

Dr. Tritt's Standard Course Policies

Unless specifically stated otherwise, the following policies apply to all my courses and students.

The following topics are discussed in this document:

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Attendance

I generally take attendance (at least periodically) in freshmen and sophomore courses. I permit one unexcused absence per quarter in 100 level courses. I permit two unexcused absences per quarter in 200 level courses. Each unexcused absence more than the number permitted will result in a significant reduction in your final grade. I consider arriving to lecture more than 10 minutes late counts as an absence. I do not take attendance in junior and senior level classes. However, I have noticed that students who regularly skip my lectures rarely get above a "C" in my courses. You are responsible for all homework assignments and schedule changes announced in lecture or posted on the course web site.

You must attend tests and quizzes. I do not give make-up tests or quizzes. If you miss a test or quiz for an acceptable reason, then I will omit it from the calculation of your final average. If you miss a test or quiz without an acceptable reason, you will receive a zero on it.

You must attend laboratories and arrive on time. If you miss a lab for an acceptable reason, I will give you a chance to make it up for a grade. If you miss a lab without an acceptable reason, you will still have to make it up but will receive a grade of zero on it. Being more than a few minutes late for lab will result in a reduction in your class participation grade.

If you must miss a lecture, quiz, test or lab, try to call me (or have someone else call if you can't) **beforehand** and explain the situation. I am more generous about excusing absences if you call beforehand. Acceptable reasons for absences include you being sick or a serious illness or death in your immediate family. If you are sick enough to need to miss a class, you should see MSOE's school nurse or your doctor. Therefore, I may require a written medical excuse in these situations. Transportation and childcare problems are acceptable excuses only once during any given quarter. Documentation for these and other situations may be required as I think is appropriate.

I do not drop students for missing class. You must complete the appropriate paperwork if you decide to drop my course or withdraw from school. I calculate and submit grades for all students on the official class roster at the end of the quarter.

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Assignments

You should complete reading assignments before lecture. You will understand the lecture better and can participate more if you read the assignments beforehand. If there is anything in the reading you do not understand, ask about it during a lecture or come to my office during office hours.

You may turn in homework assignments late. I generally deduct 10%/weekday from late homework up to a maximum of 50%. I generally accept late work until the last day of regular classes for the quarter (Friday of week 10).

You may turn in lab reports late. I will apply 10%/weekday penalty to all reports turned in late.

Your homework assignments and reports should look professional. I do not require that you type assignments or reports but I do recommend it. You should neatly print hand written reports. You should neatly and completely label all graphs and figures. If I can't read something, I will assume that it is wrong. You should use a word processor for longer reports. You do not have to recopy the questions on your homework assignments, just indicate the question number. Staple the pages of each assignment together (No paper clips!).

All submissions must include the following information somewhere on the first page: **your name (or group number and names), the assignment or lab number or name, the date submitted, the due date, my name and the course number.**

You may use previously used paper for homework assignments. Draw a single diagonal line across the previously used side of the paper. The side of the paper you use for the assignment should not have any previous marks on it. Reports must be done on new paper.

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Tests and Quizzes

All tests and quizzes will be cumulative and will cover material from **both the lectures and the reading assignments.**

I generally give closed book midterm tests and quizzes. In courses involving equations and problem solving, I generally allow the use of a 3" by 5" reference card on midterm tests and quizzes and a note sheet or the text book on finals.

I may give unannounced quizzes to determine who is coming to class prepared. I generally use the scores on these quizzes as part of the class participation grades.

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Learning Objectives and Expectations

In most courses, I distribute lists of learning objectives around the beginning of each week. These lists show what I consider to be acceptable performance in the course. I will design quizzes, tests and the final exam to measure how well you met these objectives. You should refer to these objectives while reading the text and studying for tests. You should score at least 90% on tests and get at least a B in the course if you meet these objectives.

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Academic Integrity

I expect all my students to exhibit integrity and professional behavior at all times. Any cheating or dishonesty will be dealt with severely. Please see the school's "Policy on Student Integrity" and "Academic Dishonesty Procedure and Appeals Process" for more information.

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Determination of Final Grades

I determine final letter grades using a breakpoint method. I first determine the final averages. I then sort these averages into ascending order. Next, I make a bar chart of the averages. This chart usually looks similar to Figure 1.

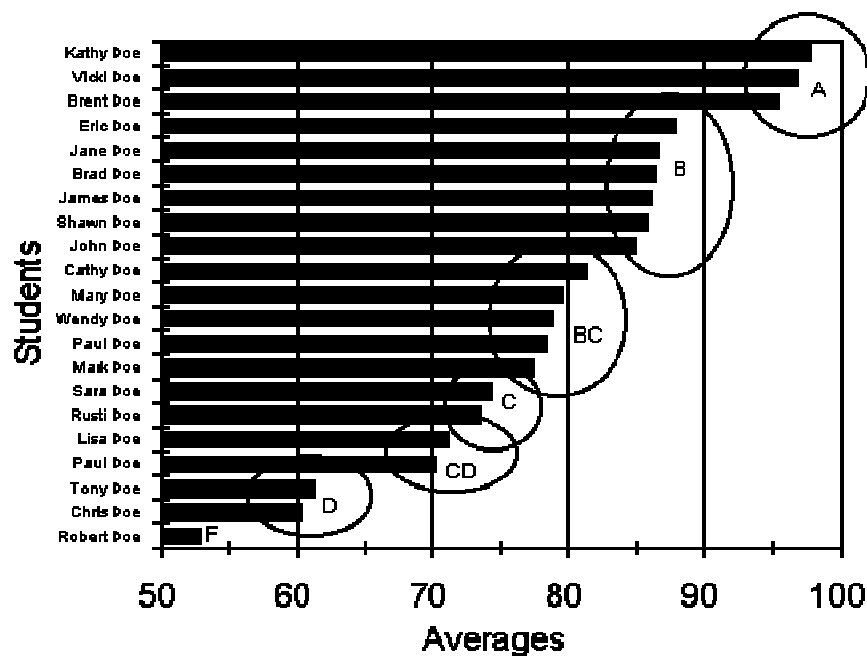


Figure 1 Final letter grades are determined by sorting and graphing the final averages. Letters are then assigned to natural groups of averages.

I then examine the plot for groups or clusters of similar averages. After finding logical groupings of the averages, I assign letter grades to each group. The highest and lowest letter grades I assign depend on my overall impression of the class and my impression of the best and worst students in it. I base these impressions on the skills I believe are needed by good engineers, nurses or perfusionists. I sometimes combine nearby groups or separate larger groups at this point. I continue adjusting the group boundaries until I am satisfied that the grading is fair. I sometimes omit particular grades (such as AB's in the example).

I next determine the range of average scores for each letter grade by examining the spaces between the groups. Table 1 shows the ranges for the example in Figure 1. I then translate each final average into a letter grade using these ranges.

Less or equal to...	but greater than...	Letter Grade
100	90	A
90	82	B
82	75	BC
75	72	C
72	65	CD
65	55	D
55	0	F

This system assures there will be relatively wide gaps between averages that translate into different letter grades. This assures that students that receive different letter grades really differ in ability or performance.

One disadvantage of this system is that it makes it difficult to estimate letter grades based on particular scores (reports, homework, midterms, etc.) and mid-quarter averages. I therefore will announce the average, standard deviation and the best and worst score on each assignment and for the mid-quarter averages. You should use this information as a **rough** guide of how you are doing in the course.

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*Send comments and suggestions about this page to: [Dr. Charles S. Tritt](#)
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