

NON-PUNITIVE GRADING PRACTICES

IN THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE

by

William E. Knight

Dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

Community College Education

APPROVED:

Charles A. Atwell, Chairman

Edwin L. Barnes

W. Robert Sullins

James L. Hoerner

Larry V. Weber

Blacksburg, Virginia

1981

18/8/16
200 7/2/81

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was the best of times and the worst of times
(Dickens, 1956).

While my involvement in graduate education at VPI&SU was long and arduous, the faculty, fellow doctoral students, and committee members greatly enriched these experiences and made them more rewarding than I ever thought possible.

Special appreciation and consideration is extended to the members of my committee: Drs. Charles A. Atwell (Chairman), Edwin L. Barnes, James L. Hoerner, W. Robert Sullins, and Larry J. Weber. Dr. Atwell's wise counsel and provocative insight into the dissertation process enabled me to complete this study. Dr. Sullins' leadership in the Community College Program area greatly enriched the Program of Study, and his personal involvement throughout my graduate program has been invaluable. Dr. Hoerner provided vital financial assistance needed to carry out this research project, and in the classroom, he presented new insights into technical/vocational education. Dr. Barnes provided practical administrative experience in the form of an internship and treated me as an "equal" among his professional colleagues. Dr. Weber's advice and encouragement will long be remembered.

A very special acknowledgement is extended to my wife, and my daughters, and . Their constant love, faith, encouragement and sacrifices made this achievement possible. I dedicate this dissertation to them.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
 CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.....	2
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.....	6
RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	7
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	8
DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	9
POPULATION FOR THE STUDY.....	10
METHODOLOGY.....	11
DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	11
SUMMARY.....	12
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	13
HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS OF GRADING PRACTICES.....	13
NON-PUNITIVE GRADING RESEARCH IN THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE....	20
National Studies.....	20
State Studies.....	22
Individual Two-Year College Studies.....	26
NON-PUNITIVE GRADING: PRO AND CON.....	30
SUMMARY.....	39
3. METHODOLOGY.....	40
THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT.....	41
POPULATION.....	42
DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES.....	46
TREATMENT OF THE DATA.....	47
SUMMARY.....	47
4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY.....	49
ANALYSIS OF THE INVENTORY ITEMS.....	49
Demographic and Other Institutional Data.....	49
Never Implemented Non-Punitive Grading Practices..	55
Implemented and Dropped Non-Punitive Grading Practices.....	57
Will Implement or Have Implemented Non-Punitive Grading Practices.....	59

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	Page
PRESENT STATE OF NON-PUNITIVE GRADING PRACTICES.....	64
Research Question - One.....	65
Research Question - Two.....	67
Research Question - Three.....	68
Research Question - Four.....	72
Research Question - Five.....	75
Research Question - Six.....	79
Research Question - Seven.....	81
SUMMARY.....	85
5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	87
SUMMARY.....	87
CONCLUSIONS.....	91
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	97
REFERENCES.....	99
APPENDICES.....	106
A. COVER LETTER - FIRST MAILING.....	106
B. COVER LETTER - SECOND MAILING.....	108
C. COVER LETTER - THIRD MAILING.....	110
D. NON-PUNITIVE GRADING PRACTICES SURVEY.....	112
E. REASONS RESPONDENTS WERE CONSIDERING DROPPING NON-PUNITIVE GRADING PRACTICES.....	116
F. REASONS RESPONDENTS FELT NON-PUNITIVE GRADING WAS WORKING IN THEIR INSTITUTIONS.....	118
G. FORMS OF NON-PUNITIVE GRADING: PUBLIC SECTOR.....	123
H. BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES: COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADING PRACTICES.....	126
VITA.....	140

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
TABLE	
1. Population Summary by State.....	45
2. Description of Population by Classification of Public or Private.....	50
3. Description of Population by Institutional Type.....	52
4. Description of Population by Total Enrollment As of Fall Quarter 1979.....	53
5. Description of Population by Level of Authority for Setting or Changing Grading Policies.....	54
6. Description of Population by Predicted Grading Trends Within the Next Five Years.....	56
7. Description of Responding Institutions by Present Status of Non-Punitive Grading Practices.....	58
8. Frequencies of Years Non-Punitive Grading Implemented.....	60
9. Frequencies of Years Non-Punitive Grading Dropped.....	61
10. Composite Frequencies of Years Non-Punitive Grading Practices Implemented.....	63
11. Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to Part II of the Survey Instrument.....	66
12. Frequencies of Public Two-Year Colleges with Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Institutional Size.....	70
13. Frequencies of Public Two-Year Colleges with Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Institutional Size Compared to All Public Two-Year College Responses.....	71

LIST OF TABLES (Continued)

	Page
14. Frequencies of Public Two-Year Colleges with Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Academic Policy Control.....	73
15. Frequencies of Public Two-Year Colleges with Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Academic Policy Control Compared to All Public Two-Year Colleges.....	74
16. Frequencies and Percentages of Public Two-Year Colleges with Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Institutional Type Compared to All Public Two-Year College Responses...	77
17. Description of Public Two-Year Colleges with Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Level of Satisfaction with Such Practices.....	80
18. Frequencies and Percentages of Public Two-Year Colleges Completing Part II of the Survey by Level of Satisfaction	82
19. Description of Private Two-Year Colleges with Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Level of Satisfaction with Such Practices.....	83
20. Future Trends of Current Grading Practices: Public Sector Responses.....	84
21. Future Trends of Non-Punitive Grading Practices: Public Sector Responses.....	86

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
FIGURE	
1. Modified <u>Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey</u> , Part I.....	41
2. Modified <u>Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey</u> , Part II.....	43

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1964, Teaf indicated that while administrators periodically reconsidered issues vital to their institutions such as curriculum offerings, academic standards, and admissions policies, the grading system and the "whole concept of grading" remained neglected (1964, p. 87). By the early 1970's, however, administrative emphasis began to shift and Warren (1971) reflected that "grading has slowly emerged from an area of neglect to become a widely discussed, controversial topic. But focus on grades, though intense, has been haphazard" (p. 1).

One of the areas in which the research remained haphazard throughout the 1970's was the study of non-punitive grading practices in the two-year community, junior, and technical colleges in the United States. During this period many two-year colleges sought to introduce specific changes which would align their grading practices with their institutional philosophic and academic practices. This shift from traditional to non-traditional and finally to non-punitive grading practices had never been fully studied at the national level involving the entire population of public and private two-year colleges.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the nature and extent of non-punitive grading practices in private and public two-year colleges. Additionally, the relationship of their grading practices to various institutional characteristics was carefully examined. Trend data and administrative satisfaction with existing

non-punitive grading practices were also studied.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the early 1900's when William Rainey Harper established the associate degree and a junior college at the University of Chicago, his main goal "was to increase the opportunities for able students to pursue a full college program" (Griffith, 1976, pp. 16-17). Harper was an "elitist" who wanted academically prepared students admitted to the "university colleges" [upper divisions] of the University of Chicago and the early junior colleges were designed to "feed" such qualified students into the University system (Goodwin, 1976).

During the last eighty years, the two-year college movement evolved into state networks of 866 public community colleges and 164 private junior colleges, enrolling more than four million full-time and part-time students (Gilbert, 1980).

Private junior colleges developed objectives which were different from public community colleges and usually quite limited. According to Monroe (1972) their purposes were confined to "developing Christian character, training in a specific group of occupations, or serving a special clientele of students" (p. 21). Since junior colleges usually specialized in transfer programs, they were often following the traditional academic practices of four-year colleges (Collins & Nickel, 1977; O'Banion, 1969).

The public junior colleges developed and expanded into comprehensive community colleges offering general education, technical,

and vocational programs to non-traditional as well as traditional students. While attempting to meet the needs of those students who were not typical of the college population (Cross, 1971; Young, 1976), the community college became "a social agency with an open door to further the democratization of society" (Palinchak, 1973, p. 3).

The community college was often described "as a place where every student will achieve success commensurate with his interest and abilities. With comprehensive programs and an open door, there is something for everyone - even for those who have been unsuccessful elsewhere; all may come, and all will be provided for" (O'Banion, 1969, p. 11). While the term "open door" or "open admissions" meant different things in different community colleges, it strongly implied that anyone had the opportunity to pursue post-secondary educational training (Monroe, 1972; Palinchak, 1973).

The community college mission and philosophy, as stated in the literature, appeared unique in the arena of higher education. In actual practice, however, this was not the case at all. The opportunities suggested by open admissions were quickly lost in the details and fine print of rules and regulations which more accurately described the inner workings of the institution. The gap between what was promised and what was practiced quickly becomes a chasm engulfing the naive, non-traditional student and any dreams of success the individual may have acquired (Collins, 1965; Johnson & Avila, 1977; O'Banion, 1969). Monroe (1972) indicated that without supporting policies the open-door admissions concept would become "a revolving door for students who

once admitted are left to shift for themselves and find that they are failures after one semester of college attendance" (pp. 26-27).

One reason for this dramatic difference in philosophy and practice was explained by the rapid increase in the number of community colleges during the 1960's. From 1961 to 1970, the number of public two-year college campuses increased from 405 to 850 (Monroe, 1972, p. 13). During this time the main concerns of administrators were related to planning the curricula and operational procedures, securing funds, supervising the building of physical plants, defining the mission, and employing staff members (Gleazer, 1968). Under such extreme pressures and time limitations to become operational, many of the rules and regulations adopted became quite similar to the traditional standards of four-year colleges and universities. O'Banion (1969) believed that a careful evaluation of such standards "reveals practices that not only fail to display basic philosophy but in many cases actually deny basic philosophy. These rules and regulations relate to probation, suspension, admission, social probation, and grading" (p. 12). The area in which the greatest diversity appeared between philosophy and actual practice was in the process of evaluating the academic progress of community college students.

Many of higher education's potential students did not experience success during their junior or senior high school years, not from a lack of ability, but because of their poor study habits, socioeconomic background, personal difficulties, negative attitudes, immaturity, family histories, and minority backgrounds (Cross, 1971; Garbin & Vaughn,

1971; Johnson & Avila, 1977; Moore, 1970; Palinchak, 1973).

These students, termed "new students" by Pat Cross in 1971, and "high risk" by Foss and Whipple in 1973, had not been academically prepared to compete in traditional school settings. Johnson and Avila (1977) compared the academic progress of two groups of community college students during a period of four years and suggested that...

People who have previously experienced fear and failure in school must have a relatively free, non-threatening, non-punitive environment if they are to overcome that fear. They must be allowed to explore freely, to experience success, and to develop new attitudes. Community colleges for the most part fail to accommodate these needs. Unless complemented by academic policies that allow for this new growth, community college open admissions policies become somewhat of a hoax, promising high-risk students new opportunity, but not providing for its realization. (p. 110)

Thus, community colleges which had traditional grading practices invoked a serious conflict between open admissions and the academic evaluation of their unique students (Collins, 1965; Johnson & Avila, 1977; Palinchak, 1973). Some community colleges tended to use the grading process as a means of "cooling out" or "screening out" students not fit to advance up the rungs of the academic ladder (Clark, 1960; Johnson & Avila, 1977; Monroe, 1972; Palinchak, 1973). Such a traditional evaluation system was based on the A, B, C, D, F letter grades and was supported by punitive measures which included: imposed deadlines for withdrawal, withdrawal with a failing grade, required minimum grade-point averages, academic probation, and academic suspension (Collins & Nickel, 1977; Fensch, 1962; Goldstein

& Tilker, 1971; Johnson & Avila, 1977).

Other community colleges, which attempted to synchronize their grading practices with their philosophy and mission, tended to use non-punitive grading practices (Hahn, 1973; Johnson & Avila, 1977; Palinchak, 1973). Non-punitive grading practices were characterized by Johnson and Avila (1977) as "pass/no fail" (p. 111). The letter grades A, B, C, and sometimes D were supported by non-punitive measures such as: elimination of the F grade, liberalized withdraws and incompletes, no minimum grade point average, use of the "y" grade or the "in-progress" grade, no academic probation, and no academic suspension (Caldwell, 1973; Caldwell & Dodamead, 1973; Cohen, 1971; Ebersole, 1975; Elsner & Brydon, 1974; O'Banion, 1969). Non-punitive grading practices enabled students to take courses until they satisfied course requirements. Students normally withdrew themselves from the institution when they became convinced that they would not be able to meet the necessary requirements and standards. However, it must be stressed that the most important consideration was "that everyone has an opportunity and is not punished by an F grade in courses where progress is unsatisfactory" (Caldwell & Dodamead, 1973, p. 29).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The literature revealed that the open door philosophy and traditional grading practices of many two-year colleges were in direct conflict. The result was that a large number of two-year college students were "unnecessarily discouraged and thereby deterred from

higher education by community colleges that operate as mini-universities (Johnson & Avila, 1977, p. 109). The present status of non-punitive grading practices and policies in the two-year college remained highly speculative due to a lack of substantive research. Therefore, it was the purpose of this study to determine: (1) the number of public and private two-year colleges currently using non-punitive grading practices (2) the different forms of non-punitive grading practices currently in use in public and private two-year colleges (3) the institutional characteristics of public and private two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices to include: head count enrollment, academic policy control, curricula offerings (4) the degree of satisfaction, among deans of instruction, with non-punitive grading practices being used in public and private two-year colleges (5) the future trends of non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year colleges.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

More specifically the purpose of this study was to answer the following research questions:

1. How many public and private two-year colleges are currently using non-punitive grading practices?
2. What are the different forms of non-punitive grading practices now in use in public and private two-year colleges?
3. Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and among private two-year colleges with different enrollment classifications?
4. Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and among private two-year colleges with different academic policy control?

5. Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and among private two-year colleges with different curricular emphasis?
6. What is the level of satisfaction among deans of instruction with the current non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year colleges?
7. What are the future trends of non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year colleges?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Prior to the completion of this study, the literature indicated that there had been studies of non-punitive grading practices in individual two-year colleges (Basonic, 1975; Breen, 1978; Caldwell & Dodamead, 1973; Claesgens, 1972; Ebersole, 1975; Handelman, 1974; Maxwell, 1974; Stein, 1976; Tschechtelin, 1974; Woods, 1978), in state two-year college systems (Collins, 1965; Collins & Nickel, 1975; Elsner & Brydon, 1974; LACCD Grading Practices and Policies, Research Report, 1976; Pyle, 1970; Smith, 1969a; Smith, 1969b) and in national studies which surveyed small samples of two-year colleges (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, 1971; Caldwell, 1973; Collins & Nickel, 1975; Warren, 1971). However, no national study of non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year colleges had ever been conducted using the entire population. The data base created by this study of two-year colleges provided academic policy makers at state and local levels with a comprehensive up-to-date description of non-punitive grading practices. In addition to indicating the extent of such practices, the study made comparisons

between public and private institutions. Within the public sector additional comparisons, based on specific institutional characteristics, were analyzed. Levels of satisfaction with existing non-punitive practices were indicated by the academic deans as well as their beliefs on the future of non-punitive grading practices.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions were assigned.

Public two-year college: A college labeled as such in the 1980 Community, Junior and Technical College Directory and limited to the continental United States.

Private two-year college: A college labeled as such in the 1980 Community, Junior and Technical College Directory and limited to the continental United States.

Traditional grading practices: Letter grades (A, B, C, D, F) or numbers or symbols which can be converted to letter grades (AACRAO Survey of Grading Policies, 1971).

Non-Traditional grading practices: Letter grades (A, B, C, D, F) and/or the use of pass/fail, written achievement reports, credit - no credit, which cannot be converted to letter grades and may be punitive in their interpretation.

Non-Punitive grading practices: A system of grading which does not assign zero or negative values to low grades (i.e., "D" or "F") which must be offset by grades with high positive values assigned to

them (i.e., "A" or "B"). Therefore, non-punitive grading practices do not penalize students for failing to meet a specific level of performance. Non-punitive grading practices include, but are not limited to the following: elimination of the "F" grade, use of positive transcripts, unlimited withdrawal from courses without penalty, and liberal use of incomplete or continuing status grades.

POPULATION FOR THE STUDY

The population for this study consisted of the deans of instruction and/or chief academic officers of all the non-profit public (n=866) and private (n=164) two-year colleges in the continental United States as listed in the 1980 American Association of Community, Junior, and Technical College Directory. This Directory did not list information related to two-year proprietary institutions and, therefore, they were not included in the population.

Multi-campus institutions and consolidated community college districts were surveyed at the central office level and the chief academic officer reported for all colleges in the district or all multi-campus of the main institution. This survey technique was based on the assumption that all colleges in a district or all multi-campus of an institution were under the control of the same board and, therefore, the policies would be the same. To insure that this assumption was correct, all multi-campus and district level chief academic officers were asked in the questionnaire if they had grading practices on their other campuses that were different from what the main campus or central office

reported. All positive replies were followed-up with a questionnaire sent to the respective institution for a complete description of the grading practices.

METHODOLOGY

With the assistance of the doctoral committee, the researcher developed the Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey for community, junior, and technical two-year colleges. A survey of the entire population of public and private two-year colleges in the continental United States was the primary data collection methodology. The data were analyzed and reported after two follow-up survey mailings had been completed.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While the population of this study consisted of all the two-year public and private colleges in the continental United States, the primary focus of the study was limited to those institutions which plan to implement non-punitive grading practices, those institutions which have implemented non-punitive grading practices and are considering dropping them, and those institutions which have implemented non-punitive grading practices and are continuing with the practices. Two-year colleges identified as having traditional, or non-traditional grading practices, but which did not conform to the researcher's definition of non-punitive, completed only Part I of the questionnaire.

SUMMARY

This chapter served as an introduction as well as overview of the study. An introduction to the study through a detailed discussion of the conflict between two-year colleges' "open door" admissions policies and traditional grading systems preceded the statement of the problem. Seven research questions were developed to adequately address the purpose of the study. A mail survey of the entire population of community, junior, and technical colleges was the primary data collection methodology. Data analysis procedures were discussed, significant terms defined, the population and limitations described, and the significance of the study presented.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter contains a review of relevant literature pertaining to grading practices in post-secondary education in the United States. The chapter is organized as follows: 1) highlights of the historical evolution of traditional, non-traditional, and non-punitive grading practices in universities and two-year colleges, 2) relevant research related to the development of non-punitive grading in two-year colleges, 3) arguments for and against non-punitive grading practices.

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS OF GRADING PRACTICES

There is no solution to the grading problem satisfactory to all concerned... Grading is inevitable; it is at best, inaccurate and unreliable. (Dressel and Nelson, 1961, p. 251)

America's first colleges and universities were greatly influenced by and modeled on the "English college ideal" (Brickman, 1974; de Warville, 1953). Many of Harvard College's statutes were borrowed directly from Elizabethan statutes of the University of Cambridge and the phrase, "pro modo Academicarum in Anglia", often used to indicate how things were done at Harvard translated, "according to the manner of universities in England" (Brubacher and Rudy, 1976, p. 3).

The primary methods of instruction during the Colonial period included: the class recitation, customarily in Greek and Latin; the lecture method; disputations; and syllogistic disputations, usually performed in Latin (Bissell, 1962; Brubacher and Rudy, 1976; Danckaerts,

1953; Morison, Part II, 1936; Norton, 1895). With so much daily emphasis on rote memory and recitation, it was natural for the testing of students to be done orally and usually in a public exhibition (de Warville, 1953; Dexter, 1901; Brubacher and Rudy, 1976; Morison, Part II, 1936; Trollope, 1953). However, due to the restrictive nature of such methods, public oral examination rapidly gave way to other forms of student evaluation. Brubacher and Rudy (1976) indicated that one limitation of the public exhibitions for examinations was that they "militated against dependable comparisons of the relative ability of the different students. Often by chance good students would make only a mediocre achievement on a difficult question and thereby suffer in comparison with some inferior student who would manage to make a good showing on one of the easier questions" (p. 94).

In the early years of Harvard College grades were still secondary to social standing (Morison, 1936). Eliot (1923) distinguished the relative importance of "society" at Harvard when he wrote that through 1772, "the official lists of the graduates of Harvard College were arranged, like the lists of undergraduates, in an order determined by the social and occupational standing of their parents; thereafter the names were arranged in alphabetical order" (p. 7). However, the graduation ceremonies gave the examiners and other faculty members an opportunity to select a class valedictorian and salutatorian (Morison, 1936; Dexter, 1901). Smallwood (1935) suggested that since there were such positions [valedictorian and salutatorian] to be filled, a "scale for measuring attainment" must have been developed (p. 42).

The first real marking system was used at Yale about 1782 in the form of descriptive adjectives (Smallwood, 1935). The President of Yale, Ezra Stiles, noted in his diary of 1785 that fifty-eight students were present to be examined and there were "Twenty Optimi, sixteen second optimi, 12 Inferiores (Boni), ten Pejores" (Dexter, 1901, Vol. III, p. 154, footnote #1).

After 1800, many leaders in education began to realize "that evaluation is a necessary and desirable part of academic procedure. As a result, a variety of scales came into existence" (Smallwood, 1935, p. 42). By 1813 Yale had devised a four point scale which gave tutors more flexibility in grading since decimals were used to increase the range (Smallwood, 1935).

Smallwood's (1935) extensive research indicated that Harvard's first numerical scale did not evolve until 1830 when an examination in rehetoric was marked on a scale of 20 (p. 45). In 1837 Harvard's "mathematical and philosophical professors marked on the basis of 100" (p. 46).

One of the first breaks from traditional marking scales occurred at the University of Michigan. Smallwood (1935) noted the impact of such a drastic change. "It is well to realize that here is the first evidence that the accepted method of evaluating students was perhaps not the most desirable. In 1851 the students at Michigan either did or did not pass their work" (p. 48).

During the late 1800's a number of colleges and universities experimented with various numerical marking systems which were in vogue

at the time. Harvard's own experimentation led to the adoption of a "scale of merit" in 1895 which used the descriptors "Failed," "Passed", and "Passed with Distinction". The same year Michigan revised and expanded its marks to include: "Passed," "Incomplete", "Conditioned", "Not Passed", and "Absent" (Smallwood, 1935, p. 17).

In 1896 Mount Holyoke College devised a system of grading which combined descriptive adjectives, percentages, and group letters into the letter grades "A, B, C, D, E". Two years later a system was modified to the letter grades which are still very much in use in the 1980's, "A, B, C, D, F" (Smallwood, 1935, p. 52). Elsner and Brydon (1974) suggested that the evaluation of the letter grade was based on "the lack of any agreed upon definition of knowledge and the absence of any really precise way to measure the learning process" (p. 7).

The use of traditional letter grades continued unabated until the 1960's. Evans (1976) suggested that the "1960's brought a renewed reaction to grading" (p. 33). This same feeling was shared by other writers including Harrington (1974) who characterized this transitional period in the following manner:

In the aftermath of student dissatisfaction and protest which permeated virtually every area of American life in the 1960's, a reexamination began within higher education which seriously questions many traditional practices, including that of letter grading. (p. 376)

In addition to the social unrest and national protests of the 1960's there were other more specific educationally related reasons why the competitive A through F grading system was being reviewed in

a hostile manner. "These critics based their opposition on several assumptions, two major ones being: (a) students will learn more in their courses where the deleterious effects of competitive grading are reduced or eliminated; (b) encouraging learning through incentives such as grades is not in keeping with contemporary educational philosophy which say a student should study because he is interested in the subject matter, and not a grade in the subject" (Karlin & Stuart, 1969, p. 38).

One of the first universities to abolish the traditional grading system was Antioch College. On July 1, 1968 Antioch replaced their A through F system with a "credit -- no credit system". William Warren, Dean of faculty, was quoted as saying that the new system was "definitely an advance" ("Antioch Abolishes Grades", 1968, p. 391).

Grading reforms were recommended at Brown University in 1969 by an ad hoc committee on educational principles which consisted of faculty members and students. The committee recommended, through a paper entitled, "A Working Paper for Education at Brown University", that courses be graded in one of the following ways: A, B, C, No Credit or Satisfactory/No Credit. The methods of grading were restricted in two ways:

1. An instructor could designate that a specific course be graded Satisfactory/No Credit only and therefore close the grading option to the students.
2. All grading options were final at midterm.
(Noble, 1971, p. 720)

For its efforts Brown University was praised in the media "as an example where students had been able to accomplish sweeping reforms,

first of an educational nature, and in a peaceful manner" (Noble, 1971, p. 719).

At Berkeley students were allowed to elect a pass/not pass grading option for at least one-third of their required courses. Administrators felt that such an option would allow students to explore new courses with less grade pressure. Harrington (1974) indicated that "when student experiences with the pass-not pass grading option were evaluated... the majority of undergraduates favored the option and opposed grading in general" (p. 376). While the faculty members surveyed viewed the new grading option as having many educational benefits, "they did not favor an extension of the option nor a nongrading system" (p. 387).

Reporting on the first year of the pass/fail option at Brandeis University, Sgan (1969) wrote:

I would not join in the rhetoric about the amazing results that come as soon as students are released from letter grade evaluations so that they can jump into areas of knowledge which they have hungered for but which have been kept from them as a result of the "tyranny" of letter grades. Rather, I think that the lessening of the evaluative rigors to which students have become accustomed has been well received by the students and has diminished to some extent the individual student's worry and the anxiety of the student body as a whole. The mere act of grade reform has, in my opinion, been positive in terms of the morale of the study body. It has encouraged students to move into areas in which they have some interest but which they have not previously recognized as being possible electives. (p. 144)

Yale University installed a grading system which maintained the traditional A, B, C, D letter grades but eliminated the "F" grade. Any student failing to meet the objectives of a course was required

to repeat the course or take another course but there was no public record of the failure. Taft (1973) explained that this grading system was designed to "encourage students to broaden their education by taking the so-called 'tough' courses, to experiment with courses outside their field, and not to worry that a failure may hurt their future career plans" (p. 284). For Yale University the elimination of the "F" grade represented the 11th change in grading practices during the last sixty-seven years (Taft, 1973).

In order to isolate additional new trends in grading practices Quann (1970) surveyed 150 four-year colleges and universities which were experimenting with pass/fail or other grading innovations. Of those institutions responding 68 percent offered the pass/fail or a similar grading option (p. 78). However, the credit/no credit grading option which eliminated the concept of failure was seen as the "emerging pattern" (p. 79). The main reasons given by respondents for experimenting with grading alternatives were "to encourage students to explore subjects outside their major without fear of jeopardizing the grade point average" and "to minimize the fear of failing" (p. 78).

In 1971 the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRACO) conducted a survey of the grading policies and practices of its member institutions (n = 1,696). There was a strong trend among the responding institutions to "modify traditional grading policies" (p. 1). The pass/fail and credit/no credit grading practices were "utilized by 61 percent of the responding institutions on a partial basis, and by two percent exclusively" (p. 1). It was noted, however,

that while many institutions reported that they used non-traditional grading practices, less than two percent of the responding institutions actually eliminated failing grades (p. 2). The grading practices had shifted from traditional to non-traditional but remained highly punitive in practice.

The AACRAO (1971) study also found that traditional grading practices were more likely to be followed in two-year colleges; this conclusion was supported four years later in a national study of 544 public and private, two and four-year institutions conducted by Collins and Nickel (1977, p. 244). However, in both studies the number of two-year colleges surveyed was quite small. The Collins and Nickel (1977) study clearly indicated that traditional grading practices "were being modified or changed even more drastically at all levels of higher education in all states" (p. 243).

NON-PUNITIVE GRADING RESEARCH IN THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE

National Studies

Prior to the completion of this study most of the national studies of grading practices were concerned with the plethora of grading practices at both two-year and four-year colleges. Little emphasis or focus was placed directly on non-punitive grading practices in the two-year college and even when this did occur the sample sizes were quite small. In 1971 the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) conducted a survey of 1,696 member institutions to

determine: "(1) the nature and extent of changes from the traditional grading system, (2) practices in accepting transfer students and credits from institutions with non-traditional grading systems, (3) the rate and recency of change in grading systems, and (4) the anticipated nature of grading systems in the near future" (p. 1). The report indicated that the attachment to traditional grading practices was strongest in colleges with enrollments of less than 1,000 and in two-year colleges (p. 1). However, of the 897 two-year colleges in operation in 1971, only 279 responded to the survey (p. 8). In response to the question, "What type of grading system do you have?" 211 (74.3%) of the two-year colleges used a traditional grading system, 2 (.70%) utilized a non-traditional grading system and 71 (25%) maintained a grading system which combined traditional and non-traditional practices (p. 9). Only 12 (4.27%) of the two-year colleges which responded to the survey indicated that failing grades were not assigned to their students (p. 21). It is interesting to note that 131 (47.81%) of the two-year institutions anticipated that their grading systems would become "less-traditional" within the next five years (p. 33).

Caldwell (1973) summarized the then current research on grading systems that was of possible significance to administrators of the two-year college and developed an annotated bibliography. In addition to listing published articles which discussed general grading practices, Caldwell described nine community college marking systems to show the diversity of such systems.

Another national survey of grading practices was conducted in 1974 by Collins and Nickel and their findings were published a year later. A survey form was developed to "elicit current information on practices of grading, recording, and averaging" (p. 7). Of the 544 institutions responding, 178 were two-year colleges (p. 7). The use of all-inclusive or neuter grades instead of the "F" grade was a present practice in 39 of the two-year colleges (p. 21). Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory was being used by only six percent of the two-year colleges, while Credit/No Credit grades were used by 29 percent of the responding two-year colleges. Only 8 percent of the two-year institutions used a Pass/Fail grading option (p. 21). "The data on the use of the S/U, Cr/NCr, and/or P/F grades by two-year schools indicate that these schools utilized these grading practices much less than the four-year schools. The study made no attempt to ascertain reasons for the high usage by four-year schools or the low usage by two-year institutions" (p. 22).

State Studies

Although national studies of grading practices have been quite limited in number and unrepresentative of two-year colleges in general (AACRAO, 1971; Collins and Nickel, 1975), more significant studies of grading practices in the two-year college have taken place at the state level. Smith (1969a) asked the deans of instruction or presidents of 94 two-year colleges in California what percentage of their faculty used some form of non-punitive grading. The response was that at

approximately "one-fifth of California's community colleges all of the faculty will be using some form of non-punitive grading system in academic year 1969-70. At almost one-quarter of the colleges at least 50 percent of the faculty will be using an actual or defacto ABCW System" (p. 1). Collins further revealed that "a review of the 1968-1969 and 1969-1970 catalogs suggests that there is a dramatic move to the 'defacto' non-punitive schemes" (1969, p. 3). In another article written the same year, Smith (1969b) summarized that 68 percent of the junior colleges in California were experimenting with some form of non-punitive grading practices.

Pyle (1970) wrote a report designed to give information on the employment and educational situation in Colorado. However, the report also presented suggestions to the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education for solving certain problems within the system. One of these suggestions dealt specifically with non-punitive grading and appeared in the form of a resolution:

WHEREAS, the abstract concepts required in much of education beyond the high school are new to some students coming from families who have not previously sought collegiate education and inasmuch as grades should be building blocks, not stumbling blocks to success, new non-punitive grading systems which replace "D" and "F" grades with a simple "W" may be of assistance to students in the development of an adequate self-concept and success pattern without being a threat to standards, be it therefore

RESOLVED THAT THE STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION URGES BOTH STATE SYSTEM AND DISTRICT COLLEGES TO EXPLORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NON-PUNITIVE GRADING SYSTEMS. (p. 6)

By the mid-seventies non-punitive grading practices were recognized as "a national phenomenon... still in the experimental stage at many institutions" (Elsner & Brydon, 1974, p. 3). The same year Elsner and Brydon (1974) reviewed the unpublished work of Dietz who had conducted a survey of 88 California community colleges during the 1970-71 academic year. Dietz (cited in Elsner & Brydon, 1974) reported that 55 of the community colleges "were pursuing or experimenting with grading policies that will change the number of students on probation (for example, giving only A, B, C, and W grades or allowing students to drop certain grades upon a change of major). In effect, of the 81 institutions which responded on this portion of the survey, 67.9% indicated that at that time (1970-71) they had some form of non-punitive grading" (p. 4).

Dietz (cited in Elsner & Brydon, 1974) also classified the various forms of non-punitive grading practices being used in California at the time and indicated the number of community colleges utilizing the system.

1. Liberalized Withdrawals: (n = 20)
2. Credit/No Credit: (n = 16)
3. Forgiveness of Penalty Grades: (n = 10)
4. Elimination of F Grades: (n = 13)
5. Replacement of Penalty Grades by Repetition of Courses:(n = 5)

In summary then, we can observe that the California community colleges have followed the national trend in experimenting with different non-punitive grading options. One apparent distinction lies in the more extensive use of the pass-fail option by the four-year institutions and the community colleges preference for the credit/no credit concept. (Dietz, cited in Elsner & Brydon, 1971, p. 6)

The Collins and Nickel (1975) national study, discussed earlier in this chapter, was also a state study of thirteen two-year colleges in Kansas. The grading practices of these thirteen public and private two-year colleges were compared with the grading practices reported in 178 two-year colleges throughout the country. It was found that "there were few, if any, differences between the responses of the two-year schools in Kansas or in the national group" (p. 21).

In 1976, the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) published a report which examined grading practices and policies in the district's nine community colleges. The report (LACCD, Research Report 76-06, 1976) cited a study conducted by the California Postsecondary Education Commission in February 1976, entitled, Through the Open Door, which explained why grading changes had taken place in the district and throughout the state.

One has been the "forgiveness" policy in grading where poor grades earned by a student in the past were expunged from student records. The second, a more recent development, has been the policy of not awarding punitive grades ("F" and "WF") at all, on the grounds that the student's records should show only the coursework in which he or she has demonstrated satisfactory academic achievement. (p. 3)

Breen (1977) examined the grading practices in the 29 Michigan Community Colleges. However, his findings indicated that very little, if any, non-punitive grading practices were being used. Twenty-four of the colleges were using the traditional five-grade system which assigned both a letter and grade points to each grade awarded. Only one college reported recording only passing grades and the same institution does not assign any grade point average.

Individual Two-Year College Studies

Perhaps the most revealing studies on grading systems in the two-year college were conducted by researchers at individual institutions. As early as 1969, O'Banion reviewed the non-punitive grading system used by one junior college, College of the Mainland in Texas City. In this system the letter grades "A, B, C, I, WI, or WP" could be received by a student. If minimum standards were not met at the end of the term, the student received an "I" grade and negotiated a contract with the instructor. The written contract stipulated the amount of time the student had to complete the required work or bring the work up to standard. If the standards were not met at the end of the negotiated period of time, the student was withdrawn from the class and the grade changed to "WI". If a student merely withdrew from a course during the first nine weeks, the student was given a "W". After the first nine weeks a student received either a "WP" or "WI" at the time of withdrawal. Special options were available to students who needed to transfer prior to completion of the incomplete grade. Students who

received the "I" in a course which was a prerequisite to another course had to have written permission from the instructor of the course in which the "I" had been given and from the instructor of the course in which the student wanted to enroll (pp. 14-15). O'Banion (1969) suggested that such grading systems "encouraged students to broaden their interests and allow more freedom of movement with respect to courses" (p. 15).

A study of grading practices at St. Mary's Junior College, in Minneapolis, Minnesota by Claesgens (1972) revealed that "the practice of pass/no pass and satisfactory/unsatisfactory was used infrequently, and only those courses which have no credit or only a single credit and often are not transferable, such as remedial mathematics and medical technology" (pp. 62-63).

In a more dramatic attempt to implement the philosophy of the community college into grading practices, Polk Community College in Florida devised and implemented a non-punitive grading system that was preceded by five years of research and planning. The grading system evolved around the letter grades, "A", "B", "C", "D", and "W". The elimination of the "F" gave students greater flexibility to "explore" new areas of interest without the fear of failure. The student was always "in progress" toward completion of coursework without any arbitrary time limit imposed by the institution. Administrators and faculty "feel if a student spends four months of his life, his money and energy -- having nothing to show for it -- is 'punishment' enough. Why inflict an F on them?... If he does not finish satisfactorily, he obtains

nothing for the effort in terms of credit. Standards are not lowered in any way" (Caldwell & Dodamead, 1973, p. 29). The study at Polk Community College also revealed that "students tend to withdraw themselves after extended periods of receiving no credit" (Caldwell & Dodamead, 1973, p. 24).

Handelman (1974) examined the phenomenon of grade inflation at Broward Community College in Fort Landerdale, Florida and concluded that "a non-fail or pass-fail evaluation system might be in order".

In the Fall 1973 semester Mattatuck Community College implemented a non-punitive grading system which eliminated the use of plus and minus grades, eliminated the "F" grade and liberalized withdrawal policies. Maxwell (1974) compared a sample of fifty students enrolled in the old traditional system with fifty students enrolled in the non-punitive system. Although the internal validity of the study is questioned due to historical events at the time, Maxwell (1974) found a significant difference in the persistence in college rate of the two samples. The non-punitive system adversely affected the registration of students for the second term.

Tschechtelin (1975) examined the non-punitive grading system began at Harford Community College in the fall of 1974. The letter grades "A, B, C, D" were maintained but the "F" grade was replaced by an asterisk (*). The asterisk was given when course requirements had not been met and it was not counted in the computation of the Quality Point Average (QPA). This study focused on how the non-punitive grading system affected students' QPA's and the distribution of grades

throughout the college. Compared to 1973 there were more non-passing grades given in 1974 and more A grades. In 1974 incompletes dropped by six percent and withdraws rose by five percent.

At Harrisburg Area Community College two important studies were conducted in 1975. Basonic (1975) studied the effectiveness of the policy which eliminated the use of minimum grade point averages to remain in good academic standing. This research compared the academic progress of a group of students who were suspended from the college, but readmitted after a period of time (Group 1) and a group of students who qualified for suspension but instead were allowed to re-enroll the next semester with no period of academic inactivity (Group 2). Basonic found that the success rate, as measured by the GPA, of students after readmission was higher in Group 1 than in Group 2.

During the same year Ebersole (1975) reviewed the use of the "Y" or "in-progress" grade at Harrisburg Area Community College. This grade was used when a student did not successfully meet the requirements of a course. Instead of failing, the student, with the permission of the instructor, repeated the course. The Y grade did not count as credit and was not computed in the grade point average. The results of Ebersole's study indicated that many students were able to successfully complete a course after receiving the Y grade and re-enrolling in the course. The administrators and faculty felt that they had a non-punitive grading device which benefitted their students.

Metropolitan Community College experimented with a non-punitive grading device when the pass-withdraw option was introduced in lieu of

the traditional letter grades (A, B, C, D, F). The students were allowed to take the P-W option in only one class per quarter. Stein (1976) examined student reaction and use of the option by comparing data from fall quarter 1971 and winter quarter 1975. It is interesting to note that in 1971, 65.5 percent of the students using the option wanted a P rather than a D grade, but in 1975 only 42.5 percent of the students using the option wanted a P rather than a D grade. While there was little change in the number of students using the non-punitive grading option, there was an attitudinal change on the part of the students as to the acceptability of the P grade.

NON-PUNITIVE GRADING: PRO AND CON

Evaluation is an integral and indispensable part of the learning process. Without some form of appraisal that provides orientation and confirmation of achievement, attempts at learning are inefficient and the student becomes demoralized. The teacher's evaluation of the student's activities or accomplishments is a most effective aid to learning. (Haagen, 1964, p. 89)

Throughout the history of the educational process administrators and faculty members have attempted to evaluate students by the use of symbols or numerals which would in some way adequately describe varying levels of achievement. However, many academic debates have emerged over what symbols should be employed as "grades" and what definitions should be given to these symbols. Following a review of approximately 115 articles related to grades and grading systems, Dobbin and Smith (1960) concluded that while "research has uncovered

some limitations and suggested some promising direction in marking procedure, no commonly accepted system has emerged from half a century of inquiry" (p. 789). In the twenty years which followed, academicians were still not able to solve the grading dilemma. Eble (1977) recorded the prognosis of the situation when he wrote:

It is interesting that grading has so flourished in a society which avows egalitarian sentiments yet lives with a widening gap between failure and success. It is not just simplicity that keeps the grading system in place, nor its usefulness as an admission criterion for further study or the professions, nor even the students' needs to get feedback on learning. Grades probably arise from some basic urge to make distinctions, to sort and rank human beings, to unconsciously operate in harmony with the rest of society. The arguments over the validity of using grades will continue. Averages will go up and down. Faculty and students will continue to tinker with grades, resent them, and search for a better system, but the basic practices will not be greatly changed. Nevertheless, I regard the flexibility that came into grading practices in the mid-1960s as a healthier condition than the time, not long before, when bell-shaped curves, pluses and minuses, percentages and percentiles were commonplace and when only a few daring colleges resisted grades at all. (p.111)

The "flexibility" of the 60's discussed by Eble (1977) was the implementation of various non-punitive grading practices throughout institutions of higher education. Such diverse practices were to include: elimination of the F grade, liberalized withdrawals and incompletes, no minimum grade point average, use of the "Y" grade or "in-progress" grade, no academic probation, and no academic suspension (Caldwell, 1973; Caldwell & Dodamead, 1973; Cohen, 1971; Ebersole, 1975;

Elsner & Brydon, 1974; O'Banion, 1969). It was suggested by Ebersole (1975) that such changes in grading practices were developed by the view "that the only significance of grades is the distinction between success and failure, more so than the attempt to distinguish degree of success. Systems of pass/fail, successful/unsuccessful, credit/no credit and other symbolic expressions of simple polarity between success and failure are popular alternatives to graded systems of A, B, C, D, F or 4, 3, 2, 1, 0" (p. 4).

The proponents of non-punitive grading offered many arguments to defend the thesis that grades should not "punish" or "restrain" a student merely because course objectives were not met at a predetermined level in a prescribed time frame. This line of reasoning was especially prevalent in the two-year college where grading practices and college philosophy were held not to be mutually exclusive. As early as 1965, Collins had expressed this generic relationship when he wrote "that grading policies and practices can't be separated from the assumptions of purpose to be served by a junior college" (p. 33). The purpose of the junior college, Collins (1965) interjected, was "to hold people for maximum education, not to get rid of them" (p. 34). O'Banion (1969) further described the two-year college as being "student-centered" and a place where students should be able to experience some degree of "success commensurate with his interest and abilities" (p. 11).

Caldwell and Dodamead (1973) believed from their research that "the non-punitive grading system was a more accurate way to implement college philosophy" (p. 29). At Polk Community College (Florida)

these authors reported that the use of non-punitive grading allowed students to explore the curriculum without having to regret the exploration ten weeks later. The student was regarded as being "in-progress" toward completing course objectives. If the objectives were not achieved, no credit was awarded and, therefore, standards were not lowered. Such a system also allowed marginal and average students to take "high risk" courses without the fear of jeopardizing their quality point averages. Other writers including Bloom, 1966; Collins, 1965; Dressel, 1976; Fensch, 1962; Gleazer, 1968; Johnson & Avila, 1977; O'Banion, 1969; Smith, 1969b; Warren, 1971, agreed that there is enough punishment in not awarding credit to a student at the end of a term, without having to inflict the F grade.

The "open-door" philosophy of most public two-year colleges exhorted and encouraged thousands of "morally underprivileged," "ethically disadvantaged" and "culturally deprived" students to enroll in transfer and occupational/vocational classes (Collins, 1965, p. 34). Such students, characterized as "high risk" by Foss and Whipple (1973) were new to post-secondary education. In the traditional evaluation systems employed by their respective high schools, they were not always successful. Failure in written expression, reading comprehension, verbal communication as well as in economic status and social mobility had dominated their lives. A destructive cycle had been established over the years, if not through generations, and the two-year college represented one last chance to achieve some measure of success.

In their study of such students Johnson and Avila (1977) concluded that "a relatively free, non-threatening, non-punitive environment" was necessary in order for the students to overcome their dreaded fear of continued failure (p. 110).

As a result of traditional grading practices, failure was usually reflected in the grades received by students who needed the most encouragement and who needed to experience some level of success. Child and Whiting (1949) and other researchers have determined that an individual's level of aspiration is greatly affected by past failures. Their conclusions, which supported the philosophy expounded by the advocates of non-punitive grading, were stated as follows:

1. Success generally leads to a raising level of aspiration and failure to a lowering.
2. Failure is more likely than success to lead to withdrawal in the form of avoidance of setting a level of aspiration.
3. Effects of failure on level of aspiration are more varied than those of success.
4. The stronger the success, the greater is the probability of a rise in level of aspiration; the stronger the failure, the greater is the probability of a lowering.
5. Shifts in level of aspiration are in part a function of changes in the subjects confidence in his ability to obtain his goals. (pp. 306-312)

Therefore, non-punitive grading allowed the students the second chance needed to break the dismal patterns of failure. Johnson and Avila (1977) viewed the two-year college with non-punitive grading patterns as an "opportunity-center where people are given a chance to

grow, develop, and overcome handicaps" (p. 115).

Smith (1969b) summarized such persuasive arguments for non-punitive grading practices as follows:

1. Information that is provided is not terribly valuable: grades are inconsistent within teachers, across teachers, across departments across schools. Grades are not correlated highly with later performance.
2. Grades provide little incentive to work harder; they only penalize the failures.
3. Grades provide students with extrinsic motivation and not intrinsic, "learning-for-learning's-sake", motivation.
4. Grades provide incentive to beat the grading system itself and not to learn more efficiently.
5. An "F" grade is a double penalty: it not only grants no credit, it must be made up in other course. It is a penalty for learning something, however little.
6. There are really many dimensions to grades: competence, improvement, potential, drive, etc. One grade cannot summarize them all. Therefore, we should have none.
7. Elimination of the fear of an "F" grade as a penalty makes more open, frank, honest relations between students and teachers possible.
8. A-F grades makes instructors critics instead of helpers.
9. A-F grading systems discourages experimentation outside of one's field of special interest. (pp. 1-2)

In one experiment with non-punitive grading at Hofstra College in the spring of 1962, Mannello (1964) noted that "less cheating took place than in other college courses; students felt less tension in connection with class tests, changed their conception of the function of a test as an educational tool, and maintained both the quantity and

the quality of their academic performance; and finally, ample provision was made for individual needs and interests" (p. 334). In traditional grading practices the author explained, "For the thrill of learning in a relaxed environment, we substitute the anxieties of grade-building" (p. 334).

Not all educators experienced the joys and triumphs of non-punitive grading practices, nor do they believe there are any. These opponents have loudly voiced their opposition to the removal of the threat of failure. Writing in support of traditional grading practices Hahn (1973) indicated that "the idea that people ought to be evaluated springs from a primitive notion which tells us that we are different; and that the ways in which we differ are important; that these differences need to be recognized, and even recorded" (p. 27).

Another critic of non-punitive grading, Lindblade and others (1971), challenged the practices as being unrealistic. "The cold hard facts are that, in real life, people do lose - so much so that we may dub one person 'a loser', another 'a two-time loser' and still another 'a born loser'" (p. 727). This view was shared by Hahn (1973) who stressed that "when we evaluate people artificially, regardless of our motives, we will probably do them a disservice" (p. 27). Ebel (1980) also indicated that there is no way to abolish failure even though failing grades have been eliminated. "Success in learning cannot be guaranteed, and the near universal experience of teachers is that it does not always happen" (p. 386).

In a continuing attack on humanistic educators whose studies indicated that students are motivated by success, Ebel, (1980) reasoned that 1) "success has no meaning or value in the absence of the possibility and indeed the occasional experience of failure. Success and failure are opposite sides of the same coin"; 2) "there is educational value in the experience of failure. It can teach. It can motivate. If the goal is important enough, if the resolve is strong enough, initial failure may be followed by renewed and improved efforts to succeed" (pp. 387-388). Birney (1964) also supported this claim when he wrote that "failing and near-failing grades will produce the greatest amount of effort to study" (p. 96).

Another strong threat to the non-punitive grading movement was the impact of a nongraded transcript. Graduate and professional schools were reported to be the most concerned about the use of non-punitive grading practices (Goldstein, 1979; Heininger, 1972; Rosser, 1970; Warren, 1971). At the community college level articulation with four-year colleges and universities and employers appeared to be jeopardized by non-punitive grading. Hahn (1973) warned that such transcripts would cause "admission officers as well as employers to look for other criteria (entrance tests, pre-employment exams, etc.), if they find that the credentials we distribute tell less and less about a student's probability of success" (p. 27).

Smith's (1969b) study of grading systems summarized the basic arguments against non-punitive grading practices and they remain current today.

1. Grades provide needed information about student quality to: students, graduate schools, parents, employers.
2. Grades provide incentives to do better work, learn more.
3. Grades provide, in conjunction with some sort of dismissal criteria, a mechanism for opening up slots for potentially more qualified students.
4. Failure occurs in the nonacademic world; to create a failureless academic world provides students with a false image of the 'real world'.
5. The world is a competitive place; to remove competition in schools would be dishonest. Further, competition among students for grades increases the amount learned.
6. There are really many dimensions to grades; competence, improvement, potential, drive, etc. One grade cannot summarize them all. Therefore, the need for a multi-dimensional grading system.
7. Some students need the fear of a low grade to induce them to work more. After all, not every student thirsts for knowledge. (pp. 2-3)

Recently a new emphasis on stricter academic standards led Miami-Dade Community College and Passaic County Community College administrators to introduce "D" and "F" grades as well as academic suspension and expulsion (McCabe, 1981; Mellander, 1980; Middleton, 1981). While academic dismissals and suspensions rose sharply at both schools, administrators at Passaic County Community College insisted that "the previous 'non-punitive' grading system - no D's, no F's - was a proven failure" (Mellander, 1977, p. 15).

SUMMARY

Chapter 2 provided a review of the literature by presenting highlights of the historical evolution of traditional, non-traditional, and non-punitive grading practices in universities and two-year colleges. Relevant research related to the development of non-punitive grading in two-year colleges, and arguments for and against non-punitive grading practices were also discussed in detail.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

A description of the survey instrument as well as the procedures utilized in the collection and treatment of the data are described in this chapter. The organization of the chapter is as follows: 1) design of the survey instrument, 2) population for the study, 3) data collection procedures, and 4) treatment of the data.

THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The researcher designed the Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey (Appendix D) to address the seven major research questions. The survey instrument was constructed in two parts.

Part I of the survey instrument (See Figure 1) was designed to elicit demographic data, institutional characteristics and the status of non-punitive grading practices and policies. The status of the non-punitive grading practices in the responding institution (see Figure 1, item 8) determined whether Part II of the survey instrument would be completed. If one of the following items were checked the respondent was directed not to complete Part II of the survey instrument.

- A. We have not considered implementing non-punitive grading practices.
- B. We have considered adopting such practices but have rejected the idea. (Please explain why the practices were rejected).

PART I

1. Is your institution private or public? (Check one)
 - public
 - private
2. Check the item which best classifies your institution:
 - junior college
 - comprehensive community college
 - technical college/technical institute
3. Which best describes your institution?
 - single campus
 - multi-campus (if multi-campus institution, are your grading policies and practices the same for all branch campuses?)
 - Yes No
4. What was the total enrollment of your institution as of fall quarter 1979? (Total enrollment is defined as a headcount of full-time and part-time students enrolled for credit courses only). Check one.

<input type="checkbox"/> 1-499	<input type="checkbox"/> 3,500-4,999
<input type="checkbox"/> 500-999	<input type="checkbox"/> 5,000-9,999
<input type="checkbox"/> 1,000-1,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 10,000 +
<input type="checkbox"/> 2,000-3,499	
5. At what level does the final authority for setting or changing grading policies reside for your institution?

<input type="checkbox"/> state board of higher education	<input type="checkbox"/> central church authority
<input type="checkbox"/> state community college board	<input type="checkbox"/> president
<input type="checkbox"/> state university	<input type="checkbox"/> dean of instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> public school agency	<input type="checkbox"/> academic division
<input type="checkbox"/> local board	<input type="checkbox"/> academic department
<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	
6. Which of the following would you anticipate for your grading system within the next five years?
 - It will probably become more traditional
 - It will probably remain about the same
 - It will probably become more non-punitive
7. If you know of any two-year colleges, private or public, other than your institution, using non-punitive grading practices, please list the names of the colleges and the city and state in which they are located.
8. Please check the one item which best describes the present status of non-punitive grading practices in your institution. If you check items C, D, E, or F, please fill in the dates in the blanks provided. A space for explanations is given below.
 - A. We have not considered implementing non-punitive grading practices.
 - B. We have considered adopting such practices but have rejected the idea. (Please explain why the practices were rejected).
 - C. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and dropped them in 19__. (Please explain why the practices were dropped).
 - D. We have considered adopting such practices and plan to begin implementation in 19__.
 - E. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and are considering dropping them. (Please explain why you are considering dropping them).
 - F. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and are continuing with the practices. (Briefly explain why non-punitive grading is working in your institution).
 - G. Other - Please explain.

If you checked response A, B, or C to item number 8, please respond to Part III of the questionnaire.

If you checked response D, E, F, or G to item number 8, please respond to Part II and Part III of this questionnaire.

Figure 1

Modified Non-Punitive Grading
Practices Survey, Part I

- _____ C. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and dropped them in 19__. (Please explain why the practices were dropped).

Additional space was provided on the survey instrument for the explanations elicited in items B and C.

Part II of the survey instrument (see Figure 2) was designed to provide detailed information about the specific non-punitive grading system and academic grading policies used by the responding institution as well as the level of satisfaction with such grading practices.

Respondents were also asked to send the researcher a copy of the official college publication which best described the institution's grading practices; e.g., faculty handbook, student handbook, college catalog, academic policies manual or grade report form. These publications were used to insure the accuracy of the response to item 9 in Part II of the survey (see Figure 2) and to provide detailed explanations of the institution's grading policies and practices.

POPULATION

The Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey was mailed to the deans of instruction and/or chief academic officers of all the non-profit public and private two-year community, junior, and technical colleges in the continental United States as listed in the 1980 American Association of Community, Junior, and Technical College Directory (Gilbert, 1980, pp. 10-56).

PART II

9. What specific type of grading system do you use in your institution?

A, B, C, D, I (Incomplete), W (Withdrawal)

A, B, C, I, W.

A, B, C, D, NCR (no credit), W, I

A, B, C, NCR, I

Pass, NCR

Other - Please describe

10. Aside from actual grading practices, what other non-punitive academic policies does your institution practice; e.g., no probation or suspension policies, academic "bankruptcy" policy, etc. Please list and describe briefly.

11. Indicate the approximate number of awards made by your institution in the transfer and occupational/technical programs each year. Within the occupational/technical category, further indicate the number of certificates, diplomas, and degrees.

Transfer Degree (AA/AS) = (a) _____

Occupational/Technical Awards = (b) _____ (Note: b = c + d + e)

Certificates = (c) _____

Diplomas = (d) _____

Degrees = (e) _____

Total = _____ (a + b)

12. Do your grading practices differ among the different kinds of degrees, diplomas, or certificates? If so, explain briefly.

Yes _____ No _____

13. Indicate your level of satisfaction with the non-punitive grading practices being used in your institution.

very satisfied

moderately dissatisfied

moderately satisfied

very dissatisfied

When you have completed the entire questionnaire (including Part III), please enclose a copy of the official college publication which best describes your institution's grading practices; e.g., faculty handbook, student handbook, college catalog, academic policies manual, grade report form, etc. THANK YOU.

Figure 2

Modified Non-Punitive Grading
Practices Survey, Part II

Public two-year colleges located in a community college district, as specified in the 1980 AACJC Directory, were surveyed through the chief academic officer located in the district office. Other public two-year colleges with multi-campus were surveyed through the chief academic officer and/or dean of instruction located on the main campus. In order to insure that the non-punitive grading practices of all campuses were surveyed, the respondents of multi-campus institutions were asked if the grading practices were the same on all of their campuses (See Figure 1, item 3). If the grading practices were not the same, a separate survey instrument was sent to the campus or campuses indicated as having grading practices other than those used on the main campus. Since this was the case with one multi-campus community college, four of the campuses and the main campus responded to the survey. These responses increased the population by four public institutions. Multi-campus operations associated with state universities were surveyed individually rather than at the state university level.

At the time of the first mailing, a population of 1,032 two-year public and private colleges had been identified based on the established criteria. However, during the data collection process three of the two-year colleges became four-year institutions and three of the community college components of state universities had been reorganized into their respective four-year institutions. As a result of such changes, these six colleges were omitted from the population. The addition of the responses discussed in the preceding paragraph brought the final number of two-year colleges

Table 1
Population Summary By State

State	Public Two-Year Colleges	Private Two-Year Colleges	Total
ALABAMA	34	5	39
ALASKA	9	1	10
ARIZONA	10	1	11
ARKANSAS	9	4	13
CALIFORNIA	70	9	79
COLORADO	12	0	12
CONNECTICUT	17	4	21
DELAWARE	1	1	2
FLORIDA	28	4	32
GEORGIA	16	8	24
HAWAII	7	0	7
IDAHO	2	1	3
ILLINOIS	39	6	45
INDIANA	2	2	4
IOWA	15	2	17
KANSAS	21	5	26
KENTUCKY	14	5	19
LOUISIANA	5	0	5
MAINE	8	0	8
MARYLAND	17	1	18
MASSACHUSETTS	18	12	30
MICHIGAN	29	2	31
MINNESOTA	21	4	25
MISSISSIPPI	16	3	19
MISSOURI	10	5	15
MONTANA	3	0	3
NEBRASKA	7	1	8
NEVADA	4	0	4
NEW HAMPSHIRE	2	2	4
NEW JERSEY	16	2	18
NEW MEXICO	13	1	14
NEW YORK	43	14	57
NORTH CAROLINA	58	8	66
NORTH DAKOTA	6	1	7
OHIO	53	3	56
OKLAHOMA	15	3	18
OREGON	13	2	15
PENNSYLVANIA	14	13	27
RHODE ISLAND	1	0	1
SOUTH CAROLINA	21	5	26
SOUTH DAKOTA	2	3	5
TENNESSEE	12	8	20
TEXAS	50	5	55
UTAH	5	0	5
VERMONT	2	4	6
VIRGINIA	28	1	29
WASHINGTON	23	0	23
WEST VIRGINIA	8	2	10
WISCONSIN	30	1	31
WYOMING	7	0	7
	866	164	1,030

in the population to 1,030 with 866 identified as public and 164 identified as private. Table I gives a breakdown of the number of public and private two-year colleges by state.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

On May 14, 1980, a cover letter, the Non-Punitive Grading Practice Survey, and self-addressed pre-paid catalog envelope was mailed to the deans of instruction and/or chief academic officer of the public and private community, junior, and technical two-year colleges in the continental United States (n=1032). Six of these institutions were later omitted from the population due to the changes in the status of the institution and population established at n=1026. Four campuses of a multi-campus community college were added to the population because each campus reported different grading practices. Therefore, the final population figure was set at 1,030 two year colleges. The cover letter, from the Office of the Dean, College of Education, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Appendix A), indicated that this was a national study of non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year colleges. The cover letter also defined the term "non-punitive grading practices" so the respondents would understand its meaning in this particular study.

On June 16, 1980, four weeks after the first mailing, a follow-up letter (Appendix B), the survey instrument, and a self-addressed pre-paid return catalog envelope was mailed to non-respondents (n=549). Four weeks after the first follow-up was mailed, the second follow-up letter (Appendix C) was sent to the remaining non-respondents (n=407). The

non-respondents were encouraged to participate in the study by completing and returning the survey instrument as soon as possible.

Additionally, each respondent was asked to indicate any two-year public or private colleges they knew to be using non-punitive grading practices (see Figure 1, item 7). The responses in this section were checked against the returned surveys to insure that two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices were participating in the study.

On August 4, 1980, three weeks after second follow-up was mailed, the process of data collection was closed and analysis procedures were begun. At this time, 778 usable survey forms were returned representing a 75.5 percent response rate. A review of the colleges which returned the surveys and those colleges which did not return the surveys indicated that the non-respondents were equally distributed. This review further indicated that there was no specific pattern of non-respondents in terms of size, public/private or geographic location.

TREATMENT OF THE DATA

In this study descriptive statistics were used to address the seven major research questions. Frequency distributions and percentage tables were constructed based on the data received from the respondents. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was the computer program used for the analysis of the data.

SUMMARY

This chapter included a detailed presentation of the methodology employed throughout this study. The Non-Punitive Grading Practices

Survey was designed and utilized to address the seven basic research questions. The population for the study was the 1,030 deans of instruction and/or the chief academic officers of the public (n=866) and private (n=164) two-year colleges located in the continental United States. The data were collected through the use of the Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey during an eleven week period beginning May 19, 1980 and ending August 4, 1980. Frequency distributions and other descriptive research techniques were utilized to address the research questions.

Chapter 4

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Seven hundred seventy-eight usable returns were received, which represented a 75.5 percent response rate (see Table 2). A review of these returns indicated that the non-respondents were equally distributed.

ANALYSIS OF THE INVENTORY ITEMS

Demographic and Other Institutional Data

Part I of the survey instrument was designed to elicit demographic data, institutional characteristics and the status of non-punitive grading practices in the responding institutions. All respondents were instructed to answer the questions in Part I of the survey instrument. While these responses did not answer any of the research questions directly, they were incorporated into the analysis of the data required to answer the seven basic research questions dealing with non-punitive grading practices in the two-year college.

There was an equal rate of response from the public and the private sectors (75%) even though 84.1 percent of the total population was public and 15.9 percent of the total population was private (see Table 2).

TABLE 2

Description of Population by Classification
of Public or Private

CATEGORY	POPULATION	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION
Public	866	654	75.5
Private	164	124	75.6
Total	1030	778	75.5

Two hundred and eight of the respondents characterized their institutions as being junior colleges (26.7%), four hundred forty-eight as comprehensive community colleges (57.6%), and one hundred twenty-two (15.7%) as technical colleges or technical institutes (see Table 3).

Responses from single campus, two-year colleges outnumbered responses from multi-campus institutions by a margin of four to one. Only 24.1 percent of the respondents indicated that they had physical plants in more than one central location.

As shown in Table 4, more than half of the two-year colleges (51.7%) had a total enrollment of less than 2,000 as of fall quarter 1979. Only 9.6 percent of the colleges enrolled more than 10,000 students.

The final authority for setting or changing grading policies, as reported by the deans, resided most frequently with the local board of trustees (34.6%) and with the president of the two-year college (25.0%). (See Table 5 for a complete analysis of these responses.) This was quite interesting because, as early as 1973, the final report of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education concluded that "in some states 'superboards' and legislators and governors are now exercising too much detailed policy and administrative control over institutions of higher education" (p. 59). This trend toward state coordination and control continued to emerge "as much or more from external forces represented by the federal government, the courts and various national interest groups than

TABLE 3
Description of Population by
Institutional Type

Category	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
Junior College	208	26.7
Comprehensive Community College	448	57.6
Technical College/Technical Inst.	122	15.7

NOTE:

Junior College - A public or private two-year institution which specializes in liberal arts transfer programs.

Comprehensive Community College - A public or private institution which maintains comprehensive programs in liberal arts, pre-professional and technical and vocational programs.

Technical College/Technical Institute - A public or private institution which specializes in terminal one and two year vocational and technical programs.

TABLE 4

Description of Population by Total Enrollment
As of Fall Quarter 1979

Enrollment	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
1-499	92	11.9
500-999	128	16.6
1000-1999	179	23.2
2000-3499	142	18.4
3500-4999	62	8.1
5000-9999	93	12.1
10000 or more	74	9.6

Table 5
Description of Population by Level of
Authority for Setting or Changing Grading Policies

Category	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
State Board of Higher Ed.	48	6.2
State Community College Board	77	9.9
State Community College System	3	0.4
State University	23	3.0
University Community College Council	1	0.1
University Governing Board	19	2.4
University Chancellor	2	0.3
Public School Agency	3	0.4
Central Church Authority	1	0.1
Local Board of Trustees	269	34.6
President	195	25.0
Dean of Instruction/Chief Academic Officer	65	8.4
Administrative Council	17	2.2
Academic Division	15	1.9
Academic Department	4	0.5
Faculty or Faculty Senate	36	4.6

... from within each state itself" (Bender, 1975, P. 37). Regardless of where the centralization forces originated, it was apparent that in these responding two-year colleges, academic policies related to grades and grading practices remained the domain of local administrators and trustees.

A majority of the respondents (84.7%), most of whom were academic deans, anticipated that their current grading system would be the same system they would be utilizing within the next five years. Only 4.7 percent indicated that their grading practices would probably become more non-punitive within the next five years (see Table 6).

Part I, item 8 was designed to enable the respondents to best describe the present status of non-punitive grading practices in their respective institutions and their response to this item determined if Part II of the survey would be completed.

Never Implemented Non-Punitive Grading Practices

Half of the total respondents (50.4%) had not considered implementing non-punitive grading practices and 78 percent of these respondents (309 respondents) represented public institutions. Only 8.6 percent of the respondents had actually considered adopting non-punitive grading practices before finally rejecting the idea. Therefore, 59 percent of the population had never implemented non-punitive grading practices (see Table 7). Faculty reluctance to proceed with non-punitive grading practices was reported as the main reason for rejecting such grading practices during the conceptual stages. These

TABLE 6
Description of Population by Predicted Grading Trends
Within the Next Five Years

Category	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
It will probably become		
more traditional	82	10.6
remain about the same	653	84.7
become more non-punitive	36	4.7

respondents also expressed concern for the welfare of their transfer students. It was felt that a transcript which reflected non-punitive grades would disadvantage students transferring to many four-year institutions. Additional reasons given for the rejection of non-punitive grading prior to implementation included: a lack of understanding of non-punitive grades by prospective employers, a lack of support from those responsible for Veteran's Administration financial support, and a fear that a non-punitive grading system would drastically reduce students' incentives to do well.

Implemented and Dropped Non-Punitive Grading Practices

Eighty-one of the responding colleges (10.4%) had actually implemented non-punitive grading practices prior to dropping such practices some years later (see Table 7). Again, the main reason given by these respondents for dropping the non-punitive grading system was faculty opposition to the system. More specifically, faculty were concerned about the lowering of academic standards, grade inflation, and lack of grade motivation due to the absence of a failing grade. Pressures from "third parties" such as the Veteran's Administration, Tuition Assistance Programs and Basic Educational Opportunity Grant Programs also caused many two-year schools to move toward more traditional grading policies and practices. In California the State Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges actually mandated that non-punitive grading practices be eliminated by the fall of 1980. The "F" grade was reinstated but official withdrawal ("W") from a class remained quite liberal -- the last day of the fourteenth week of in-

Table 7
Description of Responding Institutions
by Present Status of Non-Punitive Grading Practices

Category	Number (Absolute Frequency)			Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
	Public	Private	Total	
A. We have not considered implementing non-punitive grading practices.	309	83	392	50.4
B. We have considered adopting such practices but have rejected the idea. (Please explain why the practices were rejected).	57	10	67	8.6
C. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and dropped them in 19__. (Please explain why the practices were dropped).	70	11	81	10.4
D. We have considered adopting such practices and plan to begin implementation in 19__.	9	1	10	1.3
E. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and are considering dropping them. (Please explain why you are considering dropping them).	19	3	22	2.8
F. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and are continuing with the practices. (Briefly explain why non-punitive grading is working in your institution).	147	8	155	19.9
G. Other - Please explain.	43	8	51	6.6

Note - Percentages based on population of all responses (n=778)

struction or 75 percent of the term whichever was less. No notation of "W" was made on the student's transcript if the student withdrew during the first four weeks or 30 percent of a term whichever was less (see Appendix H, pp. 4,7).

Based on the responses of these eighty-one academic officers, non-punitive grading practices were first implemented as early as 1960 and were introduced in greatest numbers from 1972-1974. During this period, 39 institutions (52.6%) implemented some form of non-punitive grading practices (see Table 8). However, the rapid rise in popularity of non-punitive grading practices during the early 1970's was significantly diminished later in the decade. From 1976-1978, 45 two-year colleges (59.2%) returned to more traditional grading policies and practices. In 1980 the movement toward traditional grading continued as 14 more two-year colleges (18.4%) discontinued their non-punitive grading practices (see Table 9).

It was noted that of the two-year colleges which implemented and still maintained non-punitive grading, 2.8 percent were considering dropping such practices (see Appendix E).

Will Implement or Have Implemented Non-Punitive Grading Practices

Ten institutions (1.3%) disclosed that they were currently considering adopting non-punitive grading practices and planned to actually begin implementation in the early 1980's (see Table 7).

Of the 177 responding institutions which specified that they currently had non-punitive grading practices only 22 were

Table 8

Frequencies of Years
Non-Punitive Grading Implemented

Years non-punitive grading practices were implemented	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
1960	1	1.4
1965	3	4.0
1966	1	1.4
1968	2	2.7
1969	2	2.7
1970	7	9.5
1971	8	10.8
1972	17	23.0
1973	11	14.8
1974	11	14.8
1975	6	8.1
1976	3	4.0
1977	1	1.4
1979	1	1.4

Table 9

Frequencies of Years
Non-Punitive Grading Dropped

Years non-punitive grading practices were dropped	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
1966	1	1.3
1970	1	1.3
1973	1	1.3
1974	4	5.3
1975	3	4.0
1976	14	18.4
1977	14	18.4
1978	17	22.4
1979	7	9.2
1980	14	18.4

considering dropping them and 155 were continuing with the practices (see Table 7).

The academic officers who responded that they were continuing with non-punitive grading practices expressed a variety of reasons for such action. Certainly, faculty support was a critical factor and institutional philosophy and/or sense of mission was another. Many of the respondents felt that non-punitive grading gave their students a "second chance" that was vital to their success in college and in this way permitted greater retention of students. Such "second chance" philosophy was often directly related to the specific mission of the two-year college as interpreted by the administrator. A few respondents admitted that while they were continuing with non-punitive grading practices, they really did not have any evidence as to whether the practices were working or not (see Appendix F).

Fifty-one (6.6%) of the respondents checked "other" to item 8 and then explained their grading systems in some detail (see Table 7). For the purpose of analysis, these responses were re-classified into appropriate groupings by the researcher.

A composite table of responses (see Table 10) showing when non-punitive grading practices were instituted, revealed that 72.1 percent of the colleges that implemented non-punitive grading practices did so between 1970 and 1975. A sharp decline in the number of institutions implementing non-punitive grading practices began in 1976 and continued into 1980.

Table 10

Composite Frequencies of Years
Non-Punitive Grading Practices Implemented

Years non-punitive grading Practices were implemented	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
1960	1	0.4
1962	1	0.4
1965	4	1.7
1966	4	1.7
1967	1	0.4
1968	7	3.0
1969	11	4.8
1970	23	10.1
1971	24	10.5
1972	44	19.2
1973	19	8.3
1974	30	13.1
1975	25	10.9
1976	13	5.7
1977	5	2.1
1978	7	3.0
1979	5	2.1
1980	4	1.7

Present Status of Non-Punitive Grading Practices

Part II of the survey instrument was designed to provide detailed information about the specific non-punitive grading system and academic grading policies used by the responding institutions as well as the level of satisfaction with such grading practices. This information was needed to address the seven basic research questions.

The status of non-punitive grading practices in the responding institutions determined whether Part II would be completed. If response D, E, F or G of Part I, Item 8, was checked, the respondent was also asked to complete Part II of the survey instrument. In effect, only institutions with non-punitive grading practices or those who definitely planned to institute non-punitive grading practices were included in this section. Two hundred thirty-eight (30.6%) of the respondents checked one of these responses (see Table 7) and then continued to respond to Part II.

During further analysis of the data it was noted that even though the respondents completed Part II of the survey instrument, all the grading practices described were not necessarily non-punitive according to the definition used in this study. This definition was presented to the respondents in a cover letter to the survey instrument (see Appendix A).

As a result of this finding, a more detailed analysis of the responses to Part II of the survey was completed to eliminate institutions which did not conform to the researcher's definition of non-

punitive grading practices.

Of the respondents completing Part II of the survey (n=238), 31 (13%) indicated that they were using non-punitive grading practices in non-credit or developmental courses only. A much larger number of respondents, 92 (39%), maintained the use of the punitive failing grades "F" or "E", but suggested that they were using limited forms of non-punitive grading practices through the elimination of probation and suspension, unlimited withdrawals without penalty and liberal use of incomplete grades.

By the most stringent definition, then, only 105 (44%) of the institutions responding to Part II of the survey were actually found to have non-punitive grading practices in all aspects of the college's academic program. Therefore, these institutions became the data base used to answer the seven basic research questions. This population consisted of responses from 97 public and 8 private two-year colleges (see Table 11).

Research Question - One

The first research question was: How many public and private two-year colleges are currently using non-punitive grading practices?

The frequency count of all respondents (n=778) indicated that 97 (12%) public and 8 (1%) private two-year colleges were currently utilizing non-punitive grading practices as such practices were defined by the researcher in the cover letter to the respondents. An additional 31 public (4%) two-year colleges were using non-punitive

TABLE 11
 Frequencies and Percentages of
 Responses to Part II of the Survey Instrument

Category	Number (Absolute Frequency)			Percentages (Adjusted Frequency)		
	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total
Non-Punitive Grading Practices	97	8	105	12	1	13
Limited N/P Grading Practices with use of "F" or "E"	83	9	92	11	1	12
N/P in Non-Credit/Dev. Only	31	0	31	4	0	4
Plan to implement NP grading Practices	9	1	10	1	0	1

NOTE: Percentages based on population of all responses (n=778)

grading practices only in non-credit or developmental programs. None of the private colleges indicated the use of non-punitive grading practices for these purposes only. Limited forms of non-punitive grading (i.e. liberal use of incomplete grades, elimination of probation and suspension, unlimited time to withdraw without penalty) were being used by 83 public (11%) and 9 private (1%) two-year colleges in conjunction with the punitive "F" or "E" failing grades (see Table 11).

Research Question - Two

The second research question was: What are the different forms of non-punitive grading practices now in use in public and private two-year colleges?

While there were approximately twenty-five different types of non-punitive grading systems reported (see Appendix G), 38 percent of the public institutions and 50 percent of the private institutions using these systems preferred the following grades: A, B, C, D, NCR (no credit), W (withdrawal), I (incomplete). Additionally, 29 percent of the public and 38 percent of the private two-year colleges using these systems preferred the letter grades: A, B, C, D, I, W. No other marking system was used by more than 5 percent of the public two-year colleges. It appeared that a full range of traditional letter grades (A-D) was espoused with various options to report unsatisfactory progress. Only 3 (2.8%) of the colleges with non-punitive grading systems maintained the + and - signs to indicate additional

levels of achievement within the traditional A-D grades.

Aside from actual grading practices, a significant number of public and private colleges indicated that they are engaged in other non-punitive academic practices to include: No probation or suspension; liberal use of the "I" grade to include, in some instances, actually allowing the "I" grade to become a permanent part of the transcript instead of reverting to an "F" grade after a certain period of time; self-paced instruction with no "built in" time restraints; sliding GPA requirements; permitting the retaking of courses to record the second grade achieved; establishing a "new start" after being out of a post-secondary institution for a period of 5 years; and unlimited time to withdraw from courses without penalty.

Research Question - Three

The third research question was: Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and private two-year colleges with different enrollment classifications?

Respondents were asked to indicate the total enrollment of their institutions as of fall 1979, by checking one of the following:

_____ 1-499	_____ 3,500-4,999
_____ 500-999	_____ 5,000-9,999
_____ 1,000-1,999	_____ 10,000 +
_____ 2,000-3,499	

Total enrollment was defined as the headcount of full-time and part-

time students enrolled for credit courses only. For the purpose of analysis, the enrollment responses were grouped into three specific categories: small (1-1,999), medium (2,000-4,999), and large (5,000-10,000+).

The number of public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices was equally divided among the small and large colleges at 30 and 31 percent respectively, while the medium-sized colleges reported 37 percent (see Table 12).

When the number of public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices was compared to the total number of public two-year colleges responding within enrollment categories, the results heavily favored two-year colleges with medium and large total enrollments. Only 10 percent of the small public two-year colleges were using non-punitive grading practices, while the medium and large public two-year colleges were equally represented with 18 percent of the institutions in each category using non-punitive grading practices (see Table 13).

Therefore, the likelihood of public institutions with a total enrollment of over 2,000 students to have non-punitive grading practices was nearly twice as great as for those with enrollments below 2,000 students.

The number of private two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices was so small it was impossible to answer definitely the research question based on the private sector data.

Table 12

Frequencies of Public Two-Year Colleges with Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Institutional Size

Enrollment Category	Public Inst. With N/P Grading (n=97)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
Small Two-Year College (1-1,999)	30	30.9
Medium Two-Year College (2,000-4,999)	36	37.2
Large Two-Year College (5,000-10,000+)	31	31.9

Table 13

Frequencies of Public Two-Year Colleges with Non-Punitive
Grading Practices by Institutional Size Compared
To All Public Two-Year College Responses

Enrollment Category	Public Institutions (n=654)	Public Inst. With N/P Gra- ding (n=97)	Percentage
Small Two-Year Colleges (1-1,999)	287	30	10.45
Medium Two-Year Colleges (2,000-4,999)	197	36	18.27
Large Two-Year Colleges (5,000-10,000+)	170	31	18.20

Research Question - Four

The fourth research question was: Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and among private two-year colleges with different academic policy control?

Respondents were asked to determine the level at which the final authority for setting or changing grading policies resided and these findings were reported in Table 5. To better address the fourth research question, these data were collapsed into four specific categories. These categories of academic policy control included: state, university, local and other.

Of the public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices 15.5 percent indicated that the final authority for setting or changing grading policies resided at the state level and 84.5 percent suggested that the same authority resided within the local institution (see Table 14).

When the total number of public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices was compared to the total number of public two-year colleges responding within academic policy control categories, it was discovered that 16.1 percent of 509 colleges which maintained local academic policy control were non-punitive in their grading practices. Of the 110 colleges with state level academic policy control, 13.6 percent also used non-punitive grading practices. None of the public two-year colleges which reported that their academic policy controls were

Table 14

Frequencies of Public Two-Year Colleges With
Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Academic
Policy Control

Academic Policy Control	Public Inst. with N/P grading practices (n=97)	Percentages (Adjusted Frequency)
State	15	15.5
University	0	0
Local	82	84.5
Other	0	0

Table 15

Frequencies of Public Two-Year Colleges With
Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Academic Policy
Control Compared to All Public Two-Year College Responses

Academic Policy Control	Public Inst. (n=654)	Public Inst. with N/P grading practices (n=97)	Percentage
State	110	15	13.6
University	28	0	0
Local	509	82	16.1
Other	7	0	0

at the university level or in the "other" category used non-punitive grading practices (see Table 15).

It appears that public two-year colleges which maintained academic policy controls at either the local or state levels were more likely to initiate non-punitive grading practices.

Again, the number of private two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices was so small it was impossible to answer the research question definitively. Since the original data were collapsed to respond specifically to this research question, the private sector data became even less significant.

Research Question - Five

The fifth research question was: Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and private two-year colleges with different curricular emphasis?

Curricular emphasis and institutional control indicated the role and scope of the two-year college as determined by its primary mission. Monroe (1977) suggested such a notion when he related public and private control to college objectives and curricula emphasis:

Private junior colleges may have different objectives from those of the public colleges. And they should since their purpose for existence may be limited, such as developing Christian character, training in a specific group of occupations, or serving a special clientele of students. (p. 21)

If the community college is to serve a wide variety of potential students, old and young, of varying intellectual abilities, and with different educational goals, then the curriculum must offer more to students than the traditional first two years of a four-year college liberal arts or professional degree program. (p. 26)

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions were used to elicit institutional type from the respondents:

Junior College - A public or private two-year institution which specializes in liberal arts transfer programs.

Comprehensive Community College - A public or private institution which maintains comprehensive programs in liberal arts, pre-professional and technical and vocational programs.

Technical College/Technical Institute - A public or private institution which specializes in terminal one and two year vocational and technical programs.

Although Table 3 revealed "institutional type" data for all respondents, a more detailed analysis was needed to respond to this research question. Of the 648 public two-year college administrators who responded to this item, 98 classified their institutions as junior colleges (see Table 16). A solid majority of the respondents (439) indicated that their institutions were community colleges and 111 selected technical college or technical institute as the best descriptor of their institutions.

Of the 97 public institutions which had non-punitive grading practices, according to the researcher's definition of the term, it was necessary to determine what percentage of each institutional type actually utilized non-punitive grading practices. Only 9.2 percent of the public junior colleges engaged in non-punitive grading practices, while 16.6 percent of the community colleges and 13.5 percent of the technical colleges/institutes actually maintained non-punitive grading practices (see Table 16).

Table 16

Frequencies and Percentages of Public Two-Year Colleges with
Non-Punitive Grading Practices by Institutional Type
Compared to All Public Two-Year College Responses

Institutional Type	Public Institutions (n=648)	Public Inst. With N/P Grad- ing (n=97)	Percentage
Junior College	98	19	9.2
Community College	439	73	16.6
Technical College/ Institute	111	15	13.5

The public junior colleges appeared to be more steeped in traditional grading practices, not unlike their private sector counterparts.

Although an analysis of the data according to institutional type provided at least a gross response to this research question, there was the possibility of wide variation of curricular emphasis within the group classified as community colleges. In order to determine the extent to which this variation occurred, the percentage of transfer degrees awarded was calculated for each public community college with non-punitive grading practices. These figures and corresponding institutional codes were placed in rank order with the highest percentages listed first. Then the percentage of occupational/technical certificates, diplomas, and degrees was calculated and placed in rank order with the corresponding institutional codes. The institutions in the top 20 percent of each list were then analyzed according to their non-punitive grading practices.

In terms of actual non-punitive grades used, a majority of institutions in both groups preferred to use the following letter grades: A, B, C, D, I, W, NCR. A few variations of these letter grades were also used as well as "Pass/No Credit" and "Satisfactory/Not Satisfactory." However, there was little difference in the use of non-punitive letter grades within community colleges with different curricular emphasis.

Both groups indicated that, aside from actual grading practices, their institutions also maintained non-punitive academic policies such as: no probation or suspension policies, academic bankruptcy, recording only positive grades on a transcript, and providing various

means to give students a new academic start without a low grade point average. Curricula emphasis did not make a difference in the distribution of such non-punitive academic policies among the community colleges.

Although none of the administrators completing the survey believed that their grading systems would become more non-punitive in the next five years, 35 percent of the transfer and 24 percent of the occupational/technical group suggested that their grading systems would be more traditional. The majority of the transfer (65%) and of the occupational/technical (76%) groups indicated that their grading systems would not change during the next five years.

The number of cases in the private sector were so small the researcher could not give a definitive answer to this research question based on private sector data.

Research Question - Six

The sixth research question was: What is the level of satisfaction among Deans of Instruction with the current non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year colleges?

The respondents from the public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices were in general agreement that such non-punitive grading practices were a positive aspect of academic life on their campuses. As displayed in Table 17, the two levels of satisfaction accounted for 91 percent of the responses and were relatively evenly divided with 45 percent "very satisfied" and 46 percent "moder-

Table 17
 Description of Public Two-Year Colleges
 with Non-Punitive Grading Practices
 by Level of Satisfaction with Such Practices

Level of Satisfaction	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
Very Satisfied	40	45
Moderately Satisfied	41	46
Moderately Dissatisfied	8	9
Very Dissatisfied	0	0

ately satisfied." A mere 9 percent indicated that they were "moderately dissatisfied" and no respondents suggested that they were "very dissatisfied" with their non-punitive grading practices.

Among all the public institutions which completed Part II of the survey instrument and, therefore, were involved at least to some extent in non-punitive grading practices, 32.5 percent were "very satisfied" with their grading practices and 56.7 percent were "moderately satisfied." Only 9.9 percent suggested that they were "moderately dissatisfied" and .9 percent were "very dissatisfied" (see Table 18).

Although the number of cases in the private sector was so small that the researcher could not give a definitive answer to the research question, it was noted that six respondents (75%) were "moderately satisfied" with their non-punitive grading practices (see Table 19).

Research Question - Seven

The seventh research question was: What are the future trends of non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year colleges?

Of the 97 public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices, 67 (69%) anticipated that their grading systems would probably remain about the same during the next five years. Another 24 (25%) suggested that their grading practices would probably become more traditional while only 3 (3%) anticipated changes which would create a more non-punitive grading system. Three of the public two-year colleges were undecided on the future trends of their grading practices and, therefore, made no response to this item (see Table 20).

Table 18

Frequencies and Percentage of Public Two-year Colleges
Completing Part II of the Survey by Level of Satisfaction

Level of Satisfaction	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
Very Satisfied	66	32.5
Moderately Satisfied	115	56.7
Moderately Dissatisfied	20	9.9
Very Dissatisfied	2	.9

Table 19
 Description of Private Two-Year Colleges
 with Non-Punitive Grading Practices
 by Level of Satisfaction with Such Practices

Level of Satisfaction	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
Very Satisfied	0	0
Moderately Satisfied	6	75
Moderately Dissatisfied	1	12.5
Very Dissatisfied	1	12.5

Table 20
 Future Trends of Current Grading Practices:
 Public Sector Responses

Trend within five years	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
Become more traditional	77	11.88
Remain about the same	540	83.34
Become more non-punitive	31	4.78

When all the public two-year college responses were analyzed, 83.34 percent of the respondents believed that their grading practices would remain about the same, 11.88 percent anticipated moving toward a more traditional grading mode and 4.78 percent suggested that during the next five years their institutions would adopt a more non-punitive grading system (see Table 21).

The private sector population with non-punitive grading practices was too small to be of any significance. However, 3 of these respondents (43%) anticipated that their grading system would probably remain the same and 3 (43%) suggested that they would become more traditional in the next five years.

SUMMARY

This chapter detailed and analyzed the demographic and other institutional data revealed by the response to Part I of the survey instrument, and discussed the present status of non-punitive grading practices provided by the responses to Part II of the survey instrument.

In addition, each of the seven research questions was answered according to an analysis of the appropriate data.

Table 21

Future Trends of Non-Punitive Grading Practices:
Public Sector Responses

Trend within five years	Number (Absolute Frequency)	Percentage (Adjusted Frequency)
Become more traditional	24	26
Remain about the same	67	71
Become more non-punitive	3	3

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine the nature and extent of non-punitive grading practices in private and public two-year colleges. Additionally, the relationship of their grading practices to various institutional characteristics was carefully examined. Trend data and administrative satisfaction with existing non-punitive grading practices were also studied. The population for this study consisted of the chief academic officers of all the public and private two-year colleges in the continental United States as listed in the 1980 American Association of Community, Junior, and Technical College Directory.

The Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey was developed to address the seven major research questions. Part I of the survey instrument was designed to elicit demographic data, institutional characteristics and the status of non-punitive grading practices and policies in the responding institutions. Part II of the survey instrument provided detailed information about the specific non-punitive grading system and academic policies used by the responding institutions as well as the level of satisfaction with such practices. Responses to Part II were analyzed, in conjunction with the responses given by the same

respondents in Part I of the survey instrument, to provide answers to the research questions.

The survey instrument was mailed to 1,032 deans of instruction (or chief academic officers) of public and private two-year colleges. The population was finally established at 1,030 institutions. After two follow-up mailings, 778 usable surveys were returned, representing a 75.5 percent response rate. There was an equal rate of return from the public and private sectors.

In this study, descriptive statistics were used to address the seven major research questions. Frequency distributions and percentage tables were constructed based on the data received from the respondents. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was the computer program used for the analysis of the data.

The incidence of non-punitive grading practices in this study was understated due to the researcher's definition of the phrase "non-punitive grading practices." As a result of this imposed limitation, only 105 of the institutions responding to Part II of the Survey qualified as actually utilizing non-punitive grading practices. Therefore, these institutions became the data base used to answer the seven basic research questions. This specific population consisted of 97 public (12%) and 8 private (1%) two-year colleges (see Table 11). Due to the extremely small number of cases in the private sector, the researcher was not always able to give a definitive answer to the research questions based on private sector data.

In response to the research question, "How many public and private two-year colleges are currently using non-punitive grading practices?"

there were 97 public (12%) and 8 private (1%) currently utilizing non-punitive grading practices as defined by the researcher.

The second research question, "What are the different forms of non-punitive grading practices now in use in public and private two-year colleges?" revealed that approximately twenty-five different forms of non-punitive grading are being used. However, the preferred non-punitive grading system included the following letter grades: A, B, C, D, NCR (no credit), W (withdrawal), I (incomplete).

The third research question, "Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and private two-year colleges with different enrollment classifications?" was answered with data from the public sector only. The likelihood of public two-year institutions with a total enrollment of over 2,000 to have non-punitive grading systems was nearly twice as great as those institutions with enrollments below 2,000 students.

Research question four, "Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and among private two-year colleges with different academic policy control?" revealed that public two-year colleges which maintained academic policy control at either the local or state levels were more likely to initiate non-punitive grading practices. Public two-year branch campuses of four-year colleges showed no signs of involvement in non-punitive grading practices. Rather, these two-year colleges followed the traditional grading patterns established by the senior institutions.

The findings to research question five, "Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and private two-year

colleges with different curricular emphasis?" indicated that in the public sector less than 10 percent of the junior colleges engaged in non-punitive grading practices, while 16.6 percent of the community colleges and 13.5 percent of the technical colleges maintained non-punitive grading practices. A further analysis of the top 20 percent of the public community colleges awarding transfer degrees vs. the top 20 percent awarding occupational/technical certificates revealed that both groups were pleased with non-punitive grading in their respective institutions. A majority of institutions in both groups preferred to use the letter grades A, B, C, D, I, W, NCR and also maintained non-punitive academic policies such as no probation or suspension policies, academic bankruptcy, recording only positive grades on a transcript, and providing means for students to make new academic "starts" without low grade point averages. The administrators in both groups believed that their grading systems would not change during the next five years.

The sixth research question, "What is the level of satisfaction among deans of instruction with the current non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year college?" was answered in a very positive manner. The respondents from the public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices were in general agreement that such non-punitive practices were a positive aspect of academic life on their campuses

The final research question, "What are the future trends of non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year colleges?"

revealed that a majority of the academic officers (69%) in the public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices anticipated that their grading systems would probably remain about the same during the next five years.

CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of the frequency counts of public and private two-year colleges currently using non-punitive grading practices reveals that only 12 percent of the public and 1 percent of the private two-year colleges in the continental United States are truly engaged in non-punitive academic evaluation according to the researcher's definition. This finding is characteristic of a steady decline in the use of non-punitive grading practices since the peak usage period in the early 1970's (see Table 10).

The literature suggests that since non-punitive grading practices signify a rather liberal shift from the traditional grading mode (A through F), this flurry of activity toward non-punitive practices may be a direct response by college administrators to the turmoil and liberalization of the 1960's (Harrington, 1974). During this decade college students became proactive in campus political and academic protests and often violently demanded a wider representation and a louder, more resonant voice in the campus decision making process (Bushnell, 1973, & Miller, 1979). At the same time "enrollments tripled" (Gleazer, 1973, p. 7) as admission standards were eased (Miller, 1979). Curricula were designed so as not to be prejudicial to minorities and

Afro-American programs were initiated. "Core" and general education requirements were relaxed and courses were often served "cafeteria-style" to students (Martin, 1978; Milton, 1970; Wilson, 1972. p. 14). Such movement away from the more classical Harvard tradition of a fixed core of study required of the "educated man" is reflected by Milton (1970) when he commented that during this hectic phase of social and educational change there was a "dawning though begrudging recognition of the idea that there is no fixed body of knowledge which results in a person's being educated" (p. 225).

Finally, out of this traumatic and responsive period emerges non-traditional, non-punitive grading systems designed to better "fit" the more basic emotional and motivational needs of the "new," non-traditional college students (Bushnell, 1973; Cross, 1971; Elsner, 1974; Gleazer, 1973; Johnston & Avila, 1977).

These findings and supporting documentation reinforce the conclusion that non-punitive grading practices, in its purest forms, remain a viable grading system in a limited number of public and private two-year colleges during 1980-81. Furthermore, non-punitive grading practices in private two-year schools are almost non-existent, supporting the conclusions in the 1974 AACRAO Study reported by Collins and Nickel (1977, p. 244). Further conclusions, which support Elsner and Brydon's (1974) and Smith's (1969b) findings in earlier studies are that non-punitive grading practices are considered to be "experimental" by many administrators and that the majority of users of non-punitive grading do so on a limited basis. As noted in Chapter 4, the findings suggests that, while 238 public and private two-year col-

leges indicate that they are using some form of non-punitive grading practices, only 105 of these institutions actually meets the strict requirements of the researcher's definition of non-punitive grading practices. Thirty-one institutions are using non-punitive grading practices in non-credit or developmental courses only. A much larger number of respondents (92) maintains the "F" or "E" failing grade while using limited forms of non-punitive grading through the elimination of probation and suspension, unlimited withdrawals without penalty and liberal use of incomplete grades.

Since non-punitive grading appears to be consistent with the mission and philosophy of the two-year colleges, it is surprising that 50.4 percent of the respondents never considered such grading practices and another 8.6 percent have discussed the non-punitive practices only to reject them later.

Therefore, it is concluded that most academic deans in two-year colleges do not believe that non-punitive grading is consistent with the mission of their respective institutions.

An analysis of the frequency counts of different forms of non-punitive grading practices now in use in public and private two-year colleges reveals that there are approximately twenty-five different types of non-punitive grading systems. Of these systems most of the public and private colleges prefer a grading system which utilizes the following letter grades: A, B, C, D, I (incomplete), W (withdrawal), NCR (no credit). It appears that a full range of traditional letter grades (A-D) are espoused with any number of options to report unsatisfactory progress, delay of progress, or termination of progress.

This analysis supports the conclusion that an overwhelming majority of the deans in institutions with non-punitive grading practices favor non-punitive grades which represent the least change from traditional grading systems.

From the analysis of the frequency count of public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices by institutional size (based on total enrollments), it appears that institutions with a head count enrollment of over 2,000 students are twice as likely as those with total enrollments below 2,000 students to engage in non-punitive grading practices.

This analysis supports the conclusion that the total enrollment, as defined by the researcher, is a factor in providing a positive, receptive environment for non-punitive grading practices. The larger public two-year colleges (i.e. total enrollments of over 2,000 students) are less conservative and are more likely to experiment with non-traditional, non-punitive grading practices. This conclusion supports the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers' study which suggests that traditional grading practices are strongest in colleges with enrollments of less than 1,000 students (1971, p. 1).

Surprisingly, there is little difference in the incidence of non-punitive grading systems between institutions with local policy-making authority and those in systems where academic policies are made at the state or system level. Public two-year colleges which maintained such control at the state or local levels are more likely to have non-punitive grading systems (see Tables 14 and 15). On the other hand, two-year branch campuses of four-year institutions are not involved in

non-punitive grading practices at all.

These findings support the conclusion that for non-punitive grading systems to be the exclusive methods of student evaluation, academic policy control must be maintained at the local or state level. It is further concluded that university control over the academic policy of a two year college is detrimental to the existence of non-punitive grading systems. The findings supports this conclusion since no public two-year colleges under university academic policy control reports the use of a non-punitive grading system (see Table 15).

An analysis of the difference in non-punitive grading practices among public community colleges with different curricular emphasis (i.e. transfer, occupational/technical) reveals that both groups are satisfied with their respective non-punitive grading practices. Both groups prefer to use modifications and variations, and both groups maintain that their non-punitive practices will continue over the next five years.

These findings support the conclusion that curricular emphasis within public community colleges has no apparent effect on the utilization of non-punitive grading practices.

The frequency counts of level of satisfaction among deans of instruction with current non-punitive grading practices in public two-year colleges indicate that non-punitive grading is a positive aspect of academic life on their campuses. Even the deans in public two-year colleges who are merely "experimenting" with some aspects of non-punitive grading practices stress that they are satisfied with

these practices.

This analysis supports the conclusion that deans of instruction/ chief academic officers who utilize non-punitive grading practices, exclusively or experimentally, are very satisfied with these grading systems and practices.

The frequency counts of future trends of non-punitive grading practices in public two-year colleges reveals that in public two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices, a majority of the deans of instruction anticipate such practices will continue for the next five years. An analysis of all public two-year colleges responses indicates that a large majority (83%) of the respondents believe that their rather traditional grading practices will continue unchanged during the next five years while only 7.8 percent believe their present practices will become more non-traditional. These findings represent quite a change from the 1971 AACRAO study in which 56 percent of the respondents believed that their present grading practices would continue and 41 percent indicated that their grading practices would become more traditional in the future (Collins & Nickel, 1977, p. 243).

This analysis leads to the conclusions that no revolutionary changes in grading systems are likely to occur in the next five years and that non-punitive grading systems will remain the minority grading systems in public two-year colleges.

Based on write-in responses indicating why non-punitive grading practices are continued or dropped, it is further concluded that faculty

support is vital to the implementation and the deletion of non-punitive grading practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Case studies should be conducted in public and private two-year colleges where non-punitive grading practices have been implemented successfully and where non-punitive grading practices have failed in an attempt to identify specific factors which foster and/or hinder the implementation and development of such practices. Faculty members and students should be interviewed to see if their perceptions of the system are different from the chief academic officers.
2. Deans of instruction, faculty members and students currently involved in a non-punitive grading system should be asked to critique the Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey regarding its value in further research. Part II of the survey instrument needs special attention since it was designed to collect data on various aspects of non-punitive grading practices.
3. The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges should sponsor regional conferences to discuss the use of non-punitive grading systems in public and private two-year colleges. Such a sharing of ideas and experiences would be beneficial to administrators who are responsible for developing and coordinating credit and noncredit grading practices.

4. A Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey form should be developed for use at the four-year college and university level. Many items used in the two-year college form would be applicable to the new form.
5. Specific case studies of two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices should determine the impact of non-punitive grading on students' course taking patterns, students' capability to learn, students' transferability and students' retention rates. A sharing of such relevant and current material is needed to dispell any myths about non-punitive grading practices.
6. A careful examination of articulation practices from two-year colleges with non-punitive grading practices to four-year colleges is needed.
7. A study of attitudinal differences of two-year college students in a non-punitive grading system should be conducted.
8. A case study to determine the impact of "super boards" on the local autonomy of public two-year colleges needs to be conducted.

REFERENCES

- American association of collegiate registrars and admissions officers. Ad hoc committee to survey grading policies in member institutions. Washington, 1971.
- Alexander, E.D. Marking system and poor achievement. Teacher College Journal, December 1964, 36 (3), 110-113.
- Antioch abolishes grades. School and Society, November 1968, 96 (2311), 391.
- Astin, A.W. Open admissions and programs for the disadvantaged. Chicago, Illinois: Address presented at the 26th national conference on higher education, March 16, 1971. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 050 692)
- Bain, P.T., Hales, L.W. & Rand, L.P. Does pass-fail encourage exploration? College and University, Fall 1971, 47 (1), 17.
- Basonic, L. A descriptive analysis of students in academic difficulty at the Harrisburg area community college. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Reproduction Service No. 116 739)
- Bender, L.W. The states, communities, and control of the community college: Issues and recommendations. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, 1975.
- Bentinck-Smith, W. (Ed). The Harvard book: Selections from three centuries. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953.
- Birney, R.C. The effects of grades on students. Journal of Higher Education, February 1964, 35 (2), 96-98.
- Bissell, R. You can always tell a Harvard man. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1962.
- Bloom, G. There should be no F's. Business Education World, March 1966, 46 (7), 13.
- Breen, E. & Dulaney-Sorochak, J. Grading policies in the public two-year community colleges in Michigan, fall 1977. Warren, Michigan: Macombe County Community College, February 1978. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 161 496)
- Brickman, W.W. & Lehrer, S. A century of higher education. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1974.

- Brubacher, J.S. & Rudy, W. Higher education in transition: A history of American colleges and universities, 1636-1976. New York: Harper & Row, 1976.
- Busnell, D.S. Organizing for change: New priorities for community colleges. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1973.
- Caldwell, J.H. Current research on grading systems of possible significance to junior colleges: An annotated bibliography. Los Angeles, Calif.: California University, 1973. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 071 650)
- Caldwell, J.H. & Dodamead, T.E. Non-punitive grading: Encouraging academic exploration. Community and Junior College Journal, March 1973, 43 (6), 29.
- Child, I.L. & Whiting, J.W. Determinants of level of aspiration: Evidence from everyday life. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, July 1949, 44 (3), 303-314.
- Claesgens, R., Heinen, S.M. & Trenchard, M. Grading patterns and practices. Minneapolis, Minnesota: St. Mary's Junior College, 1972. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 072 781)
- Clark, B. The open door college: A case study. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960.
- Collins, C. Grading in the community college: A proposal. Junior College Journal, December 1965, 36 (4), 33-36.
- Collins, J.R. & Nickel, K.N. Collegiate grading system: Traditional or nontraditional. Clearinghouse, Feb. 1977, 50 (6), 243-247.
- Collins, J.R. & Nickel, K.N. Grading policies in higher education: The Kansas study/The national survey. Wichita, Kansas: Wichita State University, May 1975.
- Cohen, A.M. A constant variable: New perspectives on the community college. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971.
- Cross, P.K. Beyond the open door: New students to higher education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971.
- Danckaerts, J. They knew hardly a word of Latin. In W. Bentinck-Smith (Ed.), The Harvard book: Selections from three centuries. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953.
- de Warville, B. The air of Cambridge is pure. In W. Bentinck-Smith (Ed.), The Harvard book: Selections from three centuries. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953.

- Dexter, F.B. (Ed.), The literary diary of Ezra Stiles (3 vols.). New York: C. Scribner's sons, 1901.
- Dobbin, J.E. & Smith, A.Z. Marks and marking systems. In C. W. Harris (Ed.), Encyclopedia of Educational Research. (3rd ed.). New York: Macmillan Company, 1960.
- Dressel, P.L. Handbook of academic evaluation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976.
- Dressel, P.L. & Nelson, C.H. Evaluation in higher education. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.
- Ebersole, J.F. A study of the 'In-Progress' grade. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Harrisburg Area Community College. Ed.D. Practicum, Nova University, March 1975. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 104 452)
- Ebel, R.L. The failure of schools without failure. Phi Delta Kappa, February 1980, 61 (6), 386-388.
- Eble, K.E. The craft of teaching. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977.
- Eliot, C.W. Harvard memories. Freeport, New York: Book for Libraries Press, 1923.
- Elsner, P.A. & Brydon, C.W. Non-punitive grading practices and policies. Oakland, Calif.: Peralta Community College System, Office of Educational Services, 1974. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 088 549)
- Fensch, E.A. Good ol' A, B, C, D, and F. Clearinghouse, October 1962, 37 (2), 93-95.
- Foss, L. & Whipple, H. Open door education: Bringing the streetcorner to the college. Community and Junior College Journal, March 1973. 46 (6), 18-19.
- Gilbert, F. (Ed.). 1980 community, junior and technical college directory. Washington, D. C.: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, 1980.
- Gleazer, E.J., Jr., The community college: Values, vision & vitality. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, 1980.
- Gleazer, E.J. This is the community college. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968.
- Goldstein, K.M. & Tilker, H.A. Attitudes toward A-B-C-D-F and honors-pass-fail grading systems. Journal of Educational Research, November 1971, 65 (3), 99-100.

- Goodwin, G. L. The nature and nurture of the community college. Community College Frontiers, Spring 1976, 4 (3), 5-13.
- Griffith, W. S. Harper's legacy. Community College Frontiers, Spring 1976, 4 (3), 14-20.
- Haagen, C. H. The origins of a grade. Journal of Higher Education, February 1964, 35 (2), 89-91.
- Hahn, R. W. Grades and the social process. Community and Junior College Journal, March 1973, 43 (6), 27-28.
- Handleman, C. Academic grade inflation at Broward community college. Fort Lauderdale, Florida: Broward Community College. Ed. D. Practicum, Nova University, June 1974. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 097 952)
- Harrington, C. Experience with pass/not pass grading: Faculty view. Journal of College Student Personnel, September 1974 (a), 15 (5), 383-388.
- Harrington, C. Experiences with pass/not pass grading: Student view. Journal of College Student Personnel, September 1974, (6) 15 (5), 376-382.
- Heininger, J. F. The nongraded transcript. Journal of General Education, January 1972, 23 (4), 301-308.
- Johnson, A. & Avila D. Community Colleges: Miniuniversities or opportunity centers? Community/Junior College Research Quarterly, January-March 1977, 1 (2), 109-116.
- Karlins, M., Kaplin, M. & Stuart, W. Academic attitudes and performance as a function of differential grading systems: An evaluation of Princeton's pass-fail system. Journal of Experimental Education, Spring 1969, 37 (3), 38.
- LACCD grading practices and policies. Los Angeles, Calif.: Los Angeles Community College, December 1976. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 131 877)
- Lindblade, C., Noble, M. E., Spain, F. & Levitt, R. Grading systems: All win, no lose. College and University, Summer 1971, 46 (4), 717-731.
- McCabe, R. H. Now is the time to reform the American community college. Community and Junior College Journal, May 1981, 51 (8), 6-10.
- Mannello, G. College teaching without grades. Journal of Higher Education, June 1964, 35 (6), 328-334.

- Mannello, G. Grades must go. Educational Record, Summer 1969, 50 (3), 305-308.
- Martin, R. G. Cognitive therapy: A new mission for community colleges in New directions for community colleges: Responding to new missions, November 24, 1978.
- Maxwell, J. A study of the results of the implementation of a non-punitive grading practice at Mattatuck community college. Mattatuck Community College: Waterbury, Connecticut. Ed. D. Practicum, Nova University, October 1974. (ERIC Document Service No. Ed 101 781)
- Medsker, L. L. The junior college: Progress and prospect. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960.
- Melby, E. O. Let's abolish the marking system. Nation's Schools, May 1966, 77 (5), 104.
- Mellander, G. A. Community colleges must abolish tinsel diplomas. The Chronicle of Higher Education, November 28, 1977, 15-16.
- Mellander, G. A. Did the 'massacre' lead to a miracle? Community and Junior College Journal, April 1980, 50 (7), 12-14.
- Middleton, L. Emphasis on standards at Miami-Dade leads to 8,000 dismissals and suspensions in 3 years. The Chronicle of Higher Education, February 2, 1981, 3-4.
- Miller, R. I. The assessment of college performance. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1979.
- Milton, O. Curricular reform. In G. K. Smith (Ed.), The troubled campus. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1970.
- Monroe, C. Profile of the community college. Washington, D.C.: Jossey-Bass, 1972.
- Moore, W. J. Against the odds. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1970.
- Morison, S. E. Harvard college in the seventeenth century. Park II. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936.
- Noble, M. E. Grading systems: All win, no lose. College and University, Summer 1971, 46 (4), 717-726.
- Norton, C. E. Harvard. In four American universities. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1895.
- O'Banion, T. Rules and regulations: Philosophy and practice. Junior College Journal, April 1969, 39 (7), 11-15.

- Palinchak, R. The evolution of the community college. Metchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1973.
- Priorities for action: Final report of the Carnegie Commission on higher education, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973.
- Pyle, G. B. Action steps for reaching the disadvantaged in Colorado. Denver, Colorado: Colorado State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, March 1970. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 049-727)
- Quann, C. Survey shows variation in grading trends. College and University Business, September 1970, 49 (3), 78.
- Rosser, M. Criteria used for admission by graduate departments. American Psychologist, June 1970, 25 (6), 558-560.
- Sgan, M. R. The first year of pass-fail at Brandeis University: A report. Journal of Higher Education, February 1969, 40 (2), 135-144.
- Smallwood, M. L. An historical study of examinations and grading systems in early American universities. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1935.
- Smith, L. G. Non-punitive grading in California junior colleges. El Cajon, California: Grossmont College, 1969 (a). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed 035-409)
- Smith, L. G. Study materials related to grades and grading systems. El Cajon, California: Grossmont College, 1969 (b). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed 040 700)
- Stein, J. B. Analysis of 'P' grade option in fall 1971 and winter 1975. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Metropolitan Community College, 1976. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 143 409)
- Taft, H. New grading systems at Yale. Intellect, February 1973, 101 (2347), 284-285.
- Teaf, H. M., Jr. What price grades? Journal of Higher Education, February 1964, 35 (2), 100-103.
- Trollope, A. I did not visit the museum. In W. Bemtrock-Smith (Ed.), The Harvard book: Selections from three centuries. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953.
- Tschechtelin, J.D. Changes in quality point index at Harford community college. Bel Air, Maryland: Harford Community College, January 1975. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 101 764)

- Wallace, T. H. Innovative grading practices; An annotated bibliography. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Harrisburg Area Community College, 1976. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 132 996)
- Warren, J. R. College grading practices: An overview. Report No. 9, Washington, D.C.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, March 1971.
- Wilson, L. C. The open access curriculum. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1972.
- Woods, N. A. Non-punitive grading systems; The experience of one college. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Kalamazoo Valley Community College, 1978. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 156 249)
- Young, E. A. Preliminary results of a survey of psychology department faculty and students attitudes regarding a no 'F' grade policy in Psychology I. Los Angeles, Calif.: Los Angeles City College, 1970. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 038 977)

APPENDIX A
Cover Letter - First Mailing



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

May 19, 1980

Dear Dean:

There is some evidence to suggest that non-punitive grading practices are declining in two-year colleges. Since such policies seem to follow logically from the mission and purpose of the community college, we wish to determine and report the status of non-punitive grading and the extent of any reduction in these practices.

For the purpose of this study non-punitive grading is defined as a system of grading which does not assign zero or negative values to low grades (i.e., "D" or "F") which must be offset by grades with high positive values assigned to them (i.e., "A" or "B"). Therefore, non-punitive grading practices do not penalize students for failing to meet a specific level of performance. Non-punitive grading practices include, but are not limited to, the following: elimination of the "F" grade, use of positive transcripts, unlimited withdrawal from courses without penalty, and liberal use of incomplete or continuing status grades. Pass/Fail is considered to be a highly punitive grading practice.

Non-punitive or no-fail grading practices have been employed in a number of four-year and community colleges. However, we have been unable to find any comprehensive attempt to determine if such practices are spreading or perhaps have peaked and are declining.

In addition to surveying non-punitive grading practices, we are also interested in determining the status of competency based education practices. Please complete Part III to indicate the status of Competency Based Education at your institution.

We hope that you will assist us in our attempt to report the status of non-punitive grading and competency based education in the nation's public and private two-year colleges by completing the attached brief questionnaire. If another individual is to complete the questionnaire, please attach this letter so the individual will have our definition of non-punitive grading. If you complete Part II of the questionnaire, please send us a copy of the official college publication which best describes your institution's grading practices. A mailer is provided.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Atwell
Associate Dean
College of Education

William E. Knight
Graduate Assistant

APPENDIX B
Cover Letter - Second Mailing



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

June 16, 1980

Dear Dean:

On May 19, 1980 our office mailed you the "Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey". Four weeks have passed and we still have not heard from you. We are aware of the myriad end-of-term activities with which each administrator must cope. However, your participation is critical to the success of the study and we hope you will take the few minutes required to complete the questionnaire. If the first survey form has been lost or discarded, please complete the enclosed questionnaire and mail today.

For the purpose of this study non-punitive grading is defined as a system of grading which does not assign zero or negative values to low grades (i.e., "D" or "F") which must be offset by grades with high positive values assigned to them (i.e., "A" or "B"). Therefore, non-punitive grading practices do not penalize students for failing to meet a specific level of performance. Non-punitive grading practices include, but are not limited to the following: elimination of the "F" grade, use of positive transcripts, unlimited withdrawal from courses without penalty, and liberal use of incomplete or continuing status grades. Pass/Fail is considered to be a highly punitive grading practice.

In addition to surveying non-punitive grading practices, we are also interested in determining the status of competency based education practices. Please complete Part III to indicate the status of Competency Based Education at your institution.

If another individual is to complete the questionnaire, please attach this letter so the individual will have our definition of non-punitive grading. If you complete Part II of the questionnaire, please send us a copy of the official college publication which best describes your institution's grading practices. A business reply mailer is provided for your convenience.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Atwell
Associate Dean
College of Education

William E. Knight
Graduate Assistant

APPENDIX C
Cover Letter - Third Mailing



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

July 14, 1980

Dear Dean:

On May 19 and again on June 16, 1980 our office mailed you the "Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey." A total of eight weeks have passed and we still have not heard from you. More than fifty percent of the two-year colleges across the nation responded to the first mailing and responses from the second mailing are coming in now. However, your response is important to us and we want to hear from you as soon as possible.

For the purpose of this study non-punitive grading is defined as a system of grading which does not assign zero or negative values to low grades (i.e., "D" or "F") which must be offset by grades with high positive values assigned to them (i.e., "A" or "B"). Therefore, non-punitive grading practices do not penalize students for failing to meet a specific level of performance.

In addition to surveying non-punitive grading practices, we are also interested in determining the status of competency based education practices. Please complete Part III of the survey to indicate the status of Competency Based Education at your institution.

We sincerely hope that you will assist us in our attempt to report the status of non-punitive grading and competency based education in the nation's public and private two-year colleges by completing the "Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey." A mailer has been provided with the survey for your convenience.

Thank you for taking the time to assist us in this effort. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Atwell
Associate Dean
College of Education

William E. Knight
Graduate Assistant

APPENDIX D
Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey

NON-PUNITIVE GRADING PRACTICES SURVEY

(PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TWO-YEAR COLLEGES)

No names of colleges or individuals will be used to report the results of this study. Your name and address are needed only for follow-up purposes.

NAME (please print)

TITLE

COLLEGE NAME

BUSINESS PHONE

COLLEGE MAILING ADDRESS (include state and zip code)

PART 1

1. Is your institution private or public? (Check one)
 - public
 - private
2. Check the item which best classifies your institution
 - junior college
 - comprehensive community college
 - technical college/technical institute
3. Which best describes your institution?
 - single campus
 - multi-campus (if multi-campus institution, are your grading policies and practices the same for all branch campuses?)
 - Yes
 - No
4. What was the total enrollment of your institution as of fall quarter 1979? (Total enrollment is defined as a headcount of full-time and part-time students enrolled for credit courses only). Check one.

<input type="checkbox"/> 1-499	<input type="checkbox"/> 3,500-4,999
<input type="checkbox"/> 500-999	<input type="checkbox"/> 5,000-9,999
<input type="checkbox"/> 1,000-1,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 10,000 +
<input type="checkbox"/> 2,000-3,499	
5. At what level does the final authority for setting or changing grading policies reside for your institution?

<input type="checkbox"/> state board of higher education	<input type="checkbox"/> central church authority
<input type="checkbox"/> state community college board	<input type="checkbox"/> president
<input type="checkbox"/> state university	<input type="checkbox"/> dean of instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> public school agency	<input type="checkbox"/> academic division
<input type="checkbox"/> local board	<input type="checkbox"/> academic department
<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	

6. Which of the following would you anticipate for your grading system within the next five years?

- It will probably become more traditional
- It will probably remain about the same
- It will probably become more non-punitive

7. If you know of any two-year colleges, private or public, other than your institution, using non-punitive grading practices, please list the names of the colleges and the city and state in which they are located.

8. Please check the one item which best describes the present status of non-punitive grading practices in your institution. If you check items C, D, E, or F, please fill in the dates in the blanks provided. A space for explanations is given below.

- A. We have not considered implementing non-punitive grading practices.
- B. We have considered adopting such practices but have rejected the idea. (Please explain why the practices were rejected).
- C. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and dropped them in 19__. (Please explain why the practices were dropped).
- D. We have considered adopting such practices and plan to begin implementation in 19__.
- E. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and are considering dropping them. (Please explain why you are considering dropping them).
- F. We implemented non-punitive grading practices in 19__ and are continuing with the practices. (Briefly explain why non-punitive grading is working in your institution).
- G. Other - Please explain.

If you checked response A, B, or C to item number 8, please respond to Part III of the questionnaire.

If you checked response D, E, F, or G to item number 8, please respond to Part II and Part III of this questionnaire.

PART 11

9. What specific type of grading system do you use in your institution?

A, B, C, D, I (Incomplete), W (Withdrawal)

A, B, C, I, W.

A, B, C, D, NCR (no credit), W, I

A, B, C, NCR, I

Pass, NCR

Other - Please describe

10. Aside from actual grading practices, what other non-punitive academic policies does your institution practice; e.g., no probation or suspension policies, academic "bankruptcy" policy, etc. Please list and describe briefly.

11. Indicate the approximate number of awards made by your institution in the transfer and occupational/technical programs each year. Within the occupational/technical category, further indicate the number of certificates, diplomas, and degrees.

Transfer Degree (AA/AS) = (a) _____

Occupational/Technical Awards = (b) _____ (Note: b = c + d + e)

Certificates = (c) _____

Diplomas = (d) _____

Degrees = (e) _____

Total = _____ (a + b)

12. Do your grading practices differ among the different kinds of degrees, diplomas, or certificates? If so, explain briefly.

Yes _____ No _____

13. Indicate your level of satisfaction with the non-punitive grading practices being used in your institution.

very satisfied

moderately dissatisfied

moderately satisfied

very dissatisfied

When you have completed the entire questionnaire (including Part III), please enclose a copy of the official college publication which best describes your institution's grading practices; e.g., faculty handbook, student handbook, college catalog, academic policies manual, grade report form, etc. THANK YOU.

APPENDIX E

Reasons Respondents Were Considering
Dropping Non-Punitive Grading
Practices

8-E. We are considering dropping N/P grading for the following reasons.

1. Faculty have complained about the lack of skills of students entering college. Our experience with I (incomplete) grades is that students tend not to complete the course requirements. We shall still retain the "W" grading, but will probably force students to decide earlier if they intend to withdraw.
2. Staff feels that the grading system inflates students' records to those who review student grade point average. Grades no longer motivate students to success. Students fail to take failure to earn credit seriously.
3. California community colleges have a mandated uniform grading policy which will be implemented fall 1980 (some have extensions to fall 1981). We are in favor of the non-punitive grading policy which we presently have; however, the state is modifying it. (F grade must be used instead of NCR).
4. Faculty prefers that we return to a more traditional system of grading due to the low success rate of non-punitive grading practices.
5. Faculty desires to return to an "F" grade. There is a feeling that the present system leads to grade inflation.
6. Teacher and student dissatisfaction. A special committee conducted an extension study and decided on a new grading policy which the Board accepted. We still consider it non-punitive, but our students and instructors think of it as more traditional.
7. Faculty was concerned that lack of failure would adversely affect learning incentive.
8. Pressures from "third parties" to change to a more traditional grading system (e.g. Veterans Administration, Tuition Assistance Programs, BEOG etc.) It was difficult to evaluate a student's eligibility for specific types of assistance.

APPENDIX F

**Reasons Respondents Felt Non-Punitive
Grading was Working in Their
Institutions**

8-F Briefly explain why N/P grading is working in your institution.

1. Students are not excluded from enrollment because of academic suspension.
2. N/P grading allows students to explore new areas without fear of failure.
3. N/P grading has a long history of success and has become an accepted "way of life" at this institution.
4. I'm not sure it is working. We have ways to get around a fairly traditional system.
5. Learning for mastery is the "official" ideology of the college and the practice of most faculty.
6. It is an integral part of the institution's philosophy that learning should be competency -- based and self-paced.
7. Faculty support the concept.
8. No F's are recorded and our students seem to need a "second chance."
9. N/P grading was developed by a broad based faculty committee and then approved by management and the board.
10. Students like present system. One third of the faculty do not. Once changed it is hard to change again here. Dean's preference, too.
11. Aid to student retention. Motiyates some to return and remove "F" by retaking course.
12. N/P grading was established when the college opened in 1973. We had a college-wide evaluation of the practice on two occasions. The system works fine -- and continues to work well.
13. Permits retention of students who would otherwise drop out. Fosters student morale. Encourages students to enter the system. Most faculty members are pleased with it.
14. N/P grading permits students to take courses and course loads which are difficult, but possible, and then permits them to withdraw without penalty from courses in the program if it is too difficult. It also permits people who develop illness, domestic, financial or other problems to drop out and then start again without penalty.

15. Faculty support and believe in it for the most part. It meshes nicely with Competency Based Education and other non-traditional instructional practices.
16. It is the system we have and it works.
17. Most of our students who benefit from non-punitive grading practices do not transfer and many are also in the Occupational Education fields. The good students usually have little academic problems and therefore transfer is no problem to them. Non-punitive grading has not affected the transfer of any students.
18. We use the incomplete grade liberally. It seems to give the student every opportunity to succeed in a course without severe time restrictions. It does present some administrative anxiety in getting the grade removed.
19. We have always used a non-punitive grading system and have never found it necessary to even contemplate implementing a punitive grading system.
20. Non-punitive grading is effective at this community college because the college is committed to evaluating students on the basis of demonstrated achievement.
21. Non-punitive grading is working because the college is committed to competency based education. We also recognize that some students take longer to achieve minimum levels.
22. For an open door institution, our students often need the opportunity to "start again" and the non-punitive system allows this.
23. Why not!
24. Non-punitive grading works because of commitment of the faculty, administration and board in concert with support of students. The college began using a non-punitive system when we first opened and the total college community continues to support the system.
25. It was the original policy when the institution was founded. Even though there is some feeling to change, it has not been a majority.
26. The policy change to non-punitive grading practices was developed and implemented cooperatively by faculty and administration.
27. Non-punitive grading works in a setting using individualized instruction procedures where the student can pick up where he left off in a subsequent semester.

28. Ours is a modified grading system. We do not have an "F" grade; we have NC (no credit). But we have minimum passing grades at D, C-, and C depending on the program and/or discipline.
29. We stress success not failure -- and not having something around a student's neck that is harder to overcome than getting out of a marriage.
30. It is well accepted by most students and faculty. The only criticism we occasionally hear is that "failing" (no credit) is too easy.
31. Faculty accepts non-punitive grading as a positive step to assist slower students.
32. A recent vote on non-punitive grading by faculty indicated 53 to remain the same, 41 to change to D & F and six don't care.
33. We have felt that the student should be rewarded for progress, not necessarily punished for failure.
34. Non-punitive works because of faculty support. It has caused some problems for the institution in reporting VA information and in monitoring attendance.
35. Non-punitive grading gives students a "second chance," particularly in first year courses. Many of our students are employed full-time and are unable to successfully complete a course for reasons other than academic.
36. Non-punitive grading works for adult students with special "re-entry" problems.
37. We adopted non-punitive grading in 1971 and modified our grading system to make non-punitive grading the option of our faculty. We particularly try to guard punitive grading in our "remedial" courses.
38. We still have problems with students not withdrawing at the proper time.
39. The faculty works hard to assure the success of non-punitive grading.
40. I have no strong evidence that these practices are or are not working.
41. Adopted when college opened in 1972. The non-punitive grading system accommodates variations in personal student interests and

abilities, as well as personal non-academic situations.

42. Non-punitive grading gives the student a viable means of correcting a mistake. It also provides the student and instructor with more options.
43. Our students "stop-out" for many reasons, many later return and, therefore, are not considered "drop-outs."
44. Non-punitive grading works because, if the student fills out the proper form he/she leaves without penalty.
45. The college feels it wants students to remain in college and unlimited withdrawal makes a students feel "wanted."
46. Non-punitive grading works because very few instructors want to take on the really tough tasks of assigning a failing grade. Some of us still hold that an "I" or "W" really doesn't represent very much success either. And in a period of job protectionism, how many want to be a part of eliminating their own job, or someone else's.
47. Non-punitive grading is restricted by policy.
48. Grades are generally thought of as positive motivators. Negative motivation through punitive systems are of little value to the immature student. (maturity not necessarily being a function of age).
49. This college places emphasis on training people for immediate employment in vocational and technical jobs. We believe that non-punitive grading is the most effective and efficient system to use in carrying out this task.

APPENDIX G

Forms of Non-Punitive Grading:
Public Sector

<u>Type of Grading System</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
A, B, C, D, NCR, W, I	38
A, B, C, D, I, W	29
A, B, C, D, NCR	5
Satisfactory/Not Satisfactory, I	3
A, B, C, D, NCR	3
A, B, C, I, W	2
P/NCR	2
A, B, C, D, IP (official drop), W (Walkaway)	2
A, B, C, D, Cr, NCR, W, I, IP	2
A, B, C, N (not complete)	1
A, B, C, P	1
A, B, C, I, P	1
A, B, C, D, AP (Adequate Progress), UP (Unsatisfactory Progress)	1
A, B, C, D, U, I, IP, PX, W, T, CW	1
A, B, C, D, X	1
A, B, C, D, T (SAT), X (in progress) N (No Show), R (Report), U (Audit) W (Withdraw)	1
M (Mastery) MH (Mastery with Honors) Cr	1
A, B, C, D, X, W x ¹ Comp. not achieved x ² Not Completed Course Objectives; reregister x ³ MSNF. contact for Evaluation; reregister	1
A, B, C, R (recycle), NCR, I	1
A, B, C, D, with +/- PLS for self paced IP in progress N no credit W withdrawal WP	1
A, B, C, D, P, S, Au (Audit)	1
A, B, C, D, R (Re-enroll)	1
A, B, C, D, X, W	1

In addition to the grades given on the preceding page, there was limited use of the following grades:

P/NCR

y or p (in progress)

CRHH (Credit, High Honor)

CRH (Credit, Honor)

CR (Credit)

SAT/UNSAT

IP

+/-

APPENDIX H

Board of Governors of the
California Community Colleges

Community College Grading Policies

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE
CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADING POLICIES

The Board of Governors adopted unanimously the following resolution on Title 5 regulations relating to Community College Grading Policies.

Be it resolved by the Board of Governors, California Community Colleges, acting under the authority of Sections 71020, 71025, 71027, 71066 of the Education Code, and implementing, interpreting and making specific Section 71066, 72285, 76000, 76224, 78205 and 78207 of the Education Code, and pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act, regulations in Title 5, Part VI of the California Administrative Code are amended, repealed and added as follows:

1. Section 51301 is amended to read:

51301. Grading Practices. Each governing board maintaining one or more community colleges shall determine a uniform grading practice for the district which shall be based on sound academic principles and conform to the following standards:

(a) Work in all courses acceptable in fulfillment of the requirements for an associate or baccalaureate degree, a certificate, diploma or license shall be graded in accordance with a grading scale adopted by the governing board consistent with Section 51306, or

(b) Be graded in accordance with the provisions of Section 51302 or Section 51302.5.

2. Section 51302 is amended to read:

51302. Credit-No credit Options. (a) The governing board of a district maintaining a community college may by resolution and regulation offer courses in either or both of the following categories and shall specify in its catalog the category into which each course falls:

(1) Courses wherein all students are evaluated on a "credit-no credit" basis.

(2) Courses wherein each student may elect on registration, or no later than the end of the first 30% of the term, whether the basis of evaluation is to be "credit-no credit" or a letter grade.

(b) All units earned on a "credit-no credit" basis in accredited California institutions of higher education or equivalent out-of-state institutions shall be counted

in satisfaction of community college curriculum requirements.

(c) The governing board may authorize a student who has received credit for a course taken on a "credit-no credit" basis within the district to convert this to a grade based on authorization shall conform to the standards for repeating enrollment contained in subdivision (f) of Section 55002, and Sections 51315, and 51316.

(d) Units earned on a "credit-no credit" basis shall not be used to calculate grade point averages. However, units attempted for which "NC" (as defined in Section 51306) is recorded shall be considered in probation and dismissal procedures.

(e) Independent study courses offered in accordance with Sections 55300-55360 of this part may be graded on a "credit/no credit" basis in accordance with subdivision (a) of this section.

(f) When a district offers courses in which there is a single satisfactory standard of performance for which unit credit is assigned, the "CR/NC" grading system shall be used to the exclusion of other grades. Credit shall be assigned for meeting that standard, no credit for failure to do so.

3. Section 51302.5 is amended to read:

51302.5. Credit by Examination. (a) The governing board maintaining one or more community colleges shall adopt and publish procedures and regulations pertaining to credit by examination in accordance with the provisions of Sections 51301, 51302, 51306, 51308, 51315, 51316, 51318 and subdivision (f) of Section 55002.

(b) The governing board may grant credit to any student who satisfactorily passes examination approved or conducted by proper authorities of the college. Such credit may be granted only to a student who is registered at the college and in good standing and only for a course listed in the catalog of the community college.

(c) The student's academic record shall be clearly annotated to reflect that credit was earned by examination.

(d) Units for which credit is given pursuant to the provisions of this section shall not be counted in determining the 12 semester hours of credit in residence required by Section 51623.

4. Section 51303 is amended to read:

51303. Standards for Probation. (a) Academic Probation. A student who has attempted at least 12 semester or 18 quarter units as shown by the official academic re-

cord shall be placed on academic probation if the student has earned a grade point average below 2.0 in all units which were graded on the basis of the grading scale described in Section 51306.

(b) Progress probation. A student who has enrolled in a total of at least 12 semester or 18 quarter units as shown by the official academic record shall be placed on progress probation when the percentage of all units in which a student has enrolled and for which entries of "W", "I", and "NC" (as defined in Section 51306) are recorded reaches or exceeds fifty percent (50%).

(c) The governing board of a community college district may adopt standards for probation which do not exceed those standards specified in subsection (a) and (b) of this section. Specifically:

(1) A district may establish, as the minimum number of units before academic or progress probation is assessed, a number of units fewer than 12 semester or 18 quarter units; or

(2) A district may establish, as the minimum grade point average for academic probation purposes, a grade point average greater than 2.0; or

(3) A district may establish, as the minimum percentage of units of "W", "I", and "NC", a percentage less than fifty percent (50%).

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700, 71020, 71025 and 71066, Education Code.

Reference: Sections 71066, 72285, and 76000, Education Code.

5. Section 51303.5 is added to read:

51303.5. Removal from Probation. (a) A student on academic probation for a grade point deficiency shall be removed from probation when the student's accumulated grade point average is 2.0 or higher.

(b) A student on progress probation because of an excess of units for which entries of "W", "I", and "NC" (as defined in Section 51306) are recorded shall be removed from probation when the percentage of units in this category drops below fifty percent (50%).

(c) the governing board of a district shall adopt and publish procedures and conditions for probation and appeal of probation and request for removal from probation. Such procedures and conditions may establish standards which do not exceed those standards specified in sub-

sections (a) and (b) of this section. Specifically:

(1) A district may establish, as a minimum grade point average for removal from academic probation, a grade point average greater than 2.0; or

(2) A district may establish, as the minimum percentage of units of "W", "I", and "NC", a percentage less than fifty percent (50%).

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 66700, 71020, 71025, 71066, Education Code.
Reference: Sections 71066, 72285, and 76000, Education Code

6. Section 51304 is amended to read:

51304. Standards for Dismissal. For purposes of this section, semesters or quarters shall be considered consecutive on the basis of the student's enrollment (i.e., a fall quarter followed by a spring quarter shall be considered consecutive if the student was not enrolled in the winter quarter of that academic year).

(a) A student who is on academic probation shall be subject to dismissal if the student earned a cumulative grade point average of less than 1.75 in all units attempted in each of 3 consecutive semesters (5 consecutive quarters) which were graded on the basis of the grading scale described in Section 51306.

(b) A student who has been placed on progress probation shall be subject to dismissal if the percentage of units in which the student has been enrolled for which entries of "W", "I", and "NC" (as defined in Section 51306) are recorded in at least 3 consecutive semesters (5 consecutive quarters) reached or exceeds fifty percent (50%) in accordance with Section 51303.

(c) The governing board of a district shall adopt and publish procedures and conditions for dismissal and appeal of dismissal and request for reinstatement. Such procedures and conditions may establish standards which do not exceed the standards specified in subsections (a) and (b) of this section. Specifically:

(1) A district may establish, as the minimum cumulative grade point average for dismissal purposes, a grade point average greater than 1.75; or

(2) A district may establish, as the minimum percentage of units of "W", "I", and "NC", a percentage less than fifty percent (50%); or

(3) A district may establish, as a minimum number of consecutive semesters or quarters, a number fewer than 3 consecutive semesters or 5 consecutive quarters.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700, 71020, 71025, and 71066, Education Code.
Reference: Sections 71066, 72285, and 76000, Education Code.

(d) The district board shall adopt rules setting forth the circumstances that shall warrant exceptions to the standards for dismissal herein set forth and shall file a copy of such rules with the Chancellor.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700, 71020, 71025, and 71066, Education Code.
Reference: Sections 71066, 72285, and 76000, Education Code.

7. Section 51306 is amended to read:

51306. Academic Record Symbols and Grade Point Average.
(a) Grades from a grading scale shall be averaged on the basis of the point equivalencies to determine a student's grade point average. The highest grade shall receive four points, and the lowest grade shall receive 0 points, using only the following evaluative symbols:

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point</u>
A	Excellent	4
B	Good	3
C	Satisfactory	2
D	Passing, less satisfactory	1
F	Failing	0
CR	Credit (at least satisfactory-units awarded not counted in GPA)	
NC	No Credit (less than satisfactory, or failing-units not counted in GPA)	

(b) The governing board for each community college district shall publish the point equivalencies for the grades used in subsection (a) of this section in the catalog or catalogues of that community college district as a part of its grading practices.

(c) The governing board of each community college district may authorize the use of only the following non-evaluative symbols:

SymbolDefinition

I

Incomplete

Incomplete academic work for unforeseeable, emergency and justifiable reasons at the end of the term may result in an "I" symbol being entered in the student's record. The condition for removal of the "I" shall be stated by the instructor in a written record. This record shall contain the conditions for removal of the "I" and the grade assigned in lieu of its removal. This record must be given to the student with a copy on file with the registrar until the "I" is made up or the time limit has passed. A final grade shall be assigned when the work stipulated has been completed and evaluated, or when the time limit for completing the work has passed.

The "I" may be made up no later than one year following the end of the term in which it was assigned.

The "I" symbol shall not be used in calculating units attempted nor for grade points.

The governing board shall provide a process whereby a student may petition for a time extension due to unusual circumstances.

IP

In Progress

The "IP" symbol shall be used to denote that the class extends beyond the normal end of an academic term. It indicates that work is "in progress", but that assignment of a substantive grade must await its completion. The "IP" symbol shall remain on the student's permanent record in order to satisfy enrollment documentation. The appropriate evaluative grade and unit credit shall be assigned and appear on the student's record for the term in which the course is completed. The "IP" shall not be used in calculating grade point averages.

SymbolDefinition

RD

Report Delayed

The "RD" symbol may be assigned by the registrar only. It is to be used when there is a delay in reporting the grade of a student due to circumstances beyond the control of the student. It is a temporary notation to be replaced by a permanent symbol as soon as possible. "RD" shall not be used in calculating grade point averages.

W

Withdrawal

The governing board of a district which decides to provide a withdrawal procedure shall adopt a policy consistent with the following:

Withdrawal from a class or classes shall be authorized through the last day of the fourteenth week of instruction (or 75% of a term, whichever is less). The governing board, however, may establish a final withdrawal date which prohibits withdrawal after a designated point in time between the end of the fourth week of instruction (or 30% of a term, whichever is less) and the last day of the fourteenth week of instruction (Or 75% of a term, whichever is less). The academic record of a student who remains in a class beyond the time allowed by district policy must reflect a symbol as authorized in Section 51306 of this part, other than a "W".

No notation ("W" or other) shall be made on the academic record of the student who withdraws during the first 4 weeks or 30% of a term, whichever is less. The governing board may establish a period of time shorter than the first 4 weeks or 30% of a term, during which no notation shall be made.

Withdrawal between the end of the fourth week (or such time as established by the district) and the last day of the four-

teenth week of instruction (or 75% of a term, whichever is less) shall be recorded as a "W" on the student's record.

The "W" shall not be used in calculating grade point averages, but excessive "W's" (as defined in Sections 51303 and 51304 of this part) shall be used as factors in probation and dismissal procedures.

Within these guidelines, criteria for withdrawal and the procedures to accomplish it shall be established by governing boards and published in college catalogs.

A district's responsibilities with respect to enrollment or attendance accounting as contained in Sections 54500-54512 of this part shall not be modified or superseded in any way by adoption of a withdrawal policy.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700, 71020, 71025, and 71066, Education Code.
Reference: Sections 71066 and 72285, Education Code.

8. Section 51307 is amended to read:

51207. Notification of Probation and Dismissal. Each community college shall make every reasonable effort to notify a student of academic probation or dismissal at or near the beginning of the semester or quarter in which it will take effect but, in any case, no later than the start of the fall semester or quarter. Each community college shall also make every reasonable effort to provide counseling and other support services to a student on probation to help the student overcome any academic difficulties. Each community college shall make every reasonable effort to notify a student of removal from probation or reinstatement after dismissal within timelines established by the district. Probation and dismissal policies and procedures shall be published in the college catalog.

9. Section 51308 is repealed.

10. Section 51308 is added to read:

51308. Grade Changes. (a) In any course of instruction in a community college district for which grades

are awarded, the instructor of the course shall determine the grade to be awarded each student in accordance with Section 51306 of this chapter. The determination of the student's grade by the instructor shall be final in the absence of mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency. Procedures for the correction of grades given in error shall include expunging the incorrect grade from the record.

(b) The governing board may authorize a student who has received credit for a course taken on a "credit-no credit" basis within the district, to convert this to a grade based on a grading scale by taking an appropriate examination. Such authorization shall conform to the procedures for repeating enrollment contained in subdivision (f) of Section 55002.

(c) The governing board of a district shall adopt and publish procedures and regulations pertaining to the repetition of courses for which substandard work has been recorded in accordance with subdivision (f) of Section 55002, and Sections 51315 and 51316. When grade changes are made in accordance with these Sections, appropriate annotations of any courses repeated shall be entered on the student's permanent academic record in such a manner that all work remains legible, insuring a true and complete academic history.

11. Section 51315 is amended to read:

51315. District Policy for Course Repetition. The governing board of a district maintaining a community college shall adopt and publish procedures or regulations pertaining to the repetition of courses for which substandard work has been recorded. For purposes of course repetition, academic renewal, and all other related provisions in this part, the term "substandard" shall be defined as meaning course work for which the grading symbols "D", "F", and /or "NC" (as defined in Section 51306) have been recorded. The procedures or regulations may allow such courses to be repeated and the previous grade and credit to be disregarded in the computation of grade point averages. In such cases, the procedure specified in subdivision (f) of Section 55002 and Sections 51308 and 51316 of this part shall be followed. When course repetition occurs, the permanent academic record shall be annotated in such a manner that all work remains legible, insuring a true and complete academic history.

12. Section 51316 is amended to read:

51316. Course Repetition: Implementation. In adopting procedures or regulations pertaining to the repetition of courses for which substandard academic performance has been previously recorded, the governing board of a district maintaining a community college:

(a) Shall not adopt any regulation or procedure which conflicts with:

(1) Education Code Section 76224, pertaining to finality of grades assigned by instructors and

(2) Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 59020 of Division 10 of this part, pertaining to the retention and destruction of records and particularly subdivision (d) of Section 59023, relating to the permanency of certain student records;

(b) May permit repetition of any course which was taken in an accredited college or university and for which substandard academic performance as defined in Section 51315 is recorded.

(c) Shall, when adopted procedures or regulations permit course repetition, indicate any specific courses or categories of courses which are exempt from consideration under these regulations;

(d) Shall, in accordance with subdivision (f) of Section 55002, deem any course repetition permitted under Section 51315 to require "prior written permission from the district superintendent or the district superintendent's authorized representative or representatives";

(e) Shall clearly indicate any courses repeated under the provisions of this section and Section 51315 on the student's permanent academic record, using an appropriate symbol;

(f) Shall, when adopted procedures or regulations permit course repetition, publish specific procedures to implement this section;

(g) May, in determining transfer of a student's credits, honor similar, prior courses repetition actions by other accredited colleges and universities; and

(h) Shall maintain a careful record of actions taken under course repetition procedures or regulations adopted in compliance with this section and Section 51315, since periodic reports may be required by the Chancellor.

13. Section 51318 is amended to read:

51318. District Policy for Academic Renewal Without Course Repetition. The governing board of a district maintaining a community college shall adopt and publish procedures or regulations pertaining to the alleviation of previously recorded, substandard academic performance as defined in Section 51315, which is not reflective of a student's demonstrated ability. Such procedures or regulations shall include a clear statement of the educational principles upon which they are based, and shall be referred to as academic renewal regulations. When academic renewal procedures or regulations adopted by the districts permit previously recorded, substandard course work to be disregarded in the computation of grade point averages, the permanent academic record shall be annotated in such a manner that all work remains legible, insuring a true and complete academic history.

14. Section 51319 is amended to read:

51319. Academic Renewal Without Course Repetition: Implementation. In adopting procedures or regulations pertaining to the alleviation of previously recorded, substandard academic performance, as defined in Section 51315 which is not reflective of a student's demonstrated ability, the governing board of a district maintaining a community college:

(a) Shall not adopt any regulation or procedure which conflicts with:

(1) Education Code Section 76224, pertaining to the finality of grades assigned by instructors, and

(2) Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 59020) of Division 10 of this part pertaining to the retention and destruction of records, and particularly subdivision (d) of Section 59023, relating to the permanency of certain student records.

(b) Shall, when the adopted procedures or regulations permit such alleviation, state:

(1) The maximum amount of coursework that may be alleviated;

(2) The amount of academic work to have been completed at a satisfactory level (minimum 2.00) subsequent to the coursework to be alleviated;

(3) The length of time to have elapsed since the coursework to be alleviated was recorded; and

(4) A description of any specific courses and/or categories of courses that are, for any reason exempt from consideration under the alleviation regulations.

(c) Shall, when the adopted procedures or regulations permit such alleviation, publish specific procedures to be followed in implementing procedures or regulations adopted pursuant to this section and Section 51318, stating, at a minimum:

(1) The procedures to be followed by students in petitioning for alleviation; and

(2) The officers and/or personnel responsible for implementing the procedures or regulations.

15. Section 51325 is added, to read:

51325. In adopting regulations and otherwise implementing the provisions of this chapter, the governing board of a district may request a reasonable phase-in period from the Chacellor. All such requests shall be made on, and in accordance with, a form provided by the Chancellor. No request shall be granted which would provide for a phase-in period which extends beyond July 1, 1981.

16. Section 55002 is amended to read:

55002. Standards. A graded course shall meet all of the following standards:

(a) The content is organized to meet the requirements for the associate degree as specified in Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 51600) of Division 2 of this part

or the requirements for an occupational certificate and is a part of a course of study not exceeding 70 units in length.

(b) It is offered as described in the college catalog, or a supplement thereto, which provides an appropriate title, number, and accurate description of course content. A course outline is available at the college. Course requirements and credit awarded are consistent with Education Code Section 66701.

(c) Only those students who have met the prerequisites for the course are enrolled.

(d) It is subject to the published standards of matriculation, attendance, and achievement of the college.

(e) The students are awarded marks or grades on the basis of methods of evaluation set forth in Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 51300) of Division 2 of this part or to such additional standards as may be established by the governing board of the district.

(f) Enrollment cannot be repeated except: to alleviate substandard work which has been recorded on the student's record or as permitted in Section 51315 of this part; or in unusual circumstances and with the prior written permission from the district superintendent or authorized representative or representatives.

Be it further resolved that these revisions to Title 5 regulations mandate no new or additional costs to local, state, or federal agencies, within the meaning of Revenue and Taxation Code, Section 2231.

Further, the Board stated their intention to consider grading policies regulations on probation and dismissal as minimum standards.

**The vita has been removed from
the scanned document**

NON-PUNITIVE GRADING PRACTICES
IN THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE

by

William E. Knight

(ABSTRACT)

The status of non-punitive grading practices and policies in the two-year college remained highly uncertain due to a lack of substantive research. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to answer the following research questions: (1) How many public and private two-year colleges are currently using non-punitive grading practices? (2) What are the different forms of non-punitive grading practices now in use in public and private two-year colleges? (3) Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among two-year colleges with different enrollment classification? (4) Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and among private two-year colleges with different levels of academic policy control? (5) Are there differences in non-punitive grading practices among public and among private two-year colleges with different curricular emphasis? (6) What is the level of satisfaction among Deans of Instruction with the current non-punitive grading in public and private two-year colleges? (7) What are the future trends of non-punitive grading practices in public and private two-year colleges?

The Non-Punitive Grading Practices Survey was designed to address the seven major research questions and was sent to 1,030 chief academic officers of public (n=866) and private (n=164) two-year colleges located in the continental United States. Seven hundred seventy-eight usable returns were received, representing a 75.5 percent response rate.

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings: (1) Non-punitive grading practices, in its purest forms, remain a viable grading system in a limited number of public and private two-year colleges during 1980-1981. (2) Non-punitive grading practices are considered to be "experimental" by many administrators and the majority of users of non-punitive grading do so on a limited basis. (3) Most academic deans in two-year colleges do not believe that non-punitive grading is consistent with the mission of their respective institutions. (4) An overwhelming majority of the deans in institutions with non-punitive grading practices favor non-punitive grades which represent the least change from traditional grading systems. (5) For non-punitive grading systems to be the exclusive methods of student evaluation academic policy control must be maintained at the local or state level. (6) University control over the academic policy of a two-year college is detrimental to the existence of non-punitive grading systems. (7) Curricular emphasis within public community colleges has no apparent effect on the utilization of non-punitive grading practices. (8) Deans of instruction who utilize non-punitive grading practices, exclusively or experimentally, are very satisfied with these grading systems and practices. (9) No revolutionary changes in grading systems are likely to occur in the next five years.

(10) Non-punitive grading systems will remain the minority grading systems in public two-year colleges. (11) It is further concluded that faculty support is vital to the implementation and the deletion of non-punitive grading practices in two-year colleges.