ITEM 1. Workshop on holistic grading

Discussion: Prior to today’s meeting, Professors Patrick Tierney and Karen Pain graded all the Quantitative Reasoning Scenarios. The first step in their process was to grade a number of scenarios together and calibrate their scoring. This involved reviewing the rubric and determining how to interpret each dimension of the rubric vis-à-vis what to look for in each written response. Using the criteria they developed, Tierney and Pain then graded the remainder of the scenarios and compared their scores. They found that the grades they assigned to each scenario were almost identical indicating a high level of agreement between the graders – exactly the desired result of holistic grading.

At today’s meeting, Professor Tierney presented this information about the grading process he and Professor Pain undertook and led the committee through a hands-on training session. The purpose of the training session was to practice scoring papers together so that when each group has to grade its own set of scenarios, they will have a good idea of how to arrive at a consensus for scoring.

Highlights from the discussion include:

- Read the Scenario out loud before beginning the process to make sure that all of the graders know exactly what it says.
- Encourage the graders to highlight key things in the Scenario to make sure everyone is on the same page.
- Some ambiguities were noted regarding the Quantitative Reasoning Scenario. Some students may have done calculations based on twice a month rather than 26 times a year.
• Only 7 out of 75 students actually showed the math in their response. This raises
the question as to whether the directions were clear enough when asking
students to show their work.
• In grading this group of Scenarios, Professors Pain and Tierney essentially looked
at only the math, since that is all they were scoring. They were able to save a lot
of time in the process by ignoring things like grammatical errors (which will be
considered when grading the same Scenario for the communications learning
outcome).
• A question came up about whether this Scenario actually tested college level
math. This is something that will be addressed when considering revisions for the
next implementation.
• Although the rubric was designed with a number of attributes, it was ultimately
used to grade the Scenario in a holistic fashion.
• Most of the problem with split scores among graders is alleviated by discussions
beforehand. The rubric drives the scoring so before the scoring begins, it is critical
the graders agree upon how each category of the rubric will be defined, i.e., the
graders need to clarify what constitutes exemplary, proficient, developing, etc.
• Create a set of “anchor papers” – samples of papers that exemplify each score. In
this case, there would be five anchor papers – one that represents a paper that
would receive a score of “Exemplary”, another for “Proficient” and so on. These
anchor papers can help guide the scoring as each group goes through their whole
set.
• In holistic grading, it is common to begin the process by looking for papers that
represent the upper and lower scores.
• It was suggested that each group read the same four or five papers, use the rubric
to score them, then swap the papers and see if there is agreement in scoring.
Once there is agreement on scoring (using the rubric), read and score the
remainder of the papers separately.

Data/data source: (where appropriate)

Action: None

Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Helen Shub, Scribe