

GRADING POLICY FOR CH301

Let me make it clear that I view grading as a necessary evil. Personally I'd like to believe you are all here because you can't wait to learn chemistry. Then, after a semester of good solid effort on everyone's part, we'd shake hands and go our separate ways. Maybe a few years from now, you could take some cut-throat exam to see if you knew enough chemistry to go to medical school, and you'd smile as you paused between questions to reminisce about good ol' Dr. Laude: "Gee", you'd think, "I wonder if he's still alive..."

But this isn't the world we've made and consequently I have to have a grading procedure for this class. Here is the general policy:

The grades for the course will be determined by the following rules:

1. Grading will be on a 1000 point scale. Letter grades will then be given on the basis of total points, using the following scale:

Various forms of A: 930 or more = A; 900 or more = A⁻
Various forms of B: 870 or more = B⁺; 830 or more = B; 800 or more = B⁻
Various forms of C: 770 or more = C⁺; 730 or more = C; 700 or more = C⁻
Various forms of D: 670 or more = D⁺; 630 or more = D; 600 or more = D⁻
Various forms of F: 599 or below = F

2. You may earn your points in the following four ways:

- You will take three 150 to 200 point evening exams on new material worth a combined total of 500 points;
- You will take a final exam worth 300 points;
- You will take six 30-point quizzes (with the top five scores counting toward a 150 point quiz total.)
- You will complete the ALEKS Chemistry learning module earning up to 50 points

NOTE WELL: I give fair quizzes and exams and people who learn the material do very well on them—average grades are in the high 70s. Therefore, do not expect this scale to be lowered--in common terminology, there will be no curve!!!

Look on the next page to find a couple of options in the grading procedure just to spice things up a bit.

Tabulated summary of examinations times and maximum point scores:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>maximum points</i>
Exam 1	Wednesday, September 30, 7:30 to 9 pm	150
Exam 2	Wednesday, October 28, 7:30 to 9 pm	150
Exam 3	Wednesday, December 2, 7 to 9 pm	200
5 best scores out of 6 quizzes	Fortnightly	150
ALEKS	5 th class day and 40 th class day deadlines	50
Cumulative Final Exam	Saturday, December 12, 7 pm till 10 pm	300
Total course points		1000

*****More grading info on the next page*****

DETAILS OF THE INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS OF THE GRADING PROCEDURE:

EXAMS. Three examinations will be given during the semester on CH301 material. These will be given about once a month at times indicated in the course schedule.. Each examination will consist of 30 to 40 five-point multiple choice questions that will be machine graded. These exams will look remarkably like your quizzes and homework sets in format and content.

QUIZZES. Quizzes emphasizing problem solving will be given six times during the semester. The quizzes will occur fortnightly during the last 20 minutes of class. Quizzes will consist of 6 questions worth five points each. The questions will be drawn from the same data bank as the exams and will give you a flavor for what the exams will look like. The quizzes will also offer you the opportunity to keep up with the material so you won't have to cram before exams or the cumulative final. Only your five best of six quizzes will count. To the best of our ability, we will refrain from administering the quiz to people who show up late, disrupt the class asking for a scantron, and expect to be accommodated. You want to be tested, show up at the start of class.

HOMEWORK SETS, WORKSHEETS AND OLD EXAMS. Unlike some of the other CH301 courses, I do not have graded homework—I use in-class quizzes instead. However during the semester I will post on-line a variety of materials to assist in preparing for the quizzes and exams. These materials include recommended problems from each chapter, a variety of work sheets, and the quizzes and exams from previous years.

GRADING OPTIONS IF YOU DIDN'T CARE FOR THE APPROACH DESCRIBED ABOVE:

And now, grading options, because life would be boring if we didn't have the opportunity for a few extra challenges.

OPTION 1 FOR THE HOPELESS OPTIMIST. A grading scheme based on the question, "if I ace the cumulative final can I get an A for the course?" In determining your course grade I will automatically determine whether your score on the final exam is higher than your cumulative average and if it is, I will substitute the exam score. If you score 93% or above on the final, you get an A for the course even if your cumulative course average is below 93%. If you score 77% or above on the final, you get a C⁺ for the course even if your cumulative course average is below 77%, etc. This is an excellent option for the student who bombs more than one test, or, believes that he or she has really started to learn the material over the course of the semester but has scores that make an A unattainable. To be eligible for this option, you have to participate in the course by taking at least two of the three exams and at least three of the six quizzes. So don't just wander into the final after a semester in Europe and expect this opportunity.

OPTION 2 FOR THE STUDENT WHO KNOWS TOO MUCH TO BE IN HERE ANYWAY. So you ace the tests and quizzes and really wish you could be home a little earlier for the holidays. Is it possible? Yes. Very simply, if you score 90 or 93% (630 or 650 points out of 700 possible) on the three exams and four of six quizzes, you will not have to take the final and will earn either an A- or an A. Each year about 20 to 25% of the class achieves this goal.