

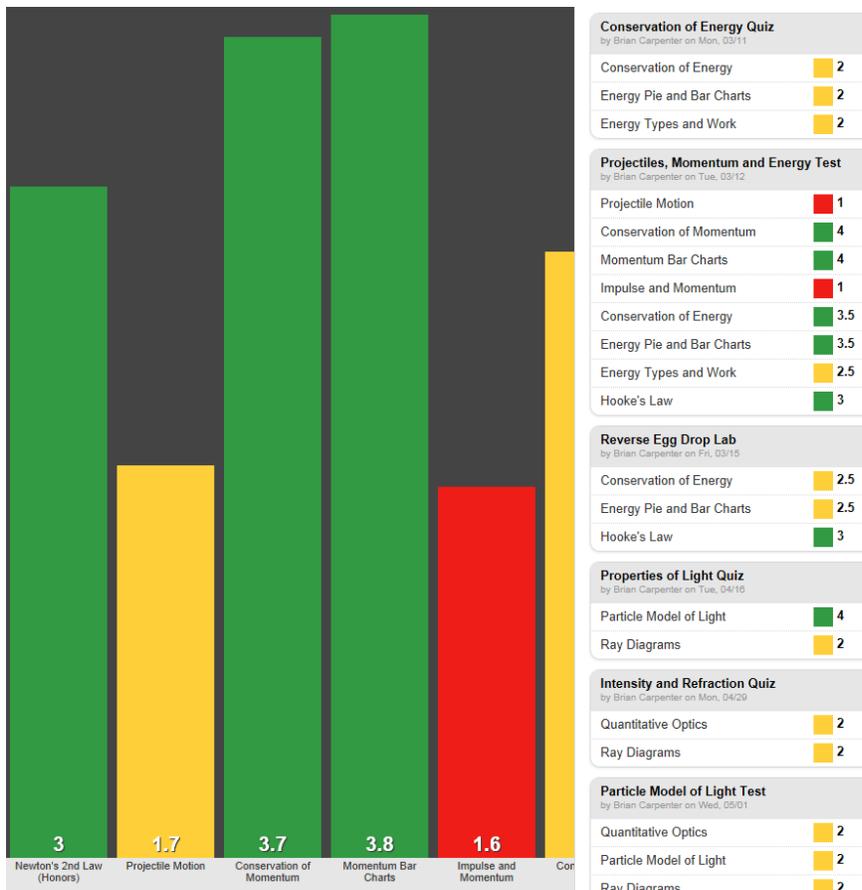
Standards Based Grading

Standards based grading (SBG) is a means of clearly communicating to a student their progress with regards to the expectations of a course thereby allowing them the power to affect change in their own learning. In practice, this means that instead of receiving feedback as a list of cryptically named assignments such as that shown here,

Honors Sem 1 09/10: Recent Grades

Entry	Score	Total Points
Quiz #02	16	20
Unit 4 & 5 Test	34	50
Homework #05-02	5	5
Homework #05-01	5	5
Quiz #04-02	16	20
Homework #04-03	5	5
Homework #04-02	5	5
Quiz #04-01	15	20
Homework #04-01	5	5
Unit 3 Test	46	50

students are instead are told how well they know or can perform on each of the objectives of the course as seen below.



When students have a clearer picture of what they are doing well and which areas need further attention, they can make informed decisions about how to spend their academic time.

As students improve their knowledge of the objectives, they improve their performance on later assessments of those objectives. Weighting later assessments more than early ones shows students that you value where they end their studies more than where they begin them.

Implementation of SBG in Science at Laurel

Gradebooks, assessments and feedback are organized around standards or course objectives. Course standards are constructed by classroom teachers and communicated to students at the beginning of each unit. All assignments directly address a student's ability to answer questions regarding the standards and they are provided feedback (both narrative and numeric) on their attempts.

Allow for opportunities to revisit standards after additional learning, practice, or review has occurred. Teachers spiral back to standards again and again throughout the course. Thus, students are expected to maintain their knowledge of previous objectives. Simultaneously, after completing additional practice, students may request an individual assessment as a means of demonstrating their improved understanding.

Later assessments carry more weight than earlier ones. Knowledge and ability grow with practice. Scores on objectives are determined by weighting the most recent assessment more heavily. Grades then more accurately reflect growing understanding instead of being a record of a student's mistakes.

Individual details such as how to calculate course grades, the frequency of spiraling back to former topics and how to present the objectives to students are handled on a course by course basis by teachers.

SBG and Growth Mindset

The implementation of standards based grading has had a noticeable impact on the perception that many of our students have of themselves as "science students". Students who in the past had not thought of themselves as capable scientific thinkers, now realize that if they don't achieve understanding on the first attempt, they can continue learning. Students are no longer cut off from understanding a topic because the class is moving on to a new one. This alleviates the need students have to be perfect on the first assessment of a standard. Our students, like most people, are expected to be fair to poor when they first attempt new skills or encounter new ideas, but by giving them a system that encourages growth they begin to see learning as a process rather than a destination.

Resources

Prezi that is shared with parents and students in physics at Laurel: <http://goo.gl/iYji4b>

Formative Assessment and Standards Based Grading by Robert Marzano:

<http://www.marzanoresearch.com/formative-assessment-standards-based-grading>

Teachers Who Use SBG

Shawn Cornally blogs at ThinkThankThink: http://shawncornally.com/wordpress/?page_id=114

Kelly O'Shea blogs at Physics! Blog!: <http://kellyoshea.wordpress.com/standards-based-grading/>

Jason Buell blogs at Always Formative: <http://alwaysformative.blogspot.com/p/standards-based-grading-implementation.html>