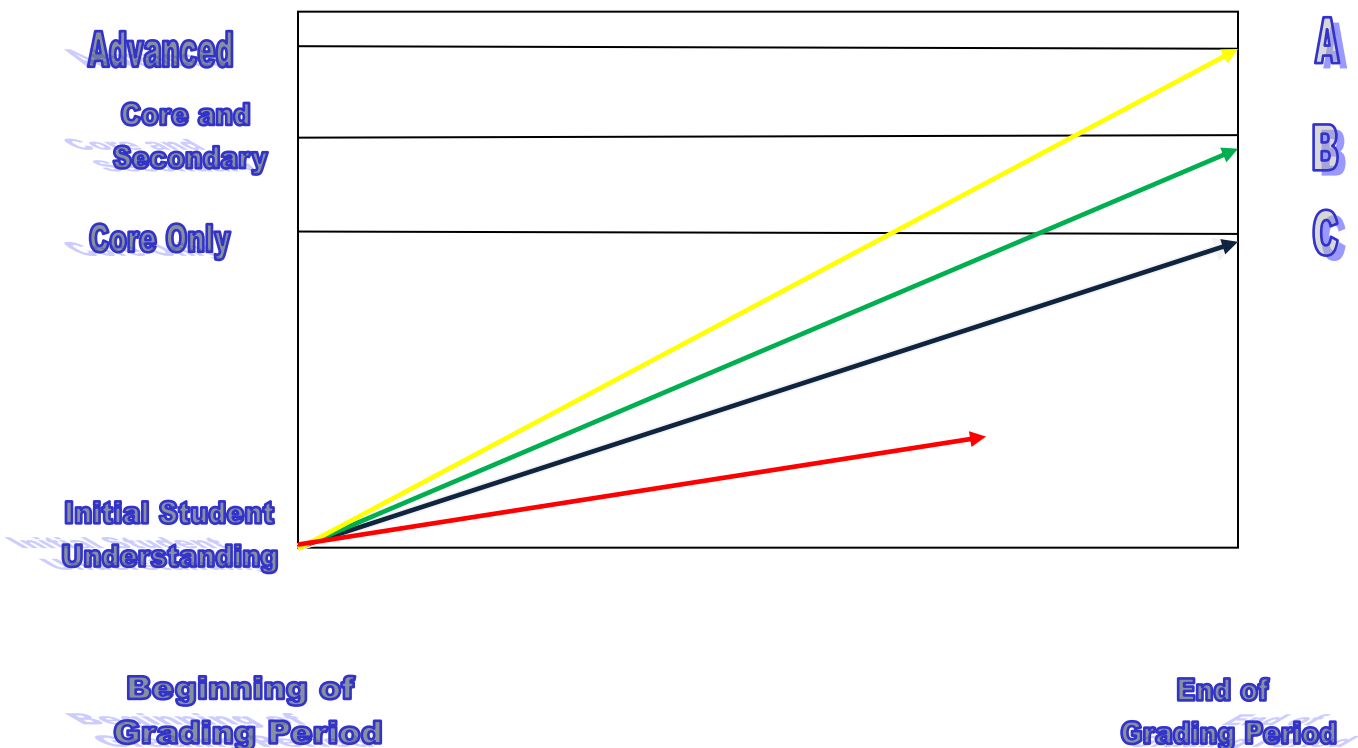


The Learning Process and How Your Grade is Determined

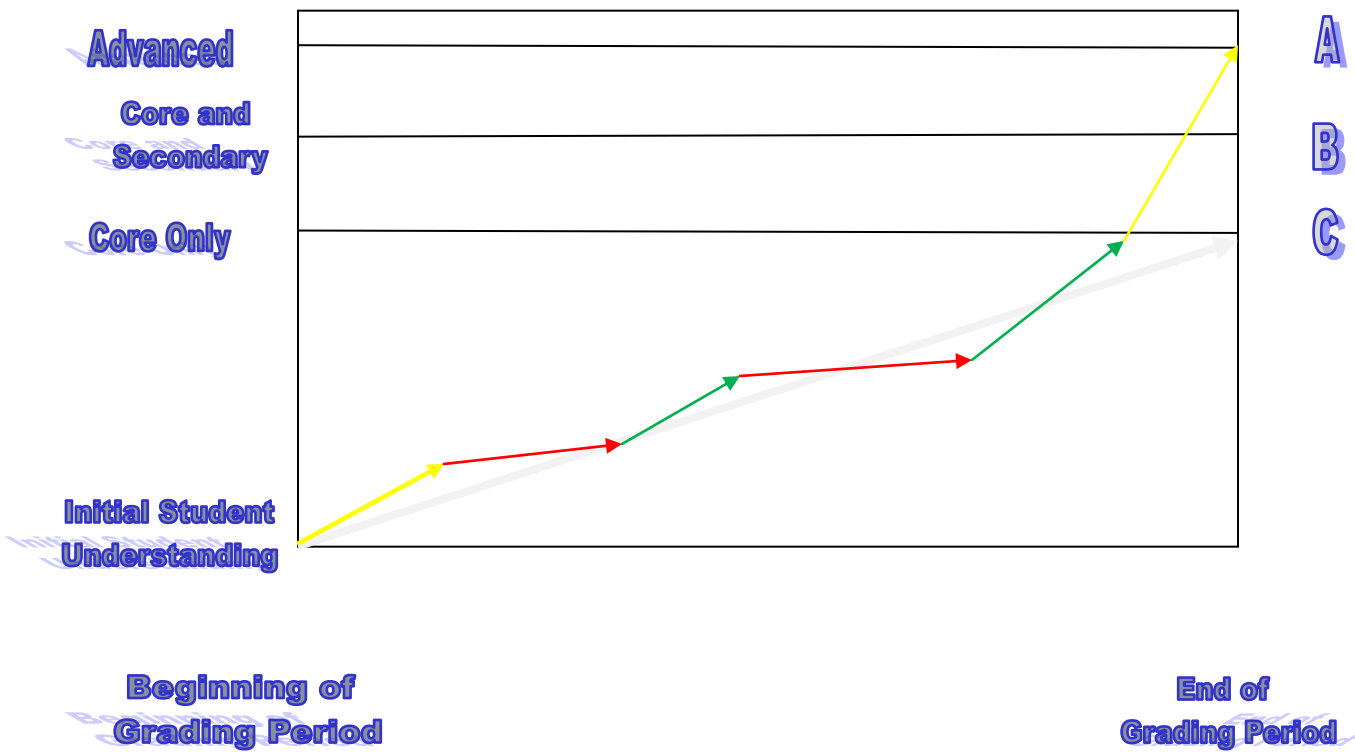
The figure below represents a student's learning process in my class. Each student enters the class with a unique level of understanding of the content. The learning objectives for the class are represented by the horizontal lines. The lowest successful level of understanding is the "core only" line. This line represents a student who learns the essential objectives and is qualified to move on to the next course in sequence, though he may struggle in that course to some degree. The next highest level is represented by the line "Core and Secondary", and it represents a student who demonstrates understanding of the core and secondary objectives. The highest level of performance is the advanced level. This can be achieved by building connections between learning objectives and by working with the objectives at a higher level of complexity beyond the minimum standard required for proficiency.

Progress grades are meant to show students and parents which "trajectory" a student is on. The colored lines on the diagram indicate possible trajectories for a student.

- If you have an A or a B as your progress grade (levels 1, 2, 3 or 4), then you have done everything you can at that point in time. The only thing you need to do is consider what you have done to be successful and keep doing it. Your trajectory would be described by the yellow (levels 1 or 2) or green (levels 3 or 4) lines on the diagram.
- If your grade is one of the pass levels (5 or 6) then the lines that describe your progress are the green (level 5) and blue (level 6) lines. To be on those trajectories means that you are on course to earn a B or C at the time the progress grade is posted.
- If your grade is one of the fail levels (7 or 8) then the red line is the best description of your progress. As you can see, the red line will not reach the A, B or C levels unless something is done to change it. What you can do to change it is discussed below.



Of course, the picture on the previous page doesn't tell the whole story. It is not very likely that your learning process will look like a straight line. It is more likely to look like this:



Progress Levels earned during this grading period: 2, 7, 4, 7, 4, 1

Final Grade for semester: A

A student who has this learning process graph might have a wide variety of progress scores, even though you can see that they reach a very successful conclusion in the end. The two lines shown in red indicate times during the semester when it is obvious that this student needs to make a course correction in order to be successful. Also notice the steep rise at the end of the grading period. This is fairly common for students in my class. Although it is less common for a student in my class to have an A all the way through at every moment in time as compared to some other classes, I have more students earn A's in the long run using this method of grading, since one or two early low scores can be COMPLETELY erased in favor of better ones.

So what might a "course correction" look like? How does a student in my class turn their ship to a new heading? There are several things that might happen, but the simple answer is this: to raise your grade in my class, you need to submit a new and improved piece of learning evidence. Sometimes that might be as simple as revising something you've already done, or by taking an alternate version of a test or quiz. In some cases, you might be asked to submit some revised work as a study aid and then be asked to take a retest. Some retest opportunities will be built in to our class quizzes and tests, especially if more than half of the class needs a chance to retest. If not, then you might be able to make an appointment to do it outside of class time.

In the next few weeks, you will have questions about your learning process, and we will work to answer those together. The most important thing to remember is that we are a team. The only thing I ask from you is a willingness to give me your best effort on a consistent basis, and to be willing to try some things that may stretch you as a student.