

Physics 112— General Physics II: Electricity, Magnetism, and Optics

Section 01 (MWF 11:00 a.m.)

Interpreting Your Grade

April 4, 2018

At this point, we have two tests (out of 3), and 7 graded homework assignments (out of 11). I have estimated your grade in the following way:

Tests: This is the weighted average of all the tests so far. (The three tests will count for 40% of the total grade. The lowest test will count for 10% of the total, or 1/4 of the test grade, and the other two each will count for 15% of the total, or 3/8 of the test grade. Until I have all three tests, I will simply report the average test score so far.)

Homework: This is the average of all the homework problem sets graded so far, but with the lowest score dropped. The grade for each week is obtained by adding the number of online points plus the number of pencil-and-paper points, and dividing by the total number of points that week. Each week is weighted equally.

Lab: Since I don't have any lab grades yet, I have assumed an average of 85.

Exam: This will be the final exam score. Typically, the average final exam score is about 5 to 10 points lower than the overall test average, so for the purpose of estimating your final grade, I have assumed the exam grades will be 5 points lower than the average of your tests so far.

Total: This is the weighted average of all your scores, computed according to the weighting in the syllabus: homework (20%), tests (40% total), the final exam (20%), and the laboratory (20%).

Grade: This is my current estimate of your final overall letter grade. (*Note:* Moodle insists on assigning letter grades to each individual activity, even though such assignments are not meaningful. Ignore them. The *Total* letter grade is the only one that matters.) For the purposes of this estimate, I use the following cutoffs:

93-100	A
90-93	A-
87-90	B+
83-87	B
80-83	B-
77-80	C+
73-77	C
70-73	C-
67-70	D+
63-67	D
60-63	D-
< 60	F

If you spot any errors, please contact me promptly and I will fix them.

One of the reasons for having three hour tests, instead of a single midterm, is so that you are not unduly affected by a single "bad day." To help out even more, I weight the tests to count your best scores more heavily.

Nevertheless, I do occasionally make small adjustments upward. When it comes time to assign final grades, I will look carefully at not just the final total numerical score, but also at progress throughout the semester and at any special or unusual circumstances that might affect your grade. I will also round up individual totals (*e.g.* 89.6% \rightarrow 90% \rightarrow A-), and adjust the overall scale, if necessary, to compensate for disparities among lab sections, or problems with any individual tests or the final exam.