

M E 433 Grading Scale and Grade Calculator

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Grading Scale

In the “old days,” the grading scale was much simpler – 90% was an A, 80% was a B, 70% was a C, and 60% was a D. When Penn State adopted the plus/minus grading system several years ago, Professor Cimbala decided to keep the same scale as the previous one, but simply **interpolated linearly for the plus and minus grades, keeping 90% as an A**. Thus, this is the standard grading cut-off scale that Professor Cimbala has adopted for all his courses:

Cut-off score (%)	Letter grade
90.00	A
86.66	A-
83.33	B+
80.00	B
76.66	B-
73.33	C+
70.00	C
60.00	D
0.00	F

This grading scale is not open to negotiation. If you end up just below one of the cut-offs, Professor Cimbala will look very carefully at your homework and exam scores, and at your class participation to see if you can legitimately be bumped up to the higher grade. If not, nothing can be done to change your grade. It is inevitable that someone is always just below the borderline. Such is life.

Grade Calculator

You can calculate your course grade using the following formula, where all assignments are reported on a scale from 0 to 100 points. The final score then also ranges in a scale from 0 to 100 points.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Score} &= (\text{average homework score out of 100 each}) * 0.30 \\ &+ (\text{average quiz score out of 100 each}) * 0.30 \\ &+ (\text{news article summary or in-class presentation score out of 100}) * 0.05 \\ &+ (\text{average class participation grade out of 100}) * 0.05 \\ &+ (\text{final exam grade out of 100}) * 0.30 \end{aligned}$$

Note: There will be 10 homeworks, 6 quizzes, 1 news article summary (note that an in-class presentation can substitute for the news article summary), 1 final exam, and several opportunities throughout the course to earn class participation points. Thus,

- Each homework set counts as $30/10 = 3\%$ of your final course grade.
- Each quiz counts as $30/6 = 5\%$ of your final course grade.
- The news article summary or class presentation counts as 5% of your final course grade.
- Class participation counts as 5% of your final course grade.
- The final exam counts as 30% of your final course grade.
- Extra credit will be considered if you are on the border when final grades are being tallied. For example, you can choose to do more than one news article summary – only one will count, but some extra credit may be given. Also, if you are a frequent contributor to the Facebook page, ask and answer many questions in class, etc., you may be given extra (bonus) class participation points that could bump you to the next higher grade level. Finally, if you are worried about your grade, you can create some extra homework and/or quiz/exam problems (provide both the questions and detailed answers for each); Professor Cimbala will look at these only for students “on the border” at the end of the semester, and your submission may be enough to bump you into the higher grad level.