

n ways I've failed at Standards Based Grading,
where $n \gg 0$

David Clark

Grand Valley State University



MAAthfest 2016

“David!”

I hear you cry,

“tell me about your SBG system!”

Three major ways to describe an SBG system:

Grade structure

Flat \longleftrightarrow Hierarchical

Mastery determination

Recent \longleftrightarrow Permanent

Assessment philosophy

Focused \longleftrightarrow Integrated

Calc 1: 30-ish engineers, teachers. Flipped.

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40 standards \rightarrow 10 big ideas \rightarrow Grade

Big ideas include Communication, Reasoning...

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Calc 1 SBG: Special features

- Revise anything one time.
Surprise: Exams are not special!
- Grace days:
Extend deadline by one class, no questions asked.
- Report grades via Google Sheets.

How did I get to this point?

Get ready to **fail!**

Fail #1:

Making my SBG system too **complex**

Fail #1: Making my SBG system too complex

Example: Coding Theory (UMN, ~ 20 students)

Sample: Every standard has a basic and advanced version. Grades depend on mastering all standards in each *big idea* at a basic or advanced level.*

* Except for some which are only basic.**

** But some are only advanced.***

*** Oh yeah, and: Exams are special!****

**** and... and... and...

Advice

If your system is too complex, students will spend their time thinking about how grades work rather than focusing on learning.

Start simple, add complexity sparingly.

Fail #2:

Making my SBG system too **simple**

Fail #2: Making my SBG system too simple

Example: Calculus 1 (GVSU, ~ 30 students)

- 43 standards, permanent mastery.
... including Guided Practices
- Students gave up on Guided Practices when they could no longer master the standard.

Fail #2: Making my SBG system too simple

Advice

Don't try to force everything into an SBG structure.

SBG-ify what you can; then use a hybrid approach.

Grade	Big Ideas mastered	Guided Practices completed with an E or M	WebWorks completed with 95% or higher
A	10 (of 10)	≥ 27 (of about 29)	≥ 10 (of about 11)
B	9	24-26	9
C	7 - 8	21-23	7 - 8
D	5 - 6	18-20	5 - 6
F	Have not fully completed any row.		

Fail #3:

Forgetting my students are **human**

Fail #3: Forgetting my students are human

Example: Calculus 1 (GVSU)

- Attendance standard created bad vibes, man.
- Grade is an F for most of the semester.
- All negative feedback: m, S.

Fail #3: Forgetting my students are human

Advice

Give students flexible options to show engagement.

Organize standards to help students see Big Ideas.

Give actionable feedback:

Excellent: Correct, Complete, Clear, Concise

Mastered: Correct, possibly with minor errors

Progressing: Evidence of progress, but important gaps remain

X: Incomplete, no explanation, impossible to follow

Fail #4:

Forgetting how to **teach**

Fail #4: Forgetting how to teach

Example: Many, many times:

Taking one day to explain SBG all at once.

... and then expecting students to fully understand.

Fail #4: Forgetting how to teach

Advice

Put the same thought and effort into training students about SBG as you would for any major topic.

Use the same teaching skills: Scaffold, use quick-checks, think-pair-share, muddiest point, etc.

Questions!

David Clark

clarkdav@gvsu.edu

<http://faculty.gvsu.edu/clarkdav/>
@dccmath

	D: Derivative basics										DA: Derivative applications						FTC: Integration				Big Ideas							Grades											
Target	D.1	D.2	D.3	D.4	D.5	D.6	D.7	D.8	D.9	D.10	DA.1	DA.2	DA.3	DA.4	DA.5	DA.6	FTC.1	FTC.2	FTC.3	FTC.4	P	R	C	RC	F	L	D	DA	FTC	TTL	Big Ideas	Almost	Base						
Required	2	4	2	4	6	4	2	2	2	2	8	4	8	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	5	3	8	5	3									
Opportunities	3	8	3	10	11	10	5	5	6	5	14	8	12	7	5	6	4	2	3	3																			
	3	5	3	7	8	8	3	4	4	4	8	5	10	3	3	2	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	2	5	3	10	5	3	37	9	0	A						
	3	5	2	4	5	2	1	0	2	3	4	2	5	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	4	6	0	0	17	1	2	F					
	2	4	2	5	6	8	3	2	5	4	10	4	7	4	4	2	3	1	2	2	3	2	3	2	5	3	10	5	3	36	8	1	B						
	2	6	3	5	6	6	4	3	4	2	10	4	9	4	3	1	2	0	2	2	3	3	3	2	5	4	10	5	3	38	9	0	A						
	3	6	3	7	7	8	4	3	2	5	10	3	6	2	4	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	5	4	10	3	4	38	8	0	B							
	3	5	0	5	6	6	3	2	5	2	8	4	9	4	3	1	3	1	2	2	3	3	3	2	5	4	9	5	3	37	9	0	A						
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	1	2	0	3	1	0	0	0	2	3	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	7	0	1	F						
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	3	7	1	8	8	8	4	3	5	4	12	4	8	2	4	3	3	1	2	2	3	4	3	2	5	4	9	5	3	38	9	0	A						

