

Intelligence is not measured by a letter

Business



Life is a journey. Notice how this statement does not say life is a destination.

Too often in life we focus on results and how those results affect us rather than the experiences and knowledge we've gained from the steps it took to acquire a certain goal. Thinking back to the fall, I can remember getting ready for my first semester exams. Since I go to the Math and Science Center in my area, I would start by going to school there for the first half of my day. It was a difficult transition between schedules because the center is a part of a different school district, which meant that my exams were during different weeks. Once I finished classes at both of my schools I would finish off my school day with a two hour long volleyball practice (if it wasn't a game day). Eventually I would get home around 5: 30.

Although this may not seem that late to some, by the time I was able to actually study for my exams, it was almost time for me to go to bed so I could start the next day. Due to this issue, every night I would give up some of my time to sleep in order to study. After about a week of cutting into my sleeping time, my exam day had finally come. I was extremely tired, and focusing was a difficult task, but I managed to get an A- out of it and maintain an A for the class. Sadly, when it came to going over the information a week later, I couldn't retain half of it. For awhile I thought about ways to connect the pieces to my problem.

How could I not know anything when I studied and got an A in the class? In the end I came to the conclusion that I didn't learn anything because the journey was wrong, but more important than that, the grade I received, the measure of my knowledge, was also incorrect. There are several problems

with the current grading system being used. The reality is that G. P. A. is comprised of so many arbitrary factors it can, and often does, completely fail to display intelligence, capability, or mastery of material: all the copied assignments, points docked for barely late work, the disparities between the grade on the final exam and the grade in the class, the forgotten homework, the grades given on effort, and the cheating on tests directly affect G.

P. A. (Boyle 1). This means that using a G. P.

A to measure intelligence is an unreliable way to accurately measure academic progress. Douglas explains that you should follow him and ask your colleagues to calculate the final grade for a student who receives the following 10 grades during a semester: C, C, MA (Missing Assignment), D, C, B, MA, MA, B, A. The final grades range from F to A and include everything in between (1). In the same course, a B in one classroom might be an A, or even a C, in another. Another issue is that an A+ vs.

A does not affect GPA, but an A vs. A- does; the latter is obviously a very subjective difference that varies widely between classes and professors (Ellis 1). Although many students would like to think so, the preference of various teachers isn't the only problem. Along with everyday life, school causes stress in a wide variety of students in various ways. As shocking as this statement is, it's true.

In the first study of its kind, researchers at the University of Minnesota's Boynton Health Service surveyed 9,931 students at 14 different two- and four-year schools. Then, they matched grade point averages with health problems such as stress, smoking and drinking as well as typical lifestyle

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choices such as gambling and excessive screen time. They found that students with unhealthy behaviors had significantly lower GPAs. In a not so shocking discovery, Stress was one of the biggest factors. Of the 69.

9 percent of students who reported they were stressed, 32.9 percent said that stress was hurting their academic performance (Ellis 1). From my viewpoint, I believe that stressed students with a common goal of achieving a high G. P. A. would be willing to do anything to make sure they achieve this goal.

This is most likely why a report from a Stanford professor states 75–98% of his students admitted to cheating in high school (Boyle 1). Personally, I feel stressed about school the majority of the time during the school year. Going back to the beginning I was stressed about coming to more than one new school, being able to find my classes, and even simple things like when I would get a chance to do my homework. I found myself managing my time decently between school, homework, sports, and marching band and personal time. Of course personal time was usually smaller than the rest and I would only get close to five hours of sleep a night. I felt content with how things were going and the activities I was participating in.

This changed as the school year went on. The closer the middle of the school year came the more homework appeared on my desk on a daily basis. While never going a season throughout the year without playing a sport, the lack of sleep started to get to me and I often felt tired and unfocused in class. This is around the time that I started to feel that sleep was a necessity over homework rather than a suggestion by my busy schedule. As you can

imagine, my grades started dropping until I had less than a month of school left and a whole lot of work to catch up on. During the time I was doing the late work it became evident to me that even though I hadn't been paying much attention in class due to lack of focus caused from being sleep deprived, I had been able to do all of the work without a single question to ask.

In this case, the homework barely scratched the surface of the information I was supposed to be learning, yet, my final grade in the class ended with an A because of it. If G. P. A. doesn't measure one's intelligence, what does it measure? G.

P. A. is a measure of effort and self-discipline. A study done by two researchers showed the correlation between G. P. A.

and self-discipline to be 67%, more than twice the correlation between G. P. A. and intelligence at 32% (Boyle 1). Looking more into self discipline, I found that the pre-frontal cortex (the part of the brain most associated with self-discipline) doesn't finish developing until around age 25.

Not only does G. P. A. misrepresent academic achievement and intelligence, it reflects skills that the majority of people are not capable of mastering until most have completely finished their education. There isn't a definite answer I can give to how we can fix the grading system.

Although, we have to start somewhere. The first step to fixing this problem is to get rid of the grading system and G. P. A. all together.

By using the current grading system you leave the impression that getting a high grade is more important than the amount learned; the impression that the destination is more important than the journey. Works Cited Boyle, J. Arthur. "American Education: The Cult of G. P.

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