MATH 544, Section 001 (TTh 12:30–1:45 PM), LeConte 405

Tests and Quizzes/Homework.

There will be three tests in the course. Each test is worth 100 points. The final exam is three hours long and is worth 200 points. Dates for the tests will be decided on a week or more in advance; the first one will occur in enough time for it to be graded and returned before the last day for withdrawing with a "W" grade.

There will be quizzes at the beginning of some classes, almost always announced in advance. The quiz grade and homework grade will be combined and weighted to make quizzes and homework together worth 200 points. The weighting scale will be given towards the end of the course. Quizzes will be weighted somewhat more than homework. The weighting scale will only be finalized towards the end of the course, but (for example) if there are three times as many homework points as quiz points, the quiz points will count for 35 percent of the combined grade rather than just 25 percent.

Homework will be collected at the beginning of the class on which it is due. **If you come in late, please leave your homework on the desk as you come in.** If you know you will be absent ahead of time on a day homework is due, put the homework in my mailbox before the time it is due. There will be a penalty for late homework, especially if it is too late for it to be graded along with the other papers. Once graded homework has been returned to the class, later homework will not be accepted.

Extra credit problems will be given from time to time. These are more difficult than the usual homework, and you will often get several chances to get the problems right. If you have a partial solution, go ahead and hand it in and I will give you hints on how to improve on it.

Hand in extra credit problems separately from regular homework. Extra credit problems are to be done strictly **on your own**. I am the only person to whom you are allowed to ask for help on them.

Points received on extra credit problems will be added your raw quiz grade score before the quiz average is computed. For example, if the quiz problems total 120 points, then the total "in the denominator" will be 1.20 regardless of whether you do extra credit or not; but if (for instance) you get 90 on the quizzes and 36 points extra credit, your quiz grade average will be 105, not 75. (It is thus possible to have a quiz grade average above 100, and more than 200 points for your combined homework-and-quiz grade score.)

I will try to schedule tests at a time convenient for everyone, so I hope the following two paragraphs will not have to come into play. . . .

Years of experience have taught me that there is no perfect way to handle absences for tests and quizzes. The following system seems to be as good as any. **Please do not ask for exceptions from it**; if I were to grant them, I would merely be moving to another imperfect system, usually inferior to the one described below.

I will not "drop the lowest test grade", nor give make-up tests. If you are absent for a test, please give me a note explaining why, and for you the questions on the final exam that correspond to the material covered by the test you missed will be used to compute your grade for that test. (Thus these questions are counted twice, but with different point values: if the questions on the final that serve for your test grade have a total value of 50 points as far as the final is concerned, they will each count double for the test grade.)

I will not "drop the lowest $n(> 0)$ homework or quiz grades". To allow for absences, etc., I will be giving out quite a few extra credit problems to help you pull up your quiz

grade (and thus your combined homework-and-quiz grade), and the grading scale for the homework-quiz grade will be at least this leninent:

> 170 and up A
> 155 - 169 B+
> 140 - 154 B
> 125 - 139 C+
> 110 - 124 C
> 95 - 109 D+
> 80 - 94 D

Grading scales on the tests will be somewhat closer to a "90 - 100 A, etc." scale, but will vary according to the difficulty of the tests.

I am generous with partial credit, so show all your work on the homework, quizzes and tests.

More about the grading system.

Since the grading scales on tests, exam, and weighted homework-and-quiz scores vary, letter grades for the overall course will be determined by comparing each student's total points with the totals at the cutoff for each letter grade. The following example, including two illustrative performances similar to two students' records in an earlier course, illustrates the method:

Cutoff Scores

Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	HW/Quiz	Final exam	Total	Course grade
90 A	89 A	91 A	85 A	175 A	530	A
85 B+	84 B+	86 B+	78 B+	160 B+	493	B+
80 B	78 B	80 B	70 B	145 B	453	B
75 C+	74 C+	76 C+	63 C+	130 C+	418	C+
70 C	68 C	70 C	55 C	115 C	378	C
65 D+	64 D+	66 D+	48 D+	100 D+	343	D+
58 D	56 D	60 D	40 D	85 D	299	D
			Student 1			
97 A	81 B	76 C+	88.6 A	136 C+	478.6	B
			Student 2			
70 C	62 D	68 D+	33.1 F	119 C	352.1	D+

"Cutoff scores" for A, etc. are defined to be the lowest scores one could have received and still obtained an A, etc. on that particular item (test, homework score, final exam). As you can see, cutoff scores for each letter grade are totaled up at the end, and the student totals are matched with the respective totals to arrive at the course letter grade.