

Grading

During this year, you will be learning information related to many topics in chemistry. In this course, a non-traditional criterion-based assessment system is used. Rather than using a point system to record scores on various assignments, quizzes, and tests, you must demonstrate your level of proficiency on various learning goals (which will be referred to as topics). For example, instead of getting one grade for a quiz that may cover many skills, you will be scored on individual learning goals such as, “I can make correct measurements based on equipment/precision.” Rubrics that list the learning goals and define achievement levels of each will be provided to you and used for assessment. Grades will be assigned based on descriptors of achievement only. You will have the opportunity to demonstrate understanding when you have learned something. This might be on a quiz in class, or you may come in to reassess a topic that you struggled with in class. You may re-attempt assessments provided that you have documented an effort to engage in additional learning (e.g., tutoring, additional practice, test corrections, etc.). In addition, an alternative assessment may be accepted if the work is pre-contracted between you and I. The deadline for reassessments will be the last day of the quarter.

For each learning goal (topic), you will be scored using the following scale:

Expert (4.0)	My response shows I understand the content/skills completely, can explain them in detail, and can apply the content/skills to a situation not discussed in class.
Proficient (3.0)	My response shows I understand the important things about the content/skills, and can usually explain them in detail.
Developing (2.0)	My response shows I have a general understanding of the content/skills, but I'm also confused about some important parts.
Beginning (1.0)	My response shows I do not understand the concept/skills.

3.5, 2.5, and 1.5 scores may also be used.

At the end of each quarter a cumulative grade will be determined. 90% of your grade will come from everything that was discussed above and will be applied to the grading scale that follows. The other 10% of your grade will come from a midterm (5%) and a final (5%).

Final Grade	Lowest Score on <u>ANY</u> Topic	AND.....
A	3.0	At least two 4.0s
A-	3.0	At least one 4.0
B+	3.0	
B	2.5	At least two 3.0s (or higher)
B-	2.5	At least one 3.0 (or higher)
C+	2.5	
C	2.0	
C-	1.5	At least two 2.5s (or higher)
D+	1.5	At least one 2.5 (or higher)
D	1.5	
F	Less than 1.5	

FAQ's

-How many topics will there be in each quarter?

-This is a great question and I don't have an answer. One of the difficult parts of teaching is to know where we will be in 9 weeks. I can make a prediction based on years past, but every year is different as is every student. To approximate...5-7 topics per quarter seems reasonable.

-If I have 4.0s on all of my topics but have a 1.0 on one topic, I fail.

- Yes. This scale does not work on averages like most scales. In order to understand chemistry, you need to show me you understand all of it.

-When can I reassess?

-I will be picking one day a week (which will most likely be Friday) that will be open for reassessing. The last few weeks of the quarter I will open up every day to reassess. You will need to provide some sort of evidence that you have worked on something to reassess it. If that one day I pick won't work out for you, we can schedule something on a different day. The excuse needs to be a feasible one.

-How will I know how I am doing? **(THIS IS THE COMMUNICATION PIECE)**

-Your folder in which you will keep this sheet along with progress tracking sheets and your quizzes will help with keeping you up to date. In Powerschool, I will update things once a week (most likely Wednesday in preparation for Friday reassessments). There will not be categories like "Tests" or "Quizzes" or "Homework". The categories will be by topic. Each week I will put in a Progress Check score (example, Matter Progress Check 1). This is strictly a score that is for reporting and not your grade. The following week I will put in a Matter Progress Check 2, and so on. As we add more topics, there will be more Progress Checks each week. Each week I will also add a Topic Score. This basically takes in to account the progress checks and would be your score at this point. The very first Topic Score will match the first progress score. After that, all progress check scores will be accounted for. Due to Powerschool not being flexible, I will be putting in **made up dates**. Please do not correspond the date to the assignment. I am doing this so when you look at Powerschool, all of the topics will be chunked together and it will be much easier to read. As you will soon read, please don't look at the % grade in Powerschool for each entry. There is no way for me to get rid of this.

To help understand with an example, see the PowerSchool screen below. I've marked the areas that you should NOT look at. One of the things PowerSchool does is calculate a grade and percentage for every entry. This doesn't work with what I am trying to do. I've circled the Topic Scores in green, as these are the scores I will apply to the grade scale.

Final Grade					
Reporting Term	Letter Grade	Percentage	Final Grade Comment		
Q1					
Q2					
S1					
Assignment Scores					
Date	Category	Assignment	Score	Pts. Poss %	Grade
Aug 25, 2011	Laboratory Performance	PC1-Lab Performance	1.5	4 37.5	F
Aug 26, 2011	Laboratory Performance	PC2-Lab Performance	2.5	4 62.5	D-
Sep 12, 2011	Laboratory Performance	TS-Lab Performance	2.5	4 62.5	D-
Sep 13, 2011	Chemistry in our Lives	PC1-Chemistry/Lives	3	4 75	C
Sep 14, 2011	Chemistry in our Lives	PC2-Chemistry/Lives	2.5	4 62.5	D-
Sep 29, 2011	Chemistry in our Lives	TS-Chemistry/Lives	3	4 75	C
Category Summary					
Category	# of Asmts	Total Points		Percentage	Letter Grade
		Earned	Possible		
Chemistry in our Lives	3	8.5	12	70.8%	C-
Laboratory Performance	3	6.5	12	54.1%	F

THESE SCORES WILL BE USED TO DETERMINE A GRADE. (SEE GRADING SCALE)

THIS DOESN'T MATTER!!!

-How do the numbers translate into a grade?

-Please see the grading scale to see how your grade can be determined. The important thing to realize is that a 3.0 IS NOT a ¾ or 75%!!!! A score of a 3.0 is a good thing, showing me you are proficient on a certain topic. One of the hardest parts of this grading style is NOT converting things to percents for a grade. If you want to calculate a grade (which will not be in Powerschool until midterm), apply your latest Topic Scores (so far) to the grade scale.

-Can my scores or overall Topic Scores change?

-ABSOLUTELY!!! Just because you master something one time, or show me you are proficient one time, doesn't mean you are done (to me anyway). Consistently showing proficiency is the key. Please don't think that a bad day or a bad quiz is going to drop your grade. I am looking at the whole picture, and one bad quiz does not a bad grade make.