

My grading system attempts to achieve the following goals: (A) each exam is weighted in your final grade as you have been told (i.e., the exams all count the same, except the final which counts double — this is in contrast to systems in which the raw exam scores are added together; such systems weight exams by the exam’s standard deviation) (B) two significant figures of your exam score are retained (in contrast to straight A=4.0, B=3.0, . . . systems) and (C) each student can determine her/his present average grade by straightforward means.

Basically what happens is your raw score is transformed to a “renormalized” score in the range 100–0. The highest score is always renormalized to 100; the median score will often be in the BC range. The following table shows the relationship between the renormalized score and letter grades:

Grade	Lowest Score Receiving Grade
A	92
AB	88
B	78
BC	74
C	64
CD	60
D	50
F	0

When an exam is graded the raw score, the renormalized score and the letter grade are recorded on the front page.

To determine your average grade after several exams, average the renormalized scores on all exams. Go to the above table and see where this average grade fits in — the result is your average grade so far.

For example, consider the following scores:

Raw Score	Renormed Score	Grade
19	53	D
29	79	B
33	89	AB

The average renormed score yields your present grade: $221 \div 3 = 73.7$ is a C. Neglecting homework and lab (see below), this student needs a renormed 85 (i.e., a middle B) on the final to get a B for the course, as $221 + 2 \times 85 = 391 \div 5 = 78.2$.

Typically homework and lab scores are high (above 90). Just as with exams, homework scores will be renormed with the class high set to 100%. Total homework will count as one exam, lab as another. Note that there is an assessment exam at the end of the semester which, while it has nothing to do with lab work, will be averaged in with the lab scores.