

Grading Policy for CH302

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 ways:

- You will take three 180 point in-class exams on new material worth a combined total of 540 points;
- You will take a final exam worth 300 points;
- You will take six 40-point quizzes (with the top four scores counting toward a 160 point quiz total.)

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 (Lectures 1 – 9)	Thursday evening, February 24	180
Exam 2 (Lectures 10 – 18)	Thursday evening, March 31	180
Exam 3 (Lectures 19 – 27)	Thursday evening, May 5	180
4 best scores out of 6 quizzes	fortnightly	160
Cumulative Final Exam (Lectures 1 – 27)	Wednesday, May 11, 2 to 5 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 CH302 material. These will be given about once a month during the scheduled class time. Each examination will consist of 30 six-point multiple choice questions that will be machine graded. These exams will look remarkably like your quizzes and worksheets in 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 8 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 four best of six quizzes will count.

HOMEWORK SETS, WORKSHEETS AND OLD EXAMS. Unlike some of the other CH302 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 including weekly worksheets to assist in preparing for the quizzes and exams.

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 90% or above on the final, you get an A or A- for the course even if your cumulative course average is below 90%. If you score 80% or above on the final, you get some form of B for the course even if your cumulative course average is below 80%, 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 summer. Is it possible? Yes. Very simply, if you score 90% (630 out of 700 possible points) on the three exams and four of six quizzes, you will not have to take the final. Each year about 25 to 30% of the class achieves this goal.