

Student Self-Grading in a Bachelor of Physical Education Course:

The Direction of Reflection

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Keywords: self-assessment, dialogism, Freire, critical consciousness, higher education

Introduction

Since reading *Freedom to Learn* (Rogers, 1969) and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970) sometime in the 1970s I have experimented with various teaching approaches (Ross, 1993) and assessment methods that attempt to engage students in their own learning process. Freire (1997) refers to this reflexive process as ‘dialogism’.

‘Dialogism’ is central to Freire’s (1970) concept of *conscientização*¹ and I find both words difficult to say and awkward to write. Thus for the purpose of this paper I will use ‘critical consciousness’ or ‘consciousness’ to frame my meaning of *conscientização*.² Dialogism is the conversation, the dialogue that takes place between students and teachers. It is the Socratic interaction that fosters the learning of students and teachers. It stimulates curiosity. Freire (1997) says that curiosity is an essential aspect of humanness. It involves the alertness to being alive, an ‘unrefrained need to understand’, to make sense of the world. Dialogic education nurtures transferring it into a methodological tool ‘epistemological curiosity’. ‘Epistemological curiosity’ enables us to step back from the experience of ‘facts’, of beauty and feelings and interrogate the meaning—or sensibility, or value, or beauty, or usefulness, or relevance, or significance—of what triggers our spontaneous or unguarded curiosity.

It is this methodological rigor that takes knowledge from the level of *common sense* to that of scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge is not what is rigorous. Rigor lies in the method applied in an approach to an object. This rigor allows for a greater or lesser *precision* in the knowledge produced or found through our epistemological quest. (Freire, 1997, p. 97)

Freire (1997) is also careful to point out that naive, spontaneous curiosity is not without method. It is, in his view, a method—a method that awakens our awareness of or comprehension of the world and our place in it. Curiosity is fundamental to our

¹ *Conscientização* is most commonly translated as conscientization. The term encompasses Freire’s ideas and means in general terms ‘learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and take action against the oppressive elements of reality.’ (Freire, 1970 p. 17)

² Consciousness is a term that I use in a similar sense to that used by Paulo Freire in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) [Penguin republished this in 1996]. He states that the aim of education is to make people more human, not just living cogs in a controlled and regulated society. To be human is to be aware, alive to the world and able to reflect about one’s place in the world. But this does not mean just noticing that for instance “I’m a poverty stricken student” or “women get paid less than men” or “my feet hurt”. Rather it is reflection that leads to action; action that is conscious and deliberate and has personal meaning—in other words *critical reflection*.

living as conscious beings rather than as animals or plants. It is the engine that drives our thoughtfulness about what we do, how we do it and why. Curiosity involves a continual flux between what we notice or what intrigues us—what's that? why does that happen? that's weird, that's new, that's beautiful—and the intellectual work of trying to make sense of our perceptions and feelings —accurately describing events or incidents; verifying our observations and descriptions of these observations; accumulating evidence; testing hypotheses; seeking congruence of feelings/emotions; clarifying values and deciding how to act. Much of this interaction between naive curiosity and epistemological curiosity is mediated by oral and written conversation that we use to explain our sense of the world to others. This conversation transcends 'idle chatter' in that it seeks to create a dialogue that is sensible to our collective 'consciousness'. "Dialogic seriousness and surrender to a critical quest must not be confused with *babbling*. To dialogue is not to babble." (Freire, 1997 p. 99)

Since 1999 I have cooperated with first year physical education degree students to gather evidence that may indicate what these students think, and feel about what they have learned in two undergraduate physical education courses. These two year-long courses address socio-cultural aspects of physical education and notions of teaching physical education. In both these courses I use questions, class discussion, group discussion and presentations along with spontaneous written tasks and a structured form of self-assessment to promote what Freire (1997) calls 'dialogism'. I try to avoid 'babbling' by restricting my tendency to lecture and dump information on students. Thus I organise whole class discussion, group discussions, group presentations and readings that involve current media, fiction and poetry. I see my role as a benign interrogator where I continually ask questions in the hope that students will be prompted to ask hard questions about what they mean about physical education and how they construct those meanings. The intent of these two papers is to provide an opportunity for students to engage with ideas about physical education and to think about the social and historical construction of the practice of physical education in New Zealand schools.

Central to my teaching approach is student self-grading. Student self-assessment is not new and has been shown to foster student learning and be an effective learning tool (Boud, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992; Brown & Knight, 1994; Orsmond, Merry, & Reiling, 2000; Taras, 2002). Although several writers (Boud, 1990, 1992; Dochy, Segers, & Sluijsmans, 1999; Orsmond et al., 2000; Taras, 2001) claim that student self-assessment is '...fundamental to all learning' (Boud, 1990) self-assessment does not appear to be widely used for the generation of course grades. Few studies have

been done to demonstrate the potential of student self-grading to stimulate curiosity, thoughtfulness or to evaluate critical consciousness or student response to the process of self-assessment (Boud, 1991, 1992; Brown & Knight, 1994; Dochy et al., 1999; Taras, 2001). Thus this paper presents some first year physical education student responses to self-grading that suggests self-assessment when used in conjunction with a Socratic approach to teaching can foster dialogic education (Freire, 1997) that enables students to make personal sense of ideas about teaching and the meaning of physical education—a sense of direction for their thinking.

The self-grading used in the courses I teach is based on the self-assessment schedule devised by Boud (1992) in that I provide students with guides to writing a self-assessment statement (Appendix 1) and compiling of a dossier containing evidence of their own learning (Appendix 2). The dossier guide is given to students at the beginning of the course and I emphasise that they should keep everything relevant to these courses in their dossiers. At the same time I make it clear that they will be grading themselves for this course and that I will explain how they will do this later in the year. I have found that if I present all the details of the self-grading at the beginning of the course students become confused and tend to forget about self-assessment. At the beginning of the second term I hand out the self-assessment guides and discuss them in class.

Students are required to complete a self-assessment statement for each course. This is a formal document with a set submission date (Appendix 1). One week after the submission of the self-assessment statements each student meets formally with me and uses their dossier to provide evidence to support their self-assessment statement and the grade that they feel reflects the quality and quantity of learning that has occurred for them. The interview is not an examination but an opportunity for students to justify the judgements that they have made about their learning achievements.

A mid-year practice interview with students meeting with me in pairs enables students to experience and understand the process, discover the vital role played by the dossier and know that the self-assessment interview is not a test of their head knowledge or ability to recycle ideas from texts, my lectures or the net. Rather it is an opportunity to show what they had done to engage with the ideas central to the course. A final grade is decided at this interview with the student proposing a final grade. If I feel that the

student has under-rated or over-rated themselves we negotiated a grade. All grades have been settled amicably.³

Crucial to the self-assessment process are the individual or group learning tasks that I set during the year. These are clearly prescribed and called learning tasks because they are optional and I do not grade them. If students submit these completed tasks by a set date and I read and return them with detailed comments. I record a ‘ball-park’ assessment. Three ticks for excellent work—work that presents sound arguments and supportive evidence to which I mostly make affirmative comments on. Two ticks for good work—work that argues a case with evidence but requires questions and suggestions that show that the argument is weak or not clear or the evidence is suspect and a better case could be made. One tick for satisfactory work—work that attempted to mount an argument and use evidence but the arguments are not clear and/or the evidence is unsubstantiated. A dot means that the submitted work does not attempt to argue a position and tends to rely on personal opinion rather than evidence. As I am trying to foster dialogue with students I make it clear that they are able to continue the dialogue by resubmitting a learning task if they wish to respond to my comments.

Method

As part of an on-going project to document student ‘consciousness’ I set out to video-record all 83 students from my first year physical education classes in 1999 through 2001 reading their self-assessment statements. These videotaped readings took place each year, three months after the completion of the course work; that is at the beginning of their second year in the programme. As I do not teach the second year students in the BPE programme there was no pressure for the students to participate. In other words I did not nag them to participate and there was no personal benefit in terms of being rewarded by me in grades for subsequent courses. Recording the self-assessment statements after the grades had been obtained and three months after the completion of the particular course work I hoped would reduce the ‘halo’ effect of students trying to impress me for a grade as well as eliminate the assessment interview anxiety that was at times obvious to me during the actual self-assessment interviews. As a further attempt to side-step the power relationship between teachers

³ All grades for Bachelor of Physical Education courses at the Auckland College of Education are monitored by an external moderator. In the five years that the self-grading has been used in these courses the external moderator has requested the reconsideration of one grade

and students all the videos were done by professional video-recording technicians and I was not present.

Students were then encouraged to cooperate with me in editing these tapes to provide what they thought was an accurate perspective of their learning, thinking and consciousness that had developed from the teaching and assessment used in these two first year Physical Education degree papers.

Students were also interviewed after the editing process to explain their editing choices to me.

In addition I collated the notes that I had taken during all the self-assessment interviews where final grades were agreed. At the end of each assessment interview, after we had agreed on the final grade, I asked each student if they felt the assessment process was fair and if self-assessment accurately documented their personal learning.

Finally I made notes of the student comments made during a group discussion session held with 19 of 24 students from the 2002 class after course grades were finalised. Students from this group were not videoed for this project. During that discussion round each student was asked to say what they felt happened for them in terms of their learning in the Socio-cultural and Professional Teacher courses.

Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Auckland College of Education and financial support was obtained from the Auckland College of Education Research Executive Committee.

Results

Video-recording

Twenty-eight of the 62 students who consented to participate in this project actually turned up for the professional video-recording of their personal self-assessment statements. Time-coded VHS tapes were produced for editing by the students. Students were asked to select sections of the video that could be shown publicly as demonstrations of the 'consciousness' or learning that they felt took place in response to these courses.

The editing proved a nightmare. It was impossible to get the groups of students together at any one time to edit the tapes. So I ended up editing each tape and giving them back to the students to view independently alongside the original recording. I

encouraged each student to suggest how the tape could be edited further to ensure it fairly represented their personal perspectives of the two courses. All but 2 of the 28 students accepted my edited version and gave consent for the recordings to be presented publicly. Both students who did not accept my editing refused to allow their tapes to be shown publicly because they felt that they looked bad on TV and made it clear that they felt the other student recordings expressed their responses to the two first year papers better than their own recordings.

Twelve of the 28 students talked to me about their reasons for not re-editing the video-recordings. Four of these said that they did not have time and trusted my selection. The other 8 students felt that the tapes did show what they felt was important about the course and that when they tried to edit the tapes they were editing for aesthetic reasons not the content. So they decided not to further edit the tapes. They also felt that I had edited out all the boring and embarrassing bits. It is worth noting that 4 of the students viewed the tapes together and 2 students viewed them individually. I don't know how 2 students viewed the tapes.

Most of the edited recordings that the students approved for public viewing focused on the process of learning and the impact this understanding has had on their approach to other courses in the college—a direction for their reflection. In general the theme of the edited video-recordings is that these courses helped them learn to think and to question taken-for-granted ideas. Some typical quotes from the self-assessment statements:⁴

(Y 1999. Supported by a carefully compiled dossier.)

My year of experiencing socio-cultural has changed my thinking considerably. I can't believe how far I have come from when I first entered the class. I now think about so many different things and try to change things in my life so it is as much of my life as I can make it. I am really glad that I have been taught socio-cultural or at least have learned about socio-cultural because I now think that it is not something that we are taught. We are given a push in the right direction then we have to find our own way. This way is through thinking, thinking for ourselves.

(K 2001. Poem was written on the back of a mannequin decorated with words, phrases and photographs linked to evidence in dossier.)

I started the year not knowing what to expect
What to wear, how to talk and how to act.
Having no idea what this class was meant to be
Discourse, hegemony, material goods and norms,
All new words to me.

Throughout this year I have to understand

⁴ The quotes are unaltered transcripts from the videos.

What these words are and how I am to use them.
I now think more deeply about the issues of this world
And have realised that I need to in order to succeed.

Still a little unsure on some terms to be explored
Now it's up to me to expand and read lots more.
This is a model of me and my life,
My culture my norms and how I express myself.

(P 2001. Supported by messy dossier that provided evidence supporting the self-assessment statement.)

Reasoning has now become a mainstay in my thinking mainly because of this class but also because this is my first year out of secondary school. In school we were presented with the right answer, everything else was wrong. Now I am in a tertiary institute if I can prove that my point is effective then I can say that it is right. It has been hard because I still find myself waiting to be given the answer but now I do try to figure it out and formulate my own answers whether they are right or not I enjoy the awareness.

(A 2000 Supported by a well organised dossier that demonstrated this student's thinking about meanings for physical education practice within New Zealand culture.)

As a student of physical education I have learned that as a teacher I will be dealing with a variety of cultures and that my own discourse may be different from that of others. I feel that I have just begun to understand this concept. In attempting to understand I have compiled a dossier of class work, including handouts on which I have made comments on, collected newspaper articles relating to education and mentally tried to apply the learning I have gained into other areas of my life. Key areas of learning I feel are important to my role as a teacher are to not take things for granted, to question and find reasons for and when receiving information; to back up my opinions with reasoning and evidence and to observe and experience other opinions and perspectives with an open mind. To function as an effective physical education teacher I need to continuously examine socio-cultural forces which act upon us. I still need to learn how to form sound opinions and to formulate teaching methods and practices that affirm the learning taken from this course.

(A 2001. Statement made as the student attached word flowers to a poster of a pohutukawa tree. The flowers represented the learning processes and linked to evidence in the dossier.)

I have learned about New Zealand culture, become aware of my own personal identity as a New Zealander. I have been constantly keeping of watch on the television and reading papers... Studying my own interests and being interested in things that make up me; questioning people about their values and listening to their values.

(M 1999. Self-assessment statement presented with a drawing entitled 'Journey Outside of the Square' and a comprehensive dossier.)

This drawing represents how my way of thinking has been influenced by the socio-cultural course. The girl represents myself. Her eyes are shut representing the idea that I have taken my focus of what I see as exactly what I used to believe and instead focusing on what I think. My arm is reaching out but only timidly which portrays the idea of unsurety. This is because when I first began this course I was not very confident in questioning that which I had never questioned before and realising that things are not really what society represents them to be. My arm has broken through the square representing the idea that I am willing to move outside the square and begin to question what I have been taught up until now and accepted as the truth. It is a big move to make as it is a lot easier to carry on and accept the norms and values that surround us. The square is made out of old thin wood which is a weak structure. The square represents the restricted mindset that used to completely control my view of the world. I am standing in darkness which also relates to the restricted confined world which is gradually moving behind me. There is no colour, everything is either black or white. This portrays the idea of the rigid world where the attitudes and beliefs within our society are accepted without

question. The vine beginning to twine around my hand represents the beginning of the new knowledge. It is only the beginning as this is an on-going process and I can see that it will never have an end. The vine is a living thing unlike the dead wood of the square...The contrasting living vine represents new knowledge that will continue to grow...This course has constantly challenged me to make that break through with my thinking.

(R 1999. Supported by comprehensive but disorganized dossier.)

“But what do you mean?” For most of the first year Bachelor of Physical Education students these words were synonymous with the name BR. Trying to answer such simple questions as what is physical education? And we spat out simple answers. Then it came “Yes, but what do you mean?” We had never been questioned like this before. For most of us questions, answers and learning were a shallow process without much real thought only the spoon feeding of information without question of validity. This was the beginning of the concept of critical thinking being pressed upon us. Part of this process involved the understanding of hegemony and hegemonic process. For myself this would be the most valuable thing that I have learnt from this paper...but I believe that I have learned much more than what was said to us. “Yes, but what do you mean?” My way of thinking, my way of learning this is the most valuable outcome for myself. This has crossed over into other lectures. No longer do I accept information that is given to us at face value and unquestioned. How do I evaluate what that I have learnt when the process is not black and white? I cannot put this on paper. I do not know where it will lead or how much further there is to go on this journey.

Interview Notes

At the end of each self-assessment interview, after student grades had been established I asked each student if they felt that the self-grading process was fair. Eighty of the 83 students said the process was fair although 7 students qualified this by saying that they felt that one or two other students, not them, may have conned me into accepting higher grade than they deserved. Three students were not sure that the process was fair and felt that the interview process was coloured by my feelings about individual students.

Group Discussion

After the self-assessment interview process had been completed for the 2002 class I coordinated a discussion session with 19 of the 24 students. I began the session by having a discussion round where each person was asked to comment on the culture of the 2002 class based on the meanings for ‘culture’ that they had come to understand during the year. And then they were asked to summarise what had happened for them as a result of the Socio-cultural and Professional Teacher classes in 2002. Students permitted me to take notes during this discussion round.

The students were overwhelmingly positive. They were articulate about how much they had learned; how much they had changed the way they think about the world; recognised that they can think for themselves and question what they have taken-for-

granted. They loved the concept of 'hegemony'. They also pointed out that they felt that they had sometimes become too questioning so that they developed a tendency to become totally cynical and believe in nothing. But it was interesting in the discussion to hear that they were aware that this nihilism is part of the process of 'waking up', realizing that everything is not simple and straightforward, that there are shades of gray and that each person has to work out for themselves what is important.

Another strong thread in the discussion was the difficulty is coming to terms with 'facts' and when to question or know how those 'facts' have been established. They sensed that as far as my teaching of physiology is concerned, I did not give them enough facts to begin the process of questioning for understanding.

It became obvious that the writing of the self-assessment statement has been crucial in informing the comments they made. Many students said such things as:

The first term seemed like a total waste of time. But when I looked back at my few notes and the stuff in my dossier (even though it wasn't much) I realised how much I had thought about and talked to my friends and family about.

Nothing happened or rather we didn't have any formal lectures just talked about stupid stuff in the first term. You pissed me off heaps, Bruce, because you let us give our opinions and then kept asking us 'why do you think that?' I wanted to learn stuff not argue. So when I came to write my SAS I thought I would have nothing to say but hey I've changed. I now like the way you teach.

I was frustrated by all the arguments and strong opinions of other students. I wanted you to tell us what we had to know. I always thought that people who argue about this stuff were just wankers. But now I find that I am having interesting talks with my flat mates. My SAS really made me realise how much I have changed this year.

I came from an all boys school and was used to hearing the opinions of teachers. I loved this class because I came to realise that everyone is entitled to *my* opinion! I've got great stuff in my dossier and hey man I love that word hegemony.

Discussion

This paper presents evidence that first year physical education students mostly responded positively to self-grading of a course based around class and group discussions of questions posed in lectures. My sense that students in these courses begin to develop a 'critical consciousness' is generally supported by the evidence collated from the video recordings 'edited' by students, notes from student interviews, informal and whole class discussions.

Although the presented quotes are typical of the videoed self-assessment statements readings and these quotes are reinforced by the comments made by all 19 students present at the post assessment discussion round with the 2002 class, only 28 of the 62

students who agreed to participate in the videoing project actually did so. And those 28 students represent only about 36% of 83 students taught in these first year classes. So it could be argued that these data do not indicate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning that took place for most of these students. In fact these data may simply reflect the interpretation and presentation of what some students saw as what would please me; or just reflect the views of those students clever or resourceful enough to cope with a differently structured course.

Despite the participation by a minority of students in the video-recording I think that the data presented here provide convincing evidence for the conscientization of most of the students in my classes. Of course not all students responded positively to the self-assessment and the dialogic discussion process practised in these classes (7 students expressed reservations about the fairness and validity of the self-grading process) but do all students in any class respond positively? What percentage of 'success' is meaningful in this process? If we look at pass rates then over the three years of this project 80 out of the 83 students passed both courses (96% pass rate). What is important in evaluating the coherence and validity of the data presented here is the recognition that teaching and learning are idiosyncratic, complex and contingent activities where teacher-student interaction is tenuous and variable so gathering unequivocal and 'objective' evidence about how students learn, what they learn, the usefulness of their learning or the effectiveness of their teacher is problematic. What this project attempted to do was to engage students in the 'presentation' of what they experienced in these two first year physical education papers by asking them to read their self-assessment statements to camera three months *after* they had passed these courses. The whole exercise was voluntary and the students were asked to participate knowing that they were making public their views. Once students had completed the consent forms and times for the recording sessions were arranged I took no further action to ensure more students responded to my request to participate in this study. Therefore I was delighted have 28 out of 62 students (45%) participate in the recording project (I was not able to video the 2002 class) even though all the participants have sporting and work commitments over and above their BPE course work. Such a high participation rate suggests that something important happened in these courses for these students. And as the recorded self-assessment statements typify those presented at the actual self-assessment interviews I think it is reasonable to assume that most students began to think about personal meanings for physical education and teaching by examining their personal values and beliefs as well as beginning to question what constitutes evidence.

All the statements from the 2002 class discussion round support the conclusion that students felt that the assessment process and the dialogic nature of the classes encouraged them to think for themselves. These students made it clear that the assessment and teaching approach enabled them to personally wrestle with the concepts and ideas that challenged their taken-for-granted views of sport, physical activity, health and physical education. However not all comments were positive. Some students did complain about the imbalance in access to factual information between them and me as a lecturer. In other words I sometimes did not provide sufficient information for students to make up their own minds when I challenged some of their ideas about exercise physiology, fitness, health and the oppressive nature of sport. These negative comments perhaps testify to the veracity of the student comments in the open class discussion.

Further support for my conclusion that student consciousness changed in response to these two courses is the information I obtained at the end of each assessment interview. Seventy-six out of the 83 students claimed that the self-grading process was fair and accurate with only 7 students expressing concern about the ability of some students to 'fake' the self-assessment process or that I was unduly influenced by the personality of some students.

Also it was obvious that the students engaged with the ideas presented in class as they were keen to argue about them so that the class discussions were often noisy and the group discussions often heated. The absence of teacher-graded learning tasks also seemed to enable students to disagree with me in class without feeling they would be penalised in their assessment. The feedback without grades on these learning tasks encouraged the students to write their own opinions and respond to the feedback. So I am convinced that the methods of teaching and assessment fostered 'dialogism' in these classes. These papers did seem to evoke the natural curiosity of the students so that they began to develop their 'epistemological curiosity' by speaking up in class, reading distributed and discovered popular media and by responding to learning tasks that were commented on but not graded. But overwhelmingly the greatest stimulus to student 'consciousness' was the actual writing of their self-assessment statements. The recorded self-assessment statements show that the creative process of writing these 'essays' did force the students to reflect on what they had learned and helped them to become aware of how much they had thought about the complex social construction of teaching and physical education. Writing the self-assessment statements gave direction to their reflection.

An important and liberating aspect of my approach to these courses has been the removal of the burden of grading student work. Without the obligation to grade each essay I am free to comment on student work so that my feedback focuses on their attempts to engage with ideas rather than on me comparing and ranking students. Although I make rough judgements about the merit of the work I do not finalise grades and am able to discuss with each student their written work alongside their dossier and self-assessment statement. My comments also act as a benchmark or criteria for student to make judgments about their own work, a process that aids in the maintaining of ‘academic standards’ while ensuring that each student is intimately involved in the grading process. It is interesting to note that both Boud (1990) and Taras (2001) argue that commenting on student work without disclosing grades seems to facilitate effective student learning or ‘critical consciousness’. However I disagree with Taras (2001) in that I do not think teachers should grade student work in the ranking sense when students are responsible for grading themselves. Rather it should be like a critical review of a paper where the reviewers’ comments are crucial feedback for the judgements that writer makes about their own work (Boud, 1990). Students need quality feedback in order to make sensible judgements about their own work as Taras (2001) makes clear but that feedback, in my view, should not be generated by teacher constructed ranked grades.

Summary and Conclusion

Engaging students in the active video-recording and editing of their self assessment statements for public viewing provided the indirect evidence presented in this paper to support the conclusions that self grading was an effective catalyst for first year students learning to think critically about physical education meaning and practice. These data were supported by a structured group discussion with one class, informal discussions with some students and notes taken during the self-assessment interviews. The validity of these data is supported by the active, public involvement of the students, the quality of the self-assessment statements and the separation of the data gathering process from the actual grading and teaching of the papers involved. Perhaps the most important aspect of this study is that it demonstrates the effect of self-assessment and dialogic education on the process of learning—the intellectual work of making sense of perceptions and feelings—that has occurred for these students.

However, this paper does not claim to be a panacea for the malaise of information dumping that masquerades as teaching in the lecture halls of our higher learning

institutions (Freire, 1996). What it does show is that self-assessment can be used effectively to foster ‘critical consciousness’, something that has been commented on but not clearly demonstrated by other educators (Boud, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992; Boud, Cohen, & Simpson, 1999; Dochy et al., 1999; Orsmond et al., 2000; Taras, 2002). The present study also illustrates one way of actively involving students in the production of evidence about their processes of learning—their direction of reflection. Thus it seems a pity that self-grading is not commonly used in higher education let alone studied as an approach to tertiary teaching.

Acknowledgement

My thanks to those students who took time to cooperate in this study and to the Auckland College of Education for financial support and forbearance.

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Appendix 1

Guidelines for Writing Self-Assessment Statements

What are the Self-Assessment Statements?

The *Self-Assessment Statements* are your formal description of what you have done to meet the requirements for X' section of 923.551 *Socio-cultural Basis of Physical Education* and 923.550 *The Professional Teacher*. Each self-assessment statement is a formal *summary* of the learning that YOU think you accomplished by taking these two papers. In other words the self-assessment statements provide a written outline of what you think you have learned as well as an explanation of the consequences of this learning for you as a prospective teacher

How is the Self-Assessment Statement used?

Firstly the final *Self-Assessment Statements* form the basis of your negotiation with the coordinator of these courses for your course grades (see Administration for details).

Secondly the *Self-Assessment Statements* are kept by ACE so that they can be accessed by any interested person (usually a course moderator). Your statement is signed by you and your lecturer/teacher at the end of the final interview. You are encouraged to keep a copy for your personal records.

Hints for writing Self-Assessment Statements

- 1 Keep in mind that your *Self-Assessment Statement* is a formal public document. Therefore present it so that someone with an understanding of physical education teaching can understand:
 - **what you actually learned by participating in these courses;**
 - **what you did to understand the concepts, ideas, theories and information that are relevant to these courses;**
 - **what your learning has meant to you as a student teacher in physical education;**
 - **and what you think you still need to learn to function as an effective physical education teacher.**
- 2 All statements about your learning must be substantiated by your **dossier**. In other words your descriptions of what you learned and what you did to learn must be backed up by the tasks that you have done, the reading that you have thought about, the notes you have taken etc that you collect in your dossier.
- 3 The form or appearance of your formal final *Self-Assessment Statement* is entirely up to you. Most people prefer to write a formal essay type of report but you may prefer to prepare a poster or poem. But there must be clear links to your dossier.

ADMINISTRATION

A formal Self-Assessment Statement is required for each course, that is one for 923.550 and one for 923.551.

You have already been given information about keeping a dossier for these two courses. Although you may wish to keep separate dossiers for the two courses it may be more convenient to keep one dossier for both.

Both formal Self-Assessment Statements are due at the end of the year before the formal interviews. The final interviews will be held during the non-lecture week so the Self-Assessment Statements are due on:

Date and time

Please note this date is one week after your Teaching Experience so you will have to be thinking about and preparing your formal Self-Assessment Statements during the September break.

To assist your preparation of the Self-Assessment Statements I have scheduled informal interviews to take place on **Date and time**. (Non lecture week)

These interviews will involve you meeting in pairs with X for between 10-15 minutes. Bring your dossier and any notes that relate to your formal self-assessment statement.

Please select an interview time by filling out the interview schedule that will be posted on X's office door.

Appendix 2

Dossier Guidelines

All students are expected to compile a dossier to be used as evidence for assessment of the attainment in 923.550 and 923.551.

The dossier is a compilation of the important things that you have done during the year to show your learning and achievements as they relate to these two courses. It is *your* record of *your* achievement.

The dossier provides evidence of the *quality of the thinking* that you have done as a result of these courses. By ‘quality of thinking’ I mean that the items that you choose to put in your dossier should show the work that you have done to make sense the concepts covered in class. It should also demonstrate how these concepts relate to your daily experience and your understanding and practice of physical education teaching as it relates to New Zealand secondary schooling.

FORMAT OF DOSSIER

The format of your dossier is entirely up to you but I have provided two simple folders that you can use to begin your dossiers for 923.550 and 923.551. The dossier is something that you will refer to when writing a self-assessment statement for these courses and when discussing your self-assessment with your lecturer. (Details of the self-evaluation will be discussed early in the second term). However it is helpful to keep a record of why you have filed each item in your dossier. One way of doing this is to attach a cover sheet to each item you include in your dossier with a short statement on what the item is and why you have included it in your dossier. (A sample cover sheet is included in your folder).

USE OF DOSSIER

You will refer to your dossier when you write your self-assessment of your learning—your explanation of what you have learned and what you want to do to continue your learning. Also you bring your dossier to your interviews with your lecturer so that you can refer to it as evidence to support your self-assessment. You will write separate self-assessment statements for 923.550 and 923.551.

SUMMARY

The Dossier is a:

- file about YOU;
- record of your learning;
- report on yourself by you.

Items you could include in your dossier

A list of books read, videos watched, articles reviewed, definitions, written statements, images that impress, or express, poems, songs, drawings, lecture notes, copies of annotated readings, stories, essays, summaries of events/ideas, descriptions of activities, lesson plans, teaching resources.

NOTE: YOUR DOSSIER for each of these courses are PUBLIC DOCUMENTS. A copy of all or part of your dossier along with your self-assessment statement will be kept for moderation by other staff. So make sure that your dossier contains evidence to support the case you make for your final grade. Your dossier will be returned to you after the final assessment interviews and course moderation.

If you have collected information that is private then keep it in a file labeled FOR MY EYES ONLY so that is not included in your dossier when you submit it at the interviews

Bring your dossier to the first milestone meeting so that you can clarify any concerns that you may have about the contents of your dossier.