

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS
FALL 2009**

PLEASE RETAIN FOR REFERENCE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty and Teaching Assistants

FROM: A. Helminck and J.R. Griggs

SUBJECT: Policies on Tests, Final Examinations, Make-up Tests, Exemptions from Final Examinations, and Grading

Hour Tests and Final Examinations for 100-300 Level Courses

1. In certain courses (MA 111, 121, 131, 141, 241, 242), the times of hour tests have been prearranged with the Physics department to avoid having several major tests on the same day. It is therefore important that the tests be given on the days indicated on the course outline. Please note that these dates have been determined with the concurrence of the Dean's Office.
2. Each faculty member will be responsible for preparing and giving each hour test and the final examination to his/her own section. Two copies of each hour test and the final exam should be given to the course coordinator (See the last page for a list of course coordinators.)
3. Graduate Teaching Assistants in their first year of teaching in this department should prepare tests and the final examination under the supervision of the course coordinator or someone designated by the course coordinator. All new graduate teaching assistants teaching the same course at the same hour should give common tests and final examinations.
4. Experienced Graduate Teaching Assistants should prepare their own tests and final exams but should have them approved by the course coordinator or someone designated by the course coordinator. Of course, teaching assistants teaching the same course at the same hour may prepare and give common tests and final examinations if they wish, and are encouraged to do so.
6. The course coordinators are responsible for depositing two copies of each test and final examination in the mathematics office (2108A). These are filed and available for reference.

Make-up Tests/Dropping Lowest Grade

1. **MA 107, 111, 121, 131** Each student whose total number of absences is less than or equal to one more than the number of class meeting per week will either have their lowest test score dropped or weighted half as much as the others. For students with more than the above defined number of absences, no reward of this nature is given. The professor should inform students upfront which system is to be used. There is no distinction between "excused" or "unexcused".
2. **MA 103, 105, 114** It is suggested that the policy explained in #1 be followed.

3. **MA 141, 241, 242**

- a. A minimum of four tests shall be given during the semester. These will be scheduled by the Department so as to minimize conflicts with tests in Physics. Additional graded work is recommended, in the form of short tests, pop-tests, and/or graded homework, at the discretion of the instructor. The use of webassign for graded homework is strongly recommended. If there is no grade from such additional work, however, or if the grade from that work is given less weight than a test grade, then none of the grades from the four scheduled tests should be dropped.
- b. If the instructor decides to schedule a fifth major test or the equivalent thereof in short tests, or if the instructor gives a grade for additional work (described in paragraph a) with weight equal to that of a test, then it is recommended that one of the five grades be dropped. The decision as to which of the five grades is eligible for dropping is at the discretion of the instructor.
- c. There shall be a cumulative final examination.
- d. Testing and grading policy must be stated and explained to the class by the instructor at the beginning of the course. Please repeat this 2 or 3 times during the first 2 weeks of classes for students who add your course. This information should be part of your written or posted syllabus for the course.
- e. Webassign homework assignments are now available for this 3-semester sequence.

4. **MA 141, 241, 242**

- a. There will be assignments in these courses which students will do on a computer using MAPLE. The assignments will be graded electronically. Dr. Larry Norris coordinates this effort.
5. In 300 level courses and above, each instructor should decide his/her own test policy, announce it to the class and also for multiple sectioned courses, inform the course coordinator.
6. Make-up tests for students with excused absences should be given whenever a student is absent from a scheduled test for an excusable reason (illness, death in the family, university organization trip, et al (see Advisers Handbook, copy in 2108).

Exemptions for Final Examinations

1. There will be **no** exemptions from final examinations in any 100, 200, or 300 level course.
2. In 400, 500, and 600 level courses, the instructor should decide on his or her own exemption policy based on the following criteria:

No exemptions should be given except for a "solid A" average. If it is decided to grant exemptions, the following policy should be followed: No student should be exempted from the final exam unless he has completed all aspects of the course. This should include having taken all tests and obtained at least a B grade on each test. In addition, some check-up on the final few weeks of work should be required. This could be a short test, required homework or an oral test.

The instructor's policy should be announced to the class as early in the semester as possible

Absence from the Final Examination

If a student is absent from the final exam and particularly if there are no legitimate reasons known by the instructor at the time, the Registrar's Office suggests that an F grade be reported. If a grade change is warranted later, a Grade Change Report form can be submitted.

Grading

Teachers of undergraduate and graduate courses should use the +/- grading scale. Teachers are expected to inform students, as a part of the course syllabus distributed at the beginning of the semester, as to the cut-offs for the different +/- grades.

The period when the student may drop a course without penalty is six weeks. No drops are allowed after this time without documented reasons and the approval of the Dean of the student's college.

The grade of IN (Incomplete) should only be given because of a serious interruption of a student's work not caused by his own negligence. (See Advisers Handbook) Teaching Assistants and Visiting or Part-time Faculty must consult with John Griggs before deciding on an IN grade for a student.

Course Prerequisites

Instructors should remind students in writing during the first week of classes of all prerequisites. A student who does not have the prerequisites for your course may be removed from enrollment. For procedures see Advisers' Handbook under the heading "Prerequisites."

Final Exams

Please remember to hold all final exams for one calendar year. This policy also applies to finals given in summer sessions. Please keep your grade records forever, and should you leave NCSU, leave your grade records and exam papers in 2108.

Course Coordinators

Coordinators for multiple sectioned courses are as follows:

MA 103	Lada	MA 141	Griggs
MA 105		MA 225	Paur
MA 107	Dempster	MA 231	Singer
MA 111	Burns-Williams	MA 241	Franke
MA 114	Page	MA 242	Norris
MA 121	Griggs	MA 341	Gremaud
MA 131	Lloyd		

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