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Abstract Information

- **Session:** Making the Transition from Introductory to Upper-Level Courses
- Paper Type:** Poster
- Title:** An actual level of difficulty of test problems and its subjective perception by students.
- Meeting:** 2009 Winter Meeting: Chicago, IL
- Location:** H-Crystal Ballroom
- Date:**
- Time:** 8:00AM - 6:00PM
- Author:** Valentin Voroshilov, BU/ Physics Department
617-353-2634, valbu@bu.edu
- Co-Author(s):** None
- Abstract:** Developing tests (midterms and finals) is an important part of a job every instructor has to do. The transition from introductory to upper-level courses is difficult sometimes because of a significant increase in the difficulty of tests. Should a test be easy or difficult; how do we measure the difficulty of the test; how do students decide if a test was difficult—should faculty even ask these questions? The assessment process is very subjective, but it is a fundamental part of teaching, since, in a way, it shows how good we are at it. To bridge our understanding of what should be assessed and how, we conducted a survey asking students to evaluate how difficult the test problems were from their point of view and comparing the students' responses with (a) an average grade for each problem (shows its actual difficulty), and (b) instructor's opinion. Preliminary analysis shows that students' evaluation of the difficulty of a test problem, as well as provided by faculty, often does not correlate with the actual difficulty level. The poster provides related data.
- Footnotes:** None

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