Del Lago Academy Grading Practices

Core Beliefs and Grading Practices:
The four core belief categories of Personalization, Authentic Learning Experiences, Ethic of Excellence, and Skilled, Professional teachers will serve as guiding values for all aspects of learning at Del Lago Academy of Applied Sciences, which includes the school wide grading practice.

**Essential Statement:** The primary purpose of grades is to communicate a student’s level of achievement to all stakeholders, which includes: school administration, the student, his or her parents or guardians, and prospective higher learning institutions and employers.

With this essential statement regarding the purpose of grading, the students and staff at Del Lago Academy pledge to use grades in a meaningful, consistent way in order to communicate achievement and improve student learning in all subjects while keeping the Mission and Core Beliefs of Del Lago Academy of Applied Science at the forefront of all decisions about assessment.

School Wide Grading Practice
Grades need to be accurate, meaningful, and consistent reflections of student achievement that support learning. To this end the school wide grading practice will provide teachers with guidelines to ensure commonalities across grading practices.

Grading and Behavior
If the primary purpose of student grades is to accurately communicate achievement, then reducing grades because of behavior is not an appropriate consequence. Students who require behavior interventions will be given appropriate behavior consequences and interventions that do not reflect on grade reporting. Grades are not to be used punitively for any inappropriate student behaviors including but not limited to:

- late work
- academic dishonesty
- tardies or absences
- lack of participation
Grading and Behavior Applied: What does this mean to students and parents?

1.) Students are encouraged to turn work in on time so as to get the most out of each assessment. However, lowering marks on late work causes inaccurate assessment of student achievement. Instead, students will receive appropriate behavioral consequences for late work and parents will be notified of instances of habitual late assessments.

2.) In the case of academic dishonesty, the student may be reassessed so that teachers may accurately report achievement and the student will be given appropriate behavioral consequences for cheating.

3.) Attendance is important for academic success. Continual tardies and absences will affect success in classes indirectly, but will not be counted as a direct part of grade determination. Students will be given appropriate behavioral consequences for tardies and unexcused absences and parents will be notified.

4.) The appropriate consequence for failing to complete an assessment is to complete the assessment. Students who fail to complete assessments have not given teachers enough data to accurately assess his or her ability and must therefore complete the assessment or receive an “Incomplete”.

Further information on behavior consequences can be found in the Del Lago Academy Behavior Interventions document.

Appropriate Evidence of Achievement

If the primary purpose of student grades is to accurately communicate achievement, then there is a need for clear learning goals, quality assessments, and constructive assessment practices. All stakeholders must have clear understanding of learning goals and expectations. Assessment of achievement must be done using clear, preset performance standards. Quality, standards-based assessments are given to students in order to assess and communicate achievement. Formative assessments are essential in giving students feedback and giving teachers information about student progress. However, formative assessments and daily practice do not give accurate evidence of student achievement. Only summative assessments will be used to determine grades. Students must be given ample time for improvement before final assessment is made. This may mean reassessment for students in order to show progress.

Appropriate Evidence of Achievement Applied: What does this mean to students and parents?

1.) Learning goals and expectations will be clearly communicated prior to giving assessments.

2.) Quality, summative assessments will be used to compare each student’s individual performance to appropriate standards.

3.) Grades will be determined using only evidence of summative, individual assessments. No formative or group assessments will be used to determine grades.

4.) Students will be given multiple opportunities to show evidence of achievement.
Grade Determination
The use of an average, or mean, as the sole measure of achievement can be misleading as it may be highly affected by outliers. Other measures, such as the median, can help teachers to use professional judgment when determining grades based on quality assessments of learning. The use of “zero” for a missing assessment skews measures of assessment in a disproportionate manner. Students with incomplete evidence should be reassessed or required to provide sufficient evidence of achievement.

Grade Determination Applied: What does this mean to students and parents?
1.) Teachers will determine grades by using accurate and appropriate evidence of student achievement.
2.) Multiple measures of central tendency such as mean and median will be used to determine most appropriate grades.
3.) Students will receive an “Incomplete” rather than a “zero” for missing assessments and will be required to complete the assessment.

Student-Driven Success
Students will adhere to the core belief of the ethic of excellence. Students will be actively involved in every aspect of their assessment.

1.) Students will set learning goals and monitor their own progress.
2.) Students will use feedback from daily practice and formative assessments to improve and build upon his or her own understanding.
3.) Students will provide timely, accurate assessments ever striving for excellence.
4.) Students will provide feedback to teachers to improve assessments and methods.