

UO Physics Department Policy on Grades

Approved December 1, 2011

Instructors will provide a syllabus to students registered for a class by the first class session each term. This can be provided on paper or electronically, e.g., on a course web site. It is the instructor's prerogative to design the grading policy for the course, but the syllabus must clearly explain the criteria according to which a student's overall letter grade for the course will be determined at the end of the term.

Expectations and requirements will vary from course to course through the Physics Department's curriculum, and these should be clearly explained in the course syllabus. Student grades are normally determined by how well they meet these expectations and requirements.

This policy offers instructors the following general guidelines for what level of performance on the criteria explained in the syllabus corresponds to a particular letter grade:

- A: Student has demonstrated a firm understanding of all course material, and is able to use that understanding to answer almost all assigned problems. The ability to apply conceptual and mathematical reasoning, at an appropriate level, has been demonstrated.
- B: Student has demonstrated a good understanding of most course material, and is able to answer most assigned problems. The ability to apply conceptual and mathematical reasoning, at an appropriate level, in most but not all areas has been demonstrated,
- C: Student has demonstrated some understanding of course material, is able to answer some assigned problems, and has exhibited limited ability to understand conceptual problems and to apply mathematical reasoning at an appropriate level.
- D: Student understands course material at a superficial level and shows little ability to understand conceptual and mathematical foundations of the subjects covered at an appropriate level.
- F: Student is unable to answer assigned problems, and shows little understanding of conceptual and mathematical foundations of the subjects covered at an appropriate level.

The Physics Department will maintain a database of the average grades awarded in each class in its current curriculum, averaged across terms and instructors. These averages will be updated annually and will be made available electronically to all physics faculty.