.

Morrow (1978) found that sixty-two percent of his subjects utilized written knowledge tests, while only twenty-eight percent used skills tests in determining grades.

Singer (1967) stated there is no reason as to why students should not be responsible for rules, history, strategy, and other matters connected with the activity. He explained that excellent physical performance does not necessarily indicate great knowledge in the activity. Singer expanded this point by noting the lack of evidence available to substantiate the belief that a strong relationship exists between written test scores and skill performance scores. It was his belief that physical education should measure and reward the skilled as well as the knowledgeable.

Willgoose (1961) made an interesting point in his discussion of the importance of the inclusion of written tests as a grading factor in physical education. He noted much undesirable spectator behavior at many games, from elementary to professional. He reasoned that much of the behavior was due to ignorance of game rules and procedures, as well as a lack of appreciation for the specialized performance and skills of the participants. Willgoose recommended evaluation of students in such items as sports terminology, rules, equipment, conditioning, role of diet in performance, and historical background of sports. He felt that tests including these types of items would give an idea of the students' extended knowledge, and coupled with skill performance, would serve a solid basis for grading.

The use of skills tests, as previously mentioned, usually consists of the employment of teacher made tests or standardized tests. Examples of standardized tests include the Hyde Archery Test, the Knox

Basketball Test, the Schmithals and French Field Hockey Test, and the Dyer Backboard Test used for tennis skills (Clarke, 1967).

A brief mention will be made of the use of physical fitness tests for grading determinants. Several authorities recommend this practice (LaPorte, 1955; McCraw, 1964; Jensen, 1962). Two authors, however, present arguments against including physical fitness scores as grading factors.

Hanson and others (1967) stated that if a single set of criteria were employed for all students, then physical fitness would not be a satisfactory basis for grading. According to them, a genetic limitation would be imposed on the student. For establishing criteria in the fitness area, they suggested a form of classification system, such as somatotyping, which would allow for gross individual differences.

Cooter (1976:50) indicated that student scores on the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Youth Fitness Test or other fitness tests were often compared to norm values and misused for grading purposes. He felt that "...these scores may present an unrepresentative picture of the motor condition of youngsters in a particular locale". Therefore, Cooter stated, that unless extreme care was taken in interpreting the norms, the students could be unduly penalized. The norms should be used only for motivation or as guidelines as to the level of student performance.

Summary

The major findings from the literature review can be summarized as follows:

1. The major purpose of grades is to provide information concerning a student's educational status to himself, to his parents, to his teachers, and to his prospective employers. Grades may also serve to stimulate, direct, and reward a student's educational efforts.

2. While physical educators are agreed that grading is an important aspect of teaching, they disagree about how grading should be accomplished.

3. The inclusion of certain grading attributes in the determination of course grades presents many divergent opinions.

4. While studies cited indicated the use of testing in physical education, contradiction existed as to what exactly should be tested, and what types of tests should be utilized.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter will include an explanation of the sample description, measurement techniques, general procedures, and analysis of data.

Sample Description

As stated previously, the purpose of this study was to obtain responses from secondary school physical education teachers in selected Virginia school districts regarding grading practices. The teachers surveyed were randomly selected from the Virginia Association For Health, Physical Education and Recreation membership list. One hundred and sixty-one teachers were selected to receive the survey.

Measurement Technique

In order to determine the current grading practices in secondary school physical education classes in Virginia school districts, a questionnaire was developed which covered many key factors of the grading program.

Several previous studies have been undertaken in this same area of concern. Chapter 2 reveals a number of studies in which the questionnaire method was utilized to obtain data. In the preparation of the

questionnaire to be used in this study, Morrow's research proved to be extremely helpful.

This investigator developed a questionnaire consisting of twenty-three items, and a copy of it is found in Appendix A. The questionnaire contained items concerned with general information desired of the respondent such as age, sex, teaching experience, and grade level taught. This information was used to make comparisons concerning grading practices used by females as opposed to males, beginning teachers as opposed to more experienced teachers, and junior high teachers as opposed to senior high teachers. The questionnaire also contained sixteen compound questions where teacher opinions on the inclusion of certain grading factors were compared with his/her actual use of these factors when determining grades.

Procedure

This study was administered in the spring of 1979. The questionnaire was sent out to one hundred and sixty-one secondary school physical education teachers in Virginia school districts. A cover letter was sent with the questionnaire to explain the purpose of the study. Confidentiality of responses was guaranteed in this letter (see Appendix B).

Following the initial mailing of the questionnaire, a second mailing was sent after a two week period as a follow-up to those who did not respond to the first request.

Analysis of Data

Upon receipt of the questionnaires from the respondents, the results were tabulated and prepared for the computer analysis. SPSS subprogram Frequencies (Nie and others, 1975) was used to compute and present one-way frequency distribution tables for the categorical variables. Subprogram Crosstabs was used to compute two-way cross-tabulation tables for the questions controlling for age, sex, teaching experience, and grade level taught. Tests of statistical significance as well as measures of association were available using this procedure. It is hoped that the results of this survey will be of value in aiding current teachers in evaluating their grading practices.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the grading procedures used for secondary school physical education classes in selected Virginia school districts. One hundred and sixty-one physical education teachers were surveyed by a twenty-three item questionnaire. A total of one hundred and seventeen questionnaires were returned, representing a return rate of 72.5 percent. Six of the returned questionnaires were not included in the statistical analysis due to inappropriate responses.

The analysis of the questionnaire was divided into several areas. The first six questions were concerned with general information desired of the respondents such as sex, age, teaching experience and grade taught. Questions seven through twenty-two attempted to find out exactly where the teacher stands on the inclusion of certain attributes often utilized for grading purposes. Each of the questions had a follow-up question that asked the teacher to respond as to whether he/she actually utilizes these attributes in the grading plan he/she follows. In this way it could be determined whether the teacher was grading according to his or her beliefs. Question twenty-three asked the teachers to indicate the approximate weightings of each attribute when determining the course grade.

The presentation of data for questions seven through twenty-three is in tabular form with a discussion immediately preceding each table.

An attempt to determine the effect of sex, age, grade level taught, and teaching experience on grading procedures was also made using the crosstabs procedure. A discussion of the major findings concerning these variables is also included.

General Information

The mean age for the teachers responding to the questionnaire was thirty-three. A majority (76.6 percent) of the respondents were female, while 22.5 percent were male. The mean number of years of teaching experience was 11.3. The grade level most frequently taught by the respondents was the tenth, represented by 28.8 percent. The next most frequently taught grade level was the ninth with 24.3 percent, and the eighth, with 20.7 percent, was the third level most frequently represented.

Item six of the questionnaire asked if the teacher followed a school system or departmental grading plan, or if the plan was left up to the individual teacher. The greatest percentage of teachers (52.3 percent) utilized a departmental plan, while 24.3 percent utilized a school system plan, and 21.6 percent followed their own individual plan.

Opinions and Practices

The following results were obtained from the data collected from questions seven through twenty-two on the questionnaire. These

questions attempted to determine the respondent's opinions and actual practices concerning the inclusion of several factors in their grading plan.

Attendance

A large percentage (87.3 percent) of the teachers agreed that attendance should be included as a grading factor, while only 3.6 percent disagreed. While 80.2 percent did use attendance when determining grades, 18.9 percent did not. This may indicate that a small percentage of the respondents, while agreeing with using attendance grading, are not able to because of school or school system policies. This information is presented in Table 1.

Student's Attitude

A majority (83.7 percent) of the teachers agreed that a student's attitude should be considered when determining grades, while only 7.2 percent disagreed. Closely parallel to the 83.7 percent agreement figure, 82 percent of the teachers did actually use attitude as a grading factor, while 16.2 percent did not. Table 2 shows this information.

Table 1

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel Attendance Should be Included as
a Factor in the Physical Education Grading Plan and the
Percentage of Teachers That Do Include Attendance

Attendance should be included as a factor in the physical education
grading plan

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	2	1.8%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.9%
Disagree	3	2.7%
Neutral	8	7.2%
Agree	47	42.3%
Strongly Agree	50	45.0%

I use attendance when determining students' physical education grades

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	1	0.9%
Yes	89	80.2%
No	21	18.9%

Table 2

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel a Student's Attitude Should be Considered as a Grading Factor and the Percentage of Teachers That Do Include Attitude as a Grading Factor

A student's attitude should be considered as a grading factor in physical education

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	1	0.9%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.9%
Disagree	7	6.3%
Neutral	9	8.1%
Agree	42	37.8%
Strongly Agree	51	45.9%

I base part of students' grade on attitude

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	2	1.8%
Yes	91	82.0%
No	18	16.2%

Student's Conduct

A high percentage of the teachers (88.2 percent) responded in favor of including student's conduct as a grading determinant, and 82.9 percent did actually base part of the grade on conduct. Only 4.5 percent disagreed with using conduct, but 17.1 percent did not base part of the grade on conduct. Again, school or school system policy may prevent some teachers from grading according to their own opinions. Table 3 presents the results to the question dealing with student conduct.

Table 3

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel That a Student's Conduct Should be a Factor in Determining the Physical Education Grade and the Percentage of Teachers That Do Base Part of a Student's Grade on Conduct

A student's conduct in class should be a factor in determining the course grade

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency ^a
Strongly Disagree	1	0.9%
Disagree	4	3.6%
Neutral	8	7.2%
Agree	45	40.5%
Strongly Agree	53	47.7%

I base part of a student's grade on his/her conduct in class

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Yes	92	82.9%
No	19	17.1%

^a Items which had no response have been eliminated in this and all other similar tables.

Dressing Out

A large percentage (94.6 percent) of the teachers gave support to the inclusion of dressing out as a factor in the physical education grade. Only 0.9 percent felt dressing out should not affect a student's grade, and 4.5 percent took a neutral stand. Of the responding teachers, 96.4 percent did actually grade on the student dressing out, while only 2.7 percent did not. This information can be found in Table 4.

Table 4

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel Dressing Out in a Proper Gym Uniform Should be Included as a Factor in the Physical Education Grade and the Percentage of Teachers That Do Base Part of Student's Grade on His/Her Dressing Out in a Proper Gym Uniform

Dressing out in a proper gym uniform should be included as a factor in the physical education grade

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Disagree	1	0.9%
Neutral	5	4.5%
Agree	39	35.1%
Strongly Agree	66	59.5%

I base part of a student's grade on his/her dressing out in a proper gym uniform

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	1	0.9%
Yes	107	96.4%
No	3	2.7%

Effort

With only three exceptions, all the teachers agreed that effort should be considered as a grading determinant. A total of 97.3 percent indicated agreement or strong agreement in response to this question. It was also found that 95.5 percent of the teachers did actually grade on the effort exhibited by their students, while only 3.6 percent did not. Table 5 illustrates these results.

Table 5

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel Effort Should be Given Consideration in Determining a Student's Grade and the Percentage of Teachers Who Grade Students on the Effort They Exhibit

Effort should be given consideration in determining a student's grade

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	1	0.9%
Disagree	1	0.9%
Neutral	1	0.9%
Agree	33	29.7%
Strongly Agree	75	67.6%

I grade the students in my classes on the effort they exhibit

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	1	0.9%
Yes	106	95.5%
No	4	3.6%

Improvement

A large percentage (92.8 percent) of the teachers agreed that improvement should be included as a factor in the physical education grade, and 84.7 percent of the teachers did actually grade on improvement. Although only one (0.9 percent) teacher disagreed with including improvement as a grading factor, 14.4 percent did not use improvement when grading their students. One reason for this could possibly be the difficulty in measuring the amount of improvement a student has accomplished. The results for this question are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel Improvement Should be Included as a Factor in the Physical Education Grade and the Percentage of Teachers Who Do Use Improvement As a Grading Determinant

Improvement should be included as a factor in the physical education grade

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Disagree	1	0.9%
Neutral	7	6.3%
Agree	44	39.6%
Strongly Agree	59	53.2%

I grade my students on the amount of improvement they have demonstrated during a unit of study

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	1	0.9%
Yes	94	84.7%
No	16	14.4%

Homework

Only 47.7 percent of the teachers felt that homework in physical education should be considered as a grading factor, while 17.1 percent disagreed with it's inclusion. Many teachers indicated a neutral opinion (35.1 percent). Closely parallel to the 47.7 percent of the teachers who agreed to the inclusion of homework, were 43.2 percent who actually used homework assignments in determining grades. It appears that those teachers who took a neutral stand did not use homework assignments, as 55.9 percent indicated a negative response. This information is shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel Homework in Physical Education Should be Considered as a Grading Factor and the Percentage of Teachers That Do Use Homework in Determining Grades

Homework in physical education should be considered as a grading factor		
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	6	5.4%
Disagree	13	11.7%
Neutral	39	35.1%
Agree	38	34.2%
Strongly Agree	15	13.5%
I use homework assignments in determining grades for my students		
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	1	0.9%
Yes	48	43.2%
No	62	55.9%

Written Tests

A large majority (96.4 percent) of the teachers agreed that knowledge demonstrated on written tests should be given consideration in determining a student's grade, while only 1.8 percent disagreed. Only 5.4 percent of the teachers did not give written tests, while 92.8 percent did. Table 8 illustrates these results.

Table 8

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel Knowledge Demonstrated on Written Tests Should be Given Consideration in Determining Students' Grades and the Percentage of Teachers Who Use Written Tests Results for Determining Grades

Knowledge demonstrated on written tests should be given consideration in determining a student's grade		
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Disagree	2	1.8%
Neutral	2	1.8%
Agree	50	45.0%
Strongly Agree	57	51.4%

I give written knowledge tests that account for part of the course grade		
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	2	1.8%
Yes	103	92.8%
No	6	5.4%

Other Knowledge

Knowledges other than those represented on written tests are often used in evaluating student achievement. Of the teachers surveyed, 71.1 percent agreed that other knowledges should be given consideration, while only 5.4 percent disagreed with their inclusion. Slightly less than a fourth of the teachers took a neutral stand. In response to whether they did actually use other knowledges in evaluating their students, 63.1 percent of the teachers indicated they did, while 35.1 percent indicated they did not. These results are found in Table 9.

Table 9

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel That Other Knowledges as Demonstrated on Term Papers, Written or Oral Reports, Bulletin Boards, Displays, or Projects Should be Given Consideration in Determining a Student's Grade and the Percentage of Teachers Who Do Use Other Knowledges in Determining Students' Grades

Other Knowledges as demonstrated on term papers, written oral reports, student made bulletin boards, displays, or projects should be given consideration in determining a student's grade

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	4	3.6%
Neutral	26	23.4%
Agree	55	49.5%
Strongly Agree	24	21.6%

I base part of a student's grade on term papers, written or oral reports, bulletin boards, displays, or projects

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	2	1.8%
Yes	70	63.1%
No	39	35.1%

Participation

A large majority of the teachers felt that student participation in class activities should constitute part of the course grade with 95.5 percent indicating agreement. Of this 95.5 percent, 67.6 percent indicated strong agreement to this item. Only one teacher (0.9 percent) disagreed with the inclusion of participation. A high percentage of 94.6 percent responded in the positive when asked if they did actually grade on participation, and only 5.4 percent answered in the negative. This information is depicted in Table 10.

Table 10

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel That Student Participation in Class Activities Should Be Considered in Determining Student's Grades and the Percentage of Teachers That Do Base Part of a Student's Grade on the Amount of Participation

Student participation in class activities should be considered in determining a student's grade

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Disagree	1	0.9%
Neutral	4	3.6%
Agree	31	27.9%
Strongly Agree	75	67.6%

I base part of a student's grade on how much he/she has participated in class activities

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Yes	105	94.6%
No	6	5.4%

Physical Fitness Tests

Over half (51.3 percent) of the teachers surveyed disagreed with the utilization of physical fitness test scores as grade determinants, while one fourth (25.2 percent) of the teachers indicated agreement. A high percentage (80.2 percent) of the teachers did not use fitness scores to grade students, and only 19.8 percent indicated they did use the scores for grading. Several teachers wrote comments on the questionnaire form, such as that while the fitness scores were not used for grading purposes, the effort exhibited by the students while taking the tests was noted, and thus influenced the students' grades. The results dealing with physical fitness scores are shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel That Scores From Standardized Physical Fitness Tests Should Be Included as Grade Determinants and the Percentage of Teachers Who Do Use Fitness Scores as Grading Factors

Scores from standardized physical fitness tests should be included as grade determinants

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	19	17.1%
Disagree	38	34.2%
Neutral	26	23.4%
Agree	21	18.9%
Strongly Agree	7	6.3%

I use physical fitness scores as a factor in determining class grades

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Yes	22	19.8%
No	89	80.2%

Showering

Only 48.6 percent of the teachers agreed that showering should be included as a factor in the physical education grade, while 24.3 percent disagreed, and 27.0 percent responded in the neutral category. While 48.6 percent agreed with the inclusion of showering, only 35.1 percent did actually use showering as a grading factor. A majority of 64.0 percent did not grade a student on whether he/she took a shower after participating in class activities. One reason for the larger negative percentage could possibly be a lack of facilities, which several teachers commented on. Table 12 illustrates these results.

Table 12

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel That Showering Should be Included as a Factor on the Physical Education Grading Plan and the Percentage of Teachers That Do Grade on Whether a Student Showers After Class Activities

Showering should be included as a factor in the physical education grading plan		
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	6	5.4%
Disagree	21	18.9%
Neutral	30	27.0%
Agree	37	33.3%
Strongly Agree	17	15.3%
I base part of a student's grade on whether he/she showers after participating in class activities		
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	1	0.9%
Yes	39	35.1%
No	71	64.0%

Observed Skills

The teachers took a strong stand (87.3 percent) in agreeing that observation of student's skills by the teacher should be included as a grading determinant. This 87.3 percent compared favorably with 88.3 percent of the teachers actually grading on observation of student's skills. Refer to Table 13 for these results.

Table 13

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel That Observation of a Student's Skills by the Teacher Should be Included as a Grade Determinant and the Percentage of Teachers Who Do Use Skill Observation To Grade Students

Observation of a student's skills by the teacher should be included as a grade determinant		
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	3	2.7%
Neutral	9	8.1%
Agree	54	48.6%
Strongly Agree	43	38.7%

Part of my students' grades are determined by my evaluation of their skills through observation		
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Yes	98	88.3%
No	13	11.7%

Skills Tests

Of the teachers surveyed, 81.9 percent agreed that scores from standardized or teacher developed skills tests should be included as grading factors, and 78.4 percent of the teachers did actually use skills tests results as grading factors. Although 8.1 percent of the teachers disagreed with using skills tests scores, a larger percentage of 20.7 did not use these scores as grading factors. Considering the 9.9 percent of the teachers who took a neutral stand, one could assume that these teachers responded negatively to the question asking if they did use skills tests results as grading factors, thus almost making up the difference. Table 14 shows these results.

Table 14

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel That Scores From Standardized or Teacher Developed Skills Tests Should be Included as Grading Factors and the Percentage of Teachers Who Do Use Skills Tests Results As Grading Factors

Scores from standardized or teacher developed skills tests should be included as grading factors

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	7	6.3%
Neutral	11	9.9%
Agree	53	47.7%
Strongly Agree	38	34.2%

I use skills tests results as grading factors

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	1	0.9%
Yes	87	78.4%
No	23	20.7%

Standards For Coeducational Classes

The question concerned with coeducational classes was included in the study because of the influence of Title IX of the Civil Rights Act, and the resulting recent changes that have taken place in the schools in order to comply with Title IX regulations. A 53.1 percent agreement level and a 41.4 percent disagreement level were attained in response to the question which asked the teachers if they felt that both boys and girls should be graded on the same standards in coeducational classes. These results closely parallel those attained from the second question which asked if the teachers did actually grade both boys and girls on the same standards in their coeducational classes. These results were that 51.4 percent did grade on the same standards, and 44.4 percent did not. The teachers, therefore, are almost equally divided in their opinions and practices in regard to coeducational grading. One reason for this could be that coeducational classes are relatively new, and the teachers are still in the experimental phase in regards to grading standards. Table 15 summarizes the results dealing with coeducational classes.

Table 15

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel That Both Boys and Girls Should be Graded on the Same Standards in Coeducational Classes and the Percentage of Teachers Who Do Grade Both Boys and Girls on the Same Standards

In coeducational classes, both the boys and the girls should be graded on the same standards

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	7	6.3%
Disagree	39	35.1%
Neutral	6	5.4%
Agree	44	39.6%
Strongly Agree	15	13.5%

In coeducational classes, I grade both the boys and the girls on the same standards

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	5	4.5%
Yes	57	51.4%
No	49	44.4%

Standards for the Handicapped

A question concerned with grading handicapped students was included in the study because of the influence of Public Law 94-142 and the mainstreaming concept. A strong majority (81.1 percent) of the teachers surveyed disagreed with grading handicapped students enrolled in regular physical education classes on the same standards as normal students. This result compared favorably with the 83.8 percent who responded that they did not grade handicapped students on the same standards as normal students. Many of the teachers indicated by written comment that they had separate adaptive classes for handicapped students in their schools. These results can be found in Table 16.

Table 16

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel That Handicapped Students Enrolled in the Regular Physical Education Classes Should be Graded on the Same Standards as the Normal Students and the Percentage of Teachers That Do Grade Handicapped Students on the Same Standards as Normal Students

When handicapped students are enrolled in the regular physical education classes, they should be graded on the same standards as the normal students

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	2	1.8%
Strongly Disagree	21	18.9%
Disagree	69	62.2%
Neutral	12	10.8%
Agree	4	3.6%
Strongly Agree	3	2.7%

I grade handicapped students on the same standards as normal students

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
No Response	9	8.1%
Yes	9	8.1%
No	93	83.8%

Weightings for Grading Attributes

Question twenty-three on the questionnaire asked the teachers to indicate, for each of sixteen attributes listed, the approximate amount of weight they give to each in their grading plan. From the data obtained, this writer attempted to place the attributes in a rank order. The results indicated that of all the attributes listed, participation was most often given the greater amount of weight with 16.2 percent of the teachers giving this attribute 81-100% weight, 14.4 percent giving 61-80% weight, 15.3 percent giving 41-60% weight, 28.8 percent giving 21-40% weight, and 20.7 percent giving 0-20% weight. Dressing out in a proper gym uniform, and effort represented the next highest percentages with 8.1 percent of the teachers giving 81-100% weight to both. Sportsmanship was the fourth highest ranked attribute, with 6.3 percent of the teachers giving it 81-100% weight. Attitude with 4.5 percent of the teachers giving it 81-100% weight, and improvement closely followed with 3.6 percent of the teachers giving it 81-100% weight. This information plus the weightings given to the remaining attributes, are illustrated in Table 17.

Table 17

Percentage of Teachers Who Give 0-20%,
21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%
Weight To Grading Attributes

Attribute	No Response	0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
Participation	4.5%	20.7%	28.8%	15.3%	14.4%	16.2%
Dressing Out	5.4%	28.8%	28.8%	15.3%	13.5%	8.1%
Effort	5.4%	36.0%	23.4%	13.5%	13.5%	8.1%
Sportsmanship	10.8%	56.8%	10.8%	10.8%	4.5%	6.3%
Attitude	5.4%	60.4%	16.2%	6.3%	7.2%	4.5%
Improvement	10.8%	48.6%	18.9%	11.7%	6.3%	3.6%
Attendance	9.0%	68.5%	10.8%	5.4%	2.7%	3.6%
Conduct	7.2%	56.8%	15.3%	9.9%	9.0%	1.8%
Written tests	8.1%	44.1%	36.0%	8.1%	0.9%	2.7%
Homework	17.1%	68.5%	9.9%	2.7%	0.0%	1.8%
Skills - observation	8.1%	53.2%	20.7%	10.8%	6.3%	0.9%
Skills - test	5.4%	47.7%	30.6%	9.9%	5.4%	0.9%
Showering	14.4%	72.1%	7.2%	4.5%	1.8%	0.0%
Physical fitness	19.8%	66.7%	7.2%	5.4%	0.9%	0.0%
Term papers	25.2%	61.3%	9.0%	3.6%	0.9%	0.0%
Displays, projects, bulletin boards	31.5%	55.9%	9.0%	2.7%	0.9%	0.0%

Effect of Sex of Respondents on Grading Practices

In response to the majority of the questions dealing with actual grading practices, both the male and female teachers usually gave similar answers. However, a difference was found in the responses to the question concerned with the utilization of homework as a grading factor. More females (48.8 percent) than males (23.8 percent) indicated that they did use homework assignments in determining grades for their students.

Another difference between the responses given by males and females was found concerning the use of standardized skills tests. More females (80 percent) than males (66.7 percent) indicated a positive response when asked if they actually use standardized skills tests for grading purposes.

The item concerned with the utilization of showering practices by students also resulted in differences in responses by males and females. When asked if they base part of a student's grade on whether he or she showers after participating in class activities, 57.1 percent of the male teachers indicated that they did, while only 27.5 percent of the females indicated that they did. These results are in Table 18.

Table 18
 Percentages of Males and Females
 Who Use Certain Attributes in
 Their Grading Plans

Attribute	<u>Male</u>			<u>Females</u>		
	Yes	No	No Response	Yes	No	No Response
Homework	23.8%	76.2%	0.0%	48.8%	50.0%	1.2%
Standardized Skills Tests	66.7%	28.6%	4.7%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Showering	57.1%	42.9%	0.0%	27.5%	71.3%	1.2%

In response to the question asking the teachers to indicate the amount of weight they give to certain grading attributes, a significant difference was found in the responses given by males and females concerning the attribute of attendance. It was found that a higher percentage of males gave the higher weightings than did the females. Slightly over fourteen percent (14.3 percent) of the males gave attendance 81-100% weight, and 4.8 percent of the males gave 61-80% weight. Only 1.3 percent of the females gave attendance 81-100% weight, and only 1.3 percent gave attendance 61-80% weight in their grading plans. Table 19 shows these results.

Table 19

The Amount of Weight Given in Their Grading Plans
to Attendance by Males and Females

	No Response	0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
Males	19.0%	52.4%	9.5%	0.0%	4.8%	14.3%
Females	5.0%	73.8%	11.3%	7.5%	1.3%	1.3%

Effect of Age of Respondents on Grading Practices

In response to the majority of questions dealing with actual grading practices, the age of the respondents had no effect on the grading practices utilized. However, a difference was found in the responses given to the question concerned with the use of written tests. Of those younger teachers between the ages of twenty-three and thirty-three, 94.3 percent indicated that they did give written tests consideration in their grading plans. The group of older teachers

(ages forty-five to fifty-five), responded similarly with 94.4 percent giving a positive answer. Of the teachers in the middle age group, (ages thirty-four to forty-four), 89.3 percent included written tests as a grading factor. This information is in Table 20.

Table 20
Percentage of Teachers Who Use Written Tests
as a Grading Factor According to Age

Response	Age 23-33	Age 34-44	Age 45-55
Yes	94.3%	89.3%	94.4%
No	5.7%	10.7%	0.0%
No Response	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%

Effect of Grade Level Taught on Grading Practices

A greater percent of senior high school teachers than junior high school teachers were found to grade on attendance, improvement, and skill observation.

A greater percent of junior high school teachers than senior high school teachers were found to base course grades on dressing out in proper gym uniforms, homework, physical fitness test scores, written tests, other knowledges and standardized skills tests. The results are illustrated in Table 21.

Table 21

Percentages of Junior High School Teachers and
Senior High School Teachers Who Use Certain
Attributes in Their Grading Plans

Attribute	Junior High			Senior High		
	Yes	No	No Response	Yes	No	No Response
Attendance	74.5%	25.5%	0.0%	48.8%	50.0%	1.2%
Dressing Out	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	93.0%	4.7%	2.3%
Improvement	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	88.4%	9.3%	2.3%
Homework	51.0%	47.2%	1.8%	37.0%	63.0%	0.0%
Written tests	94.6%	1.8%	3.6%	90.7%	9.3%	0.0%
Other knowledges: term papers, displays, projects, bulletin boards	65.5%	32.7%	1.8%	58.1%	39.6%	2.3%
Physical fitness test scores	23.6%	76.4%	0.0%	16.3%	83.7%	0.0%
Skill observation	85.5%	14.5%	0.0%	90.7%	9.3%	0.0%
Skills tests	85.5%	13.0%	1.8%	67.4%	32.6%	0.0%

In response to the question asking the teachers to indicate the amount of weight they give to certain grading attributes, a difference was found in the results obtained from junior and senior high school teachers concerning the use of physical fitness test scores. It was found that a greater percentage of junior high school teachers gave the higher weightings to fitness test scores than did the senior high school teachers, 18.2 percent weighted fitness test scores 81-100%, while 11.7 percent of the senior high school teachers indicated this amount of weight. Table 22 illustrates these results.

Table 22

The Amount of Weight Given in Their Grading
Plans to Physical Fitness Test
Scores by Junior and Senior
High School Teachers

	0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
Junior High Teachers	61.8%	14.5%	5.5%	0.0%	18.2%
Senior High Teachers	79.0%	0.0%	7.0%	2.3%	11.7%

Effect of Years of Teaching Experience on Grading Practices

A greater percent of teachers with more years of teaching experience were found to use showering as a grading attribute. Of the teachers with twenty-one to thirty-three years of teaching experience, 37.5 percent responded positively to the question asking if they graded their students on whether they took showers after class activities. Of the teachers with eleven to twenty years of experience, 37.7 indicated they used the showering attribute, and 30.9 percent of the teachers with

one to ten years of experience indicated they used showering when grading their students. This information is shown in Table 23.

Table 23

Percentage of Teachers Who Use Showering As
a Grading Attribute According to Number
of Years of Teaching Experience

Response	<u>Number of Years Taught</u>		
	1-10	11-20	21-33
Yes	30.9%	35.7%	37.5%
No	67.2%	60.7%	62.5%
No Response	1.9%	3.6%	0.0%

Effect of Type of Grading Plan Utilized
on Grading Practices

Whether the teacher followed a school system plan, a departmental plan, or his or her own individual plan was not found to have any significant effect on the majority of the teachers' responses. One difference was found in regards to the question which asked if the teachers grade their students on the amount of participation they demonstrate during a unit of study. Of those teachers who follow school system plans, 100 percent indicated they do grade on participation. Of those teachers who follow departmental grading plans, 96.2 percent indicated that they grade on participation, and of those teachers who follow their own individual grading plans, 81.8 percent grade on participation. Table 24 illustrates these results.

Table 24

Percentage of Teachers Who Use Participation
as a Grading Factor According to the
Type of Grading Plan Followed

Response	School System Plan	Departmental Plan	Individual Plan
Yes	100.0	96.2	81.8
No	0.0	3.8	18.2

Summary

The preceding sections presented analyses of the data from the teachers' responses to the grading opinions and practices questionnaire. One-way frequency distributions were computed and presented. Dressing out in a proper uniform, effort, participation, written test results, and skill observation were found to be the areas most frequently utilized for determination of the physical education grade. Two-way crosstabulations were computed for the questions controlling for age, sex, teaching experience, and grade level taught. Several significant differences were found to exist as a result of these factors. A full discussion of the results follows in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the procedures used for determining grades for secondary school physical education classes in selected Virginia school districts. A twenty-three item questionnaire used in obtaining the desired data was developed and mailed to one hundred and sixty-one physical education teachers who were listed as members of the Virginia Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. One hundred and seventeen questionnaires were returned, which amounted to 72.5 percent of the total. Of these 117, six were rendered of no practical value for the study due to inappropriate responses.

The mean age of the teachers responding to the questionnaire was thirty-three. The majority (76.6 percent) of the teachers were female, with only 22.5 percent being male. The most frequently taught grade level was the tenth. Most of the teachers (52.3 percent) followed a departmental grading plan, with 24.3 percent utilizing a school system plan. Only 21.6 percent followed their own individual grading plan.

Summary

The teachers were asked to respond to sixteen compound questions. The first part of each question asked the teachers to indicate their opinions regarding the inclusion of certain grading attributes when

determining course grades. The second part of the question asked the teachers to indicate whether or not they did actually utilize these attributes in their grading plans. The following statements, presented in order according to the percentage of teachers who responded favorably to the inclusion of these attributes in their grading plans, summarizes the results:

1. A strong majority (94.6 percent) of the teachers supported the use of dressing out as a grading factor, and 96.4 percent included it in their grading plans.

2. With only three exceptions, all of the teachers (97.3 percent) agreed that effort should be included as a grading factor, and 95.5 percent did include it.

3. The teachers (95.5 percent) took a strong stand on agreeing with the inclusion of participation as a grading factor, and 94.6 percent did grade on participation.

4. The teachers (96.4 percent) felt that knowledge demonstrated on written tests should be given consideration as a grading determinant, and 92.8 percent did use written tests.

5. Most of the teachers (87.3 percent) felt that observations of student's skills should be included as grade determinants, and 88.3 percent did use skill observation as grading factors.

6. A large percentage of the teachers (92.8 percent) felt improvement should be considered as a grading factor, and 84.7 percent did use it when grading their students.

7. A large group of the teachers (88.2 percent) supported the inclusion of conduct as a grading factor, and 82.9 percent used it as a grade determinant.

8. Most teachers (83.7 percent) agreed that a student's attitude should be considered as a grading factor, and 82 percent did base part of their students' grades on attitude.

9. More teachers (87.3 percent) felt that attendance should be included as a grading factor than the 80.2 percent who did actually use attendance in determining students' grades.

10. For the most part, 81.9 percent of the teachers agreed that standardized skills tests scores should be included as grading factors, and 78.4 percent did use these scores when grading their students.

11. Less than three-fourths of the teachers agreed that other knowledges as demonstrated on term papers, written and oral reports, student made bulletin boards, displays, or projects should be given consideration in determining a student's grade, and 63.1 percent actually did use other knowledges in their own plans.

12. Just over one half of the teachers (53.1 percent) felt that both boys and girls should be graded on the same standards in coeducational classes, and 51.4 percent did grade boys and girls the same.

13. A relatively small percentage of teachers (47.7 percent) felt that homework should be considered as a grading factor, and only 43.2 percent did actually use homework in their grading plans. Over half (55.9 percent) of the teachers did not use homework in their grading plans.

14. Less than half (48.6 percent) of the teachers agreed that showering should be included as a grading factor, and 64 percent did not use it when grading their students.

15. Over half (51.3 percent) of the teachers disagreed with the utilization of physical fitness test scores as grade

determinants, and 80.2 percent did not use fitness scores when grading their students.

16. Most teachers (81.1 percent) strongly disagreed with grading handicapped students on the same standards as normal students, and 83.3 percent did not grade handicapped students the same.

Weightings for Grading Attributes

The teachers were asked to give an approximate amount of weighting to sixteen listed attributes. The results indicated that participation was the attribute given the most weight, with dressing out and effort the next two attributes most often represented.

Effect of Sex, Age, Grade Level, Teaching Experience, Type of Grading Plan Utilized on Grading Practices

The final analysis concerned the effects of sex, age, grade taught, teaching experience, and grading plan utilized on the grading practices of the respondents. The following statements will summarize the results found concerning these variables:

1. More females than males used homework and standardized skills tests for grading purposes.
2. More males than females based part of their students grades on whether or not the student showered after class activities.
3. A higher percentage of males gave the higher weightings to attendance in their grading plans than did the females.
4. More younger and older teachers used written tests than did the group of teachers in the middle age group (ages thirty-four to forty-four).

5. A greater percent of senior high school teachers than junior high teachers were found to grade on attendance, improvement, and skill observation.

6. A greater percent of junior high school teachers than senior high school teachers were found to base course grades on dressing out, homework, physical fitness test scores, written tests, other knowledges, and standardized skills tests.

7. A greater percent of junior high school teachers were found to give the higher weightings to physical fitness scores in their grading plans than did the senior high school teachers.

8. A greater percent of teachers with more years of teaching experience were found to use showering as a grading attribute.

9. Of those teachers who follow their own individual grading plans, fewer indicated that they grade on participation than those teachers who follow a school system or departmental plan.

Conclusions

On the basis of the analysis of the data obtained within this study, the following points were concluded:

1. The five areas most frequently measured for determination of the physical education grade were dressing out in a proper gym uniform, effort, participation, written test results, and skill observation. Similar results were reported by several others. Coker (1972), in his study of Louisiana schools, found dressing out and skills tests to be among the most common grading factors used. Morrow (1973) also found these two factors to be used most often. Bayless (1978) reported dressing out and participation as grading factors frequently used in Oklahoma schools.

2. Of the five areas most frequently used for determination of the physical education grade, several could be referred to as administrative details, as described by Barrow and McGee (1971). The grading procedures used by the teachers of an administrative nature do not correspond with those behavioral or performance objectives most often described in physical education classes. This conclusion was in agreement with Gustafson (1963), and Johnson and Nelson (1969), and Barrow and McGee (1971).

3. The teachers were found to base course grades on several factors which are subjective in nature (effort, participation, skill observation). These results imply that although the teachers were presented with measurement and evaluation techniques in college and university courses, utilization of these techniques has not been really achieved.

4. In general, teachers' opinions and actual practices concerning grading procedures are parallel. The majority of teachers grade according to their beliefs, and do not seem to be limited by restrictions placed on them by their department or school system.

5. Grading practices in physical education have changed little over the years. Results similar to those indicated in this study were also reported by Fox (1959), Gustafson (1963), Terwilliger (1966), Fabricius and others (1967), Heartley (1968), Moore (1970), Lowman (1972), Morrow (1973), Coker (1972), and Bayless (1978).

6. Physical education teachers seem to consider a number of attributes in order to arrive at a final course grade for their students. These attributes, and the weightings given to each, must be explained

to the students, parents, and administrators so that the physical education grade can be fully understood and interpreted.

Recommendations For Further Study

Based on this study, the following recommendations for further study are indicated:

1. a more detailed investigation of the similarities and differences of grading procedures employed by males and females.
2. an investigation of the similarities and differences of grading procedures for required and elective physical education classes.
3. an investigation into the procedures used in grading the handicapped student placed in a normal class.
4. an investigation of the procedure used in grading boys and girls in coeducational classes.
5. an investigation of the grading practices of teachers who also serve as athletic coaches compared to non-coaches.
6. an investigation of the similarities and differences of grading procedures employed by teachers in inner city, suburban, and rural areas.
7. an investigation controlling for two or more of the dependent variables simultaneously, such as male or female by years of experience.

9. A student's conduct in class should be a factor in determining the course grade.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I base part of a student's grade on his/her conduct in class.

yes	no
-----	----

10. Dressing out in a proper gym uniform should be included as a factor in the physical education grade.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I base part of a student's grade on his/her dressing out in a proper gym uniform.

yes	no
-----	----

11. Effort should be given consideration in determining a student's grade.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I grade the students in my classes on the effort they exhibit.

yes	no
-----	----

12. Improvement should be included as a factor in the physical education grade.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I grade my students on the amount of improvement they have demonstrated during a unit of study.

yes	no
-----	----

13. Homework in physical education should be considered as a grading factor.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I use homework assignments in determining grades for my students.

yes	no
-----	----

14. Knowledge demonstrated on written tests should be given consideration in determining a student's grade.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I give written knowledge tests that account for part of the course grade.

yes	no
-----	----

15. Other knowledges as demonstrated on term papers, written or oral reports, student made bulletin boards, displays, or projects should be given consideration in determining a student's grade.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I base part of a student's grade on term papers, written or oral reports, bulletin boards, displays, or projects.

yes	no
-----	----

16. Student participation in class activities should be considered in determining a student's grade.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I base part of a student's grade on how much he/she has participated in class activities.

yes	no
-----	----

17. Scores from standardized physical fitness tests should be included as grade determinants.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I use physical fitness scores as a factor in determining class grades.

yes	no
-----	----

18. Showering should be included as a factor in the physical education grading plan.

strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I base part of a student's grade on whether he/she showers after participating in class activities.

yes no

19. Observation of a student's skills by the teacher should be included as a grade determinant.

strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree

Part of my students' grades are determined by my evaluation of their skills through observations.

yes no

20. Scores from standardized or teacher developed skills tests should be included as grading factors.

strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree

I use skills tests results as grading factors.

yes no

21. In coeducational classes, both the boys and the girls should be graded on the same standards.

strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree

In coeducational classes, I grade both the boys and the girls on the same standards.

yes no

22. When handicapped students are enrolled in the regular physical education classes, they should be graded on the same standards as the normal students.

strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree

I grade handicapped students on the same standards as normal students.

yes no

23. For each of the attributes listed below, check the approximate amount of weight you give to each in your grading plan.

	<u>0-20%</u>	<u>21-40%</u>	<u>41-60%</u>	<u>61-80%</u>	<u>81-100%</u>
Attendance	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Attitude	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Conduct	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Dressing out in proper uniform	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Effort	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Homework	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Improvement	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Written tests	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Term papers	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Displays projects, bulletin boards	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Participation	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Showering	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Skills - observation	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Skills - test	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Physical fitness	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Sportsmanship	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

_____ Check here if you desire a copy of the results of the survey when it is completed. Also, please fill in your name and address on the lines below so that one may be sent to you.

Name _____
Address _____

Dear

Within the past several years, I have become interested in grading practices in physical education. One reason for this interest is, as a physical education teacher, I have often become frustrated in trying to determine students' grades in a manner that is both justifiable and meaningful to myself, to my administrators, and to my students and their parents. Thus the topic of grading practices is the one I have chosen for my thesis in my masters program at Old Dominion University.

In order to evaluate the current status of grading practices used in our profession, I am conducting a survey of secondary physical education teachers who are listed as members of the Virginia Association For Health, Physical Education and Recreation. It is not the intent of the survey to single out any one school or teacher, but to draw some general statements as to what grading practices are currently being utilized. Specific information concerning any one school or teacher will not be divulged, but a composite report from all the participants will be prepared and presented. In asking you for your name on the survey, I mean to use it only to assist in checking those persons that have responded to the survey. If you desire, however, you may refrain from supplying your name.

Your cooperation in taking a few minutes to fill out the enclosed questionnaire would be greatly appreciated. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided for your convenience in mailing the questionnaire.

If you would like to have a copy of the final results of the survey, please indicate so in the space provided on the questionnaire, and one will be sent to you upon completion.

Thank you very much for your kind attention and your cooperation in completing the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Ellen V. Parker

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Date Due

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