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Grading by Experience Points: An Example from Computer Ethics

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Grading by Experience Points: An Example from Computer Ethics

Edward F. Gehringer
Computer Science, NC State University

The Process

Students choose a topic for the various rounds of ethical analyses,

... then submit their work.

After two rounds of peer review,

the instructor/TA assign scores

... then score the students’ reviews.

Other examples of grading by experience points

High-school biology class

- Points for doing homework, passing quizzes.
- Successive levels require twice as many points as previous levels.

Teaching with Technology

- U. of Arizona South
- Multiple assgts. in each content area, successive levels of Bloom’s taxonomy,
  - Hundreds of available assgts. in dozens of context areas
  - Achievements recognize accomplishments
  - Exemplary performance on an assignment
  - Aggregate skill point totals
- 5 categories of skill points, secret achievements

LSU Intro. to the Study of Education

- Reflective blogs – achievements
- Shine: posting 4-6 comments/week
- Super Shine: posting 7-9 comments
- Mega Shine: posting ≥ 10 comments
- Achievements for content
- High Five
  - Hmm: For a comment that they believed now but might reconsider later
  - Good sport: For not taking teacher’s comments personally

Other categories of skill points, secret achievements

Grades: Bimodal at the extremes

This is what the grade distribution would have been if I hadn’t lowered cut-offs for grades below B.

What the data shows

Survey results

Students in the XP class were moderately supportive of the peer-review process, but less supportive than students in other classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>CSC 379</th>
<th>2012 OOD course</th>
<th>“Typical” course (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green – good outcome, ≥ 4 out of 5 on neg-phrased question</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red – suboptimal, ≥ 3 out of 5 on neg-phrased question</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The material I read in order to write my chapter gave me new insight</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>4.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>into the topic I was writing on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The textbook I used for the course</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am proud of my contributions to the wiki textbook</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reviews I received helped me improve my work.</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments received were constructive and relevant</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The courses in this class are comparable to courses I have taken before</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course was challenging and rewarding</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course was relevant to my studies</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course was well-organized and easy to follow</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>3.78</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.21</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>3.74</td>
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<td>The course was well-organized and easy to follow, but challenging</td>
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