

## Class policies and grading system

Your grade in this course will be based on attendance, 3 hour tests, a final exam, hand-in homework, quizzes and a grade on your Monday labs. Attendance will be taken in each class and affects your grade as explained below. Each hour test contributes  $13\frac{1}{3}\%$  to the point total of your course grade. Your quiz and homework grades will be weighted at the end of the semester and count for  $16\frac{2}{3}\%$  of your course point total. The final exam is three hours long and counts for  $26\frac{2}{3}\%$ . The Monday computer lab grade counts for  $16\frac{2}{3}\%$ .

A penalty is assessed for more than 6 absences; each subsequent absence counts for 1/18th of a letter grade, up to 18 absences. (By a “letter grade” is meant the difference between an A and a B+, a B+ and a B, etc.) Conversely, fewer than 6 absences mean that borderline cases can go up to the next letter grade, with perfect attendance counting for 1/3 of a letter grade.

Students who leave class early or arrive late risk getting counted absent. If you know you will have to leave early, let one of us know about it at the **beginning** of class.

Homework will be of two kinds, graded and ungraded. Homework to be graded will be taken up generally once a week, on days prescribed in advance. Quizzes will be given in recitation section. They will be very similar to problems (often just one problem) from homework, either graded or ungraded; or from problems worked in class. There may also be one or two “pop quizzes” in the TTh lecture session during the semester.

If you have a privacy concern about your scores on quizzes, tests, or homework, fold the papers lengthwise and put your name on the outside, and they will be handed back to you in the same way with your scores on the inside.

To get full credit for homework, you must hand it in at or before the beginning of the class for which it is due. If you are late for class, put the homework on the front table, right after you come in. If you are absent for that class, you must either arrange to have the homework handed in by someone else for you, or you must hand it in yourself (for example, by putting it in one of our mailboxes) prior to the time it is due.

Half credit will be given for any homework handed in late, but not later than the time the homework is returned to the rest of the class after it is graded. Once graded homework has been returned to the class, later homework will not be accepted.

Years of experience have taught me that there is no perfect way to handle absences for tests and quizzes and homework. The following system seems to be as good as any. **Please do not ask for exceptions from it!** If we were to grant them, we would merely be moving to another imperfect system, usually inferior to the one described below.

We will not “drop the lowest test grade”, nor give make-up tests. If you are absent for a test, please give one of us a note explaining why, and **for you the questions on the final exam that correspond to the material covered by the test you missed will be used to compute your grade for that test.** (Thus these questions are counted twice, but with different point values: if the questions on the final that serve for your test grade have a total value of 50 points as far as the final is concerned, they will each count double for the test grade.)

We will not “drop the lowest  $n(> 0)$  quiz grades”. The only exception is for people who will be **frequently** absent on Wednesdays for legitimate reasons (varsity sport, etc.). In that case we will ignore zeroes due to absences for these reasons. If you fall into this

category, let one of us know at the beginning of the semester. We will tell you far enough in advance of your scheduled absence what homework is due while you are gone, so that you will be able to have it handed in for you in time.

To allow for other kinds of absences, etc., extra credit problems will be listed from time to time, and the grading scale for the combined homework-quiz grade will be **at least** this lenient:

Percentage
85 and up A
78 - 84 B+
70 - 77 B
63 - 69 C+
55 - 62 C
48 - 54 D+
40 - 47 D

Grading scales on the tests will be somewhat closer to the usual “90 – 100 A, etc.” scale, but will vary according to the difficulty of the tests. Your grade is based on the total number of points you get, not simply the letter grades you got on various tests, etc. For an idea of how the system works, see <http://www.math.sc.edu/~nyikos/122.html/grading2.pdf>

It is for a different class but the idea behind it is the same.

We are generous with partial credit, so show all your work on homework and quizzes and tests.

It is all right for you to help each other with the hand-in homework, but we expect the homework you hand in to be your own work and not simply copied from someone else’s homework. Penalties will be assessed in case of clear violations.

Extra credit is to be handed in to Prof. Nyikos, not the TA. Prof. Nyikos is also the only person to ask for help on extra credit. This means, in particular, that you are not to bother “math lab” tutoring center students or the Student Instructor with extra credit problems.