Judge an Be Judged...On the Anatomy of Evaluation

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Measurement is a most crucial element in the learning environment. To make effective use of measurement the distinction must be more clearly drawn between evaluation and certification as measurement tools. Certification means to make certain, to declare, or attest to qualifications. Evaluation means to find value, to determine or appraise quality of, or to judge. We need more evaluation to accompany certification in the classroom.

As the title and the above definition suggest, evaluation involves the act of rendering a judgment. Further it is the anatomy of the judging process, the way in which the evaluation is structured, which will determine the functional role it will play in learning. In the professional curricula students are measured continually and this measurement takes many forms. The two primary functions of measurement are certification and evaluation. Both are legitimate pedagogic needs and the student and teacher must have a good understanding of the goals of each method. The purpose of this paper is to examine and contrast both of these methods, to encourage more frequent and widespread usage of evaluation, and to suggest how evaluation can be accomplished.

We need to incorporate into all our classroom activities, including processes which will bring student and teacher together in a situation ripe with personal interaction. Certification testing is often limited in scope and requires only a minimum of student-teacher interaction. Numerous methods are available for the conduct of such tests but most are characterized by "objectivity," mechanics, and an avoidance of student-teacher contact.
In fact much of such measurement can be accomplished by computers. Most all of our measurements are for certification and these often polarize the participants in the learning process; the faculty at one pole, the students at the other. The student-teacher relationship is at stake in the measurement process. Activities which favor that polarization must be carefully scrutinized for any advantages which could counterbalance this glaring disadvantage.

We do need certification testing. In the professional school faculty and students are very aware of the need for certification to insure the acquisition of the specific skills necessary to the proper fulfillment of professional tasks. In this way we point out to the student and public that he has met the minimum requirements for the skillful practice of his profession. But beyond this rather simple task of certification, now well perfected by national and state agencies, there are yet equally important outcomes and purposes which the faculty can facilitate.

Along with a certification of skills and content, is not the public equally in need of, and entitled to, a professional who continues to learn from his schooling beyond the university and who is capable of mature evaluation of his own progress? Surely they deserve a professional fully aware of those qualities expected of him by his peers and professional colleagues. These include among others: creativity, perseverance, participation, judgment, trustworthiness, and integrity. The judgments of teachers, of peers, and of the profession will shape the neophyte and it is not a task to be denied or taken lightly. Evaluation must take a form which will assist the student in a judging process, a continuing dialogue.

The initial step toward such evaluation is a statement of all objectives for instruction. Our purpose is to equip young people for careers in some branch of medicine. To fulfill this aim one finds general agreement among the faculty members that the student should become familiar with a significant amount of the medical literature; he should develop an ability to utilize this information in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease; he should learn the art of thinking; he should view education as open ended and continuing; he should learn to interact with other people creating an atmosphere of helping concern; he should develop a compassion and reverence for all of life. A professional education should be a total education and the classroom can be and is used to effectively mediate more than professional skills. These objectives must be stated.

Secondly, evaluation requires that behavioral changes be established as criteria for the accomplishment of the above objectives. In the past, educators have been hesitant to render subjective judgments of a student performance believing that there were not tools to measure the behavioral changes desired. Presently there is an emphasis upon the writing of objectives for many phases of the learning situation. Some of the advantages of so doing are clear. It provides an opportunity for self-instruction and multi-media approaches to learning. Such an emphasis upon writing objectives often facilitates certification testing for content and skills.

It is desirable that each graduate of a professional school see himself as an "A student." Toward this end the concept of mastery as advanced by Bloom\(^1\) deserves strong consideration to discover those ways in which it may be applied to professional education. Mayo\(^4\) has outlined some excellent suggestions for implementing mastery measurement. It is not valid, however, to assume the position that one can not construct objectives for which there are no standard and accepted measurement criteria. To do so is to reduce objective writing and evaluation to the cognitive domain and to abandon our responsibilities to evaluate. The qualities we are attempting to develop range beyond what we can measure by cognitive objective means.

It may be true that there is a paucity of information and tools available for the measurement of these changes, but I fear that many of us would not know what we needed if they were available. A great outcome of the faculty's attempts to define
these desired behavioral changes would be the exchange of ideas and reshaping of objectives. But evaluation is a means through which we can enter a dialogue with the student. That doesn't require objective criteria and measurement instruments. The Biblical injunction to “judge not, that ye be not judged” has just that outcome when applied to education; no one gets evaluated. Structure evaluation deliberately and judge and be judged in the process.

Thirdly, some record of sequential progress must be maintained. The faculty exists to facilitate the slow evolutionary process which characterizes behavioral changes. One of their means of doing so is by the guidance they can give stemming from frequent assessments of student progress. In such an assessment a teacher should use a grid of several possible factors such as those mentioned above. Elbow\(^2\) presents a very workable proposal for such a procedure (see figure 1). The assessments should take a variety of forms and numbers. There should be planned small group discussions, stress upon individual oral communication in the classroom, and encounters of students and faculty on a one-to-one basis. During these encounters the student should be open, honest, and free to point out or demonstrate his ignorance without fear of “losing points” but in order that he might learn. The teacher, also, as emphasized by Shideler\(^6\) should be equally open and honest in his actions and reactions with the student. This type of evaluation will guide learning. It should be frequent and not count toward the certification grade. During all of these encounters the teacher should note and record his assessment of behavioral changes which indicate progress toward the objectives. These objectives if clearly stated should assist in removing fear and threat from evaluation and aid in establishing an open relationship between student and teacher required for sharing in the professional school.

Certification testing can also supple-

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**EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

| NAME: ___________________ | EVALUATION PERFORMANCE ___ % |
| CERTIFICATION PERFORMANCE ___ % |

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*AFTER ELBOW, 1959*

Figure 1. A grid of possible evaluation criteria which should be important in determination of performance.
ment evaluation. The challenge is to move from memorization and reflex recycling of information. The faculty working toward this goal can design written and oral questions which will provide for thought, develop good problem solving technique, and help encourage good learning habits and attitudes. Certification testing suggests a final assessment of skills and content. The faculty and students should welcome such opportunities. I believe this task can be delegated to outside individuals or agencies with some benefit to the learning environment. The faculty's role as facilitators might then be enhanced. Teachers and students should be participants in a process and not engaged in a content contest. If this certification task can be shifted, the faculty will be able to devote more measurement time to creating an environment of learning. I believe teachers would rather become educators, not measurement technicians; acting as persons, not machines in the classroom.

By the use of regular and deliberately structured evaluation, the student can learn the art of self-evaluation and evaluation can take its position of importance in professional education. It is the structure of these evaluations which will determine in large degree the student's attitude toward his role in the formal learning environment and the way in which he shall evaluate the continuing education he will receive throughout his learning lifetime.

Evaluation tendered by the society we serve will be based largely upon non-technical performance and for the most part totally subjective criteria. The student needs to expect and be prepared to accept this subjective evaluation. Eventually one must do his own evaluation of his performance. Self-discipline and the subsequent self-evaluation are hallmarks of a learned professional. Assistance in developing both subjective and objective evaluation skills is one of the grandest services a faculty can render its students.

**Summary**

In a professional school, students are evaluated continually. These evaluations should serve both to certify possession of minimum skills and understandings, and to stimulate further learning. Evaluation, like learning, should be open-ended and continuing. Those who teach must be responsive to the need of each student for evaluation. The evaluation must not be merely measurement, which can be done by a machine, but it must take a form which will assist the student in a judging process; a personal appraisal in dialogue. The structure of these evaluations will determine in large degree the student's attitude toward his role in the formal learning environment and the methods by which he shall evaluate the continuing education received throughout his learning lifetime. Objectives for the learning experience are a must. But objectives stated only in cognitive behavioralistic terms for an entire period of learning define only training quantity. Evaluation which is enmeshed in this guise of objectivity measures only quantity. Evaluation must also measure the achievement of objectives stated in qualitative, subjective form. Students and teachers must be prepared to explore their accomplishments by judging and allowing themselves to be judged. Students may learn to evaluate themselves on a basis similar to the way in which others evaluate them. Their teachers should help them in the use of subjective guides in judging their effectiveness by blending the objective and subjective, the content and process, the structure and function in classroom evaluation.

**REFERENCES**