Strategies for More Efficient Grading

1. **Separate grading from commenting**
   With each student assignment, reflect on whether an assignment needs to be graded. Try asking:
   - Why am I assigning a grade to this?
   - Will the benefits be worth the time that I spend on it?
   - Could I do something else?
     - Offer credit for completing the assignment?
     - Comment on the work without assigning a grade?
     - Incorporate the assignment into a larger, graded work, such as a portfolio?
   Walvord and Johnson (1998) stress the importance of communicating the importance of the assignment to students so that they do not feel as if their work is in vain.

2. **Optional grading and other feedback**
   - Minimize the amount of comments. If students wish to receive additional comments on assignments, encourage them to request it.
   - Consider giving feedback through a variety of media, including face-to-face conversations, video or audio podcasts, virtual office hours, editing feature on Wordprocessing applications, Jing, or e-mail.

3. **Use Only As Many Grade Levels As You Need**

   Grading scaling options:
   - **Most Efficient**
     - Two-level system (Pass, Fail)
     - Three-level system (Outstanding, Competent, Unacceptable)
     - Four-level system (\(+\), \(\sqrt{\), \(\sqrt{-}\), 0)
     - Five-level system (A-F)
   - **Least Efficient**
     - Thirteen-level system (A+ to F)

4. **Frame Comments for Your Students’ Use**
   - Your goal is to ensure accurate and useful feedback for your student.
   - Extensive comments on drafts may be more worthwhile than those on final versions because there is still opportunity for students to improve their grades.
   - Give students the option of receiving extensive comments explaining areas for improvement.
   - Focus your comments rather than commenting on everything.
5. **Why Waste Time on Careless Student Work? Try these ideas instead:**
   - Arrange for students to evaluate each other’s work before revising and turning in for a grade from the instructor.
   - Direct students to have their work checked by the Writing Center before they turn in their work.

6. **Use Technology**
   - Write comments on the computer. You can cut and paste frequently used comments.
   - Give feedback on an electronic copy of an assignment and upload the comments on ICON.
   - Use grading tools available on ICON.
   - Record audio files with feedback. Oftentimes you can say more in five minutes than you can write.
   - Be available via e-mail and office hours so that you can answer students’ questions during the drafting process rather than extensive comments at the end.

**Reference:**