

Course description (syllabus) & other information

Course title: J130, Classical Japanese Poetry
Semester: Fall 2012
Instructor: John R. Wallace
Meets: MWF 1–2PM (confirm time & class location at *Online Schedule of Classes*)

Please note ...

This syllabus contains critical information that covers the material unlikely to change during the term. Other details are on the web pages. I suggest you read this syllabus carefully and review it once or twice during the term. I run this class with the assumption that you have understood the below information so please contact me if something isn't clear.

Some grading aspects of my classes are perhaps unlike common practice of how you intuitively instructors will approach things. Reading this syllabus can help you score well in this class and not reading this syllabus will in many cases compromise your grade. I highlight in yellow key points but I want to repeat here information that is elsewhere on the syllabus that too often goes unnoticed or forgotten.

- ◆ Announcements: I do NOT make all relevant announcements in class, even important ones. Visit the *Announcements Page* frequently, at least once a day.
- ◆ **Academic honesty and grading fairness are important to me.** I watch my classes carefully and run tests and such in a way that those who choose to be honest are not at a disadvantage. I penalize. I expect everyone to operate under the same instructions and deadlines (although I might be flexible about major unexpected events that affect performance). My definitions of what is academically dishonest are stated on the web under “Policies” and in class at frequent intervals.
- ◆ Students who attend regularly, are attentive while in class, and avoid multitasking during class generally receive better grades.
- ◆ I have “bright lines” for submission times: something arriving at 1:01PM for a 1PM deadline is late.
- ◆ Skimming instructions, schedules and such can hurt your grade.
- ◆ Correct subject lines in emails are critically important (see below).
- ◆ Grades are reported as a number, not a letter, where A = 12, A- = 11 and so on.
- ◆ Note my treatment of extra credit activity stated elsewhere. Except for questions on exams, extra credit can have a slight grade effect but never *substitutes* for weak performance on regular assignments and is disregarded if I feel the student is otherwise not fully engaged in the class.

Course content & goals overview

In this course we will read together approximately eighty premodern poems. About half of these are 31-syllable 和歌 (waka); the other half are 17-syllable 俳句 (haiku).

Waka. We read 春 (Spring), 秋 (Autumn) and 恋 (Love) poems from the 『古今集』 (Kokinshū, 10th c.) and the 『新古今集』 (Shin-Kokinshū, 13th c.). We read some love poems in their prose context, from 『伊勢物語』 (Ise monogatari, 10th c.) and 『源氏物語』 (Genji monogatari, 11th c.).

Haiku. Most of our haiku are composed by 松尾芭蕉 (Matsuo Bashō, 17th c.), both as stand-alone poems and in the context of his prose work 『奥の細道』 (Oku no Hosomichi). We do, however, read poems by 与謝蕪村 (Yosa Buson, 18th c.) and 小林一茶 (Kobayashi Issa, 18th-19th c.).

We spend about 10-15 minutes on each poem, explaining each word in terms of grammar and poetic function within the poem. We stop at regular intervals to review as a unit the set of poems covered over several class sessions.

The primary goal of the course is to train the student in the basic appreciation of premodern poems. Grammar within poems and poetic techniques will be a topic of nearly every session. The student will also be introduced to a number of major poets and some poetry collections.

Course assignments-tests-grade scheme overview

This class places significant emphasis on the final exam. In that three hour exam you will need to write in some detail appreciation & analysis of several poems, some covered in class and some new. There are two midterms that will have a similar structure. These are optional. For those who take one or both midterms, I will assign a grade and give advice for improvement. This should help prepare for the major final.

This class does not formally track attendance, preparation or participation. All of this is voluntary. However, I think you will find that consistent attendance, preparation and participation add value to the course and increase your chances of doing well on the final. Further, frankly speaking, in ambiguous grading situations (evaluating essay answers on tests and the essay itself), knowing you as a student and knowing the nature of your participation definitely helps me understand your prose and is a factor as to whether I will “lean up” in situations where it is unclear what you meant to say.

In many of my classes I use playing cards with student names written on them to randomly call on students during class. I will not do that for this class. All participation is on a volunteer basis. You are welcome to simply come and listen, if that is your choice. The idea is to create an open and relaxed atmosphere for considering each poem.

You will be asked to submit at least three reports on specific poems.

You will be asked to submit at least twelve vocabulary lists for specific poems.

You are given the opportunity to submit one term essay towards the end of the semester. Good research and good use of research is expected. It is a moderately long term paper. You are also asked to present to the class a portion of that essay work.

Course prerequisites

This class requires the completion of J120 or the equivalent. Talk with me if you do not meet this requirement. The basic idea is that you have had systematic exposure to the grammar of premodern Japanese and that your Japanese reading skills have been developed to a certain degree. All reading material in this class is in Japanese.

Course materials

All material for this class is in digital form and is provided by me through the two web sites described below.

Communicating

How to reach me

Office hours: Please use the link on the *Announcements Page*.

My office is **Dwinelle 5110**.

My email is jwallace@berkeley.edu.

- ◆ ALL emails for this class should use one of these subject line templates (note the underlines!):

J130_ LASTNAME_ classname keyword
J130_ assignmenttag_ LASTNAME_ classname
J130_ assignmenttag_ LASTNAME_ classname keyword

See Home Course Page sidebar “OH & EMAIL ME” for definitions of assignmenttag, classname, and keyword.

- ◆ I usually do not check email after 9:30PM and check less frequently during weekends.

This class uses two web sites (sonic.net & bspace)

This class uses a primary and secondary Web site. Off-campus individuals following my class via podcast, please email me. I might be creating a special site for this group since you do not automatically have access to the bSpace site.

PRIMARY <i>Announcements Page</i>	PRIMARY <i>Course Pages</i>	SECONDARY <i>(materials that require restricted access)</i>
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<p>—www.sonic.net—</p> <p>ALWAYS START HERE</p>	<p>—www.sonic.net—</p>	<p>—bSpace—</p>
<p>announcements</p> <p>links to course pages</p>	<p>sidebar: class policies, syllabus, assignment & test information, links to other Web site, etc.</p> <p>main window: class schedule</p>	<p>course materials (texts, vocab glosses, sound files, powerpoints, etc.)</p> <p>unofficial grade postings*</p> <p>*If I have posted a grade to bSpace then for whatever reason changed the grade, the new grade will almost never appear on bSpace.</p>

Class announcements

I do not make many announcements in class, even important ones. Read the announcements page.

Where to look for announcements?

Once the class is up and running, go here: <http://www.tabine.info/~tabine/aa/calcrses/annc/annc.html> In the days and weeks before class begins, I might contact the class using the message tool on bSpace.

After class stops meeting but until grades are submitted, I continue to use the *Announcements Page*. Once I submit grades, I will soon switch back to bSpace for any additional announcements.

When to check for announcements?

- ◆ **Please check the Announcements Page frequently** beginning a few days before the start of the course until the end of finals week.
- ◇ Any announcements that are less than 24 hours before class will not include any required material. In practice, however, I very often add material to a web page just before or even after the class. Your class experience is probably enhanced if you are able to follow any of the new information. **For exams, you should definitely review the pages since there may well be relevant changes.**
- ◆ **Remember to refresh your browser** to insure you are seeing the updated version of the page.

Class sessions schedule & content, deadlines

- ◆ **The class schedule / outline is accessed via the Announcements Page.**
- ◆ **Please DO NOT download the Course Schedule / Outline or individual schedule pages** since these might change after you have downloaded them.

General policies

On the sidebar of the Course Home Page are links to my policies about

... my efforts to be “green” in class operation (including an invitation to contact me if my policy is hindering your learning experience),

... laptops use in the classroom and all other types of multitasking (**prohibited**), and

... **academic honesty** (extensive page of definitions, explanations, examples, penalties mostly related to plagiarism and the accurate and fair use of research material).

Please read them. Some of the information there affects your grade, sometimes dramatically.

An important note on academic honesty

I am very attentive to issues about plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty, both in the production of assignments and essays and during quizzes and exams.

Dishonesty during quizzes or exams usually is penalized by a “F” on the question involved or the entire exam. It also triggers a review

by me of all other material a student has submitted. I reserve the right to rescore material that I once thought was honest but given later actions by the student appear more suspicious under a second review. For material that is done at home on the honors system, dishonesty on one assignment can generate an “F” on all other similar assignments and, when severe, might disqualify the student from submitting any more of that type of assignment.

Plagiarism is difficult to define. All students are expected to read carefully my full statement on these issues. Access the Academic Honesty page through the Course Home Page sidebar. The academics honesty page is long, for a web page. **Please read it in full by the end of the first week of the term.** Ask questions. **After a week I will assume you are fully aware of, and have understood thoroughly, its contents including the penalties described.**

Please note that “I’m sorry, I won’t do it again” does not release you from the penalties incurred due to academic dishonesty.

[Accommodation for students with disabilities](#)

If you need accommodations for any type of disability or if you want me to have emergency medical information, please email me, or speak to me after class or during office hours.

[Grades](#)

[General comments](#)

- ◆ Students are always welcome to discuss with me concerns about grades. If you use “J130” at the beginning and “gradeissue” as a keyword in the email subject line your emails will be reviewed again before assigning a final course grade. I recommend this. (Keywords are irregular word strings I request to be put in emails so that later I can use them as a search term. This is explained in my comments on emailing me, found through the Course Home Page sidebar.)
- ◆ **Some grades are reported to bSpace**, though this report might be several sessions after the grade is determined. bSpace is NOT the official grade book record. Also, **when I have discussed a grade with a student and changed it, these changes are almost never uploaded to bSpace.** (It is time inefficient to upload grades on an individual basis.)
- ◆ **All grades in all categories are either originally in or converted to a 12-pt scale where A = 12, A- = 11 and so on.** (See the charts at the end of this document.) This is also the way grades are communicated. To tell a student that s/he made a 12 on an assignment is to say that s/he received an “A”. Test grades might initially have a raw and/or percent score but this is curved and given a letter grade and it is the letter grade, not the raw score or percent that counts towards the final grade.
- ◆ **Travel plans:** Students often schedule travel plans very close to class sessions. I do not consider missed flights, delayed or cancelled flights or inexpensive tickets to be excusable reasons for absences. I take our class sessions very seriously and hope you will, too.
- ◆ **Leaving early or arriving late because of midterms in other classes:** I do not consider this a valid reason for missing part of the class. I do have sympathy with a student’s desire to arrive early to a test room or when a test runs overtime. However, this explanation is so frequently abused that it is difficult to sort out those who legitimately need to do this and those who do not. Therefore, please email me ahead of time if possible and perhaps we can work something out.
- ◆ **Job interviews:** I am ambivalent about job interviews. If you seem otherwise to be fully engaged in the class, I will probably consider missing class as inevitable but I will regret that you have missed the material. You should make extra effort to participate in the sessions you are able to attend. When the student seems otherwise relatively uninvolved in the class, I do sometimes wonder if the interviews might have been able to be scheduled at a better time.
- ◆ **I consider the final exam period a firm date.** Please do not ask to take an exam early because you have travel or moving plans. (This is a general statement, some of my classes do not use the final exam period.)
- ◆ **I basically never give incompletes in a class.**

[About “grade categories”](#)

When there are multiple assignments of a similar nature, I usually group them under a single category. Short responses at the end of readings, or multiple quizzes are good examples. Categories are more than just a higher hierarchy of a grading system. They are the grades used to calculate the final grade. At the end of the term I give one more consideration to the category grade and determine if it seems to be a fair representation based on the mathematical average. I manually adjust the category grade on rare occasions either because the student had a legitimate reason (major illness, death in the family, etc) for under-performance on a specific test or, in cases where skills are being built over the term, grades towards the end of the term might get greater weight than those towards the beginning. Manual adjustments are rare and, when done, will have a note in the grade book that preserves as a record

my reasoning. Manual adjustments almost always improve a student's grade. However, I reserve the right to reduce the grade as well.

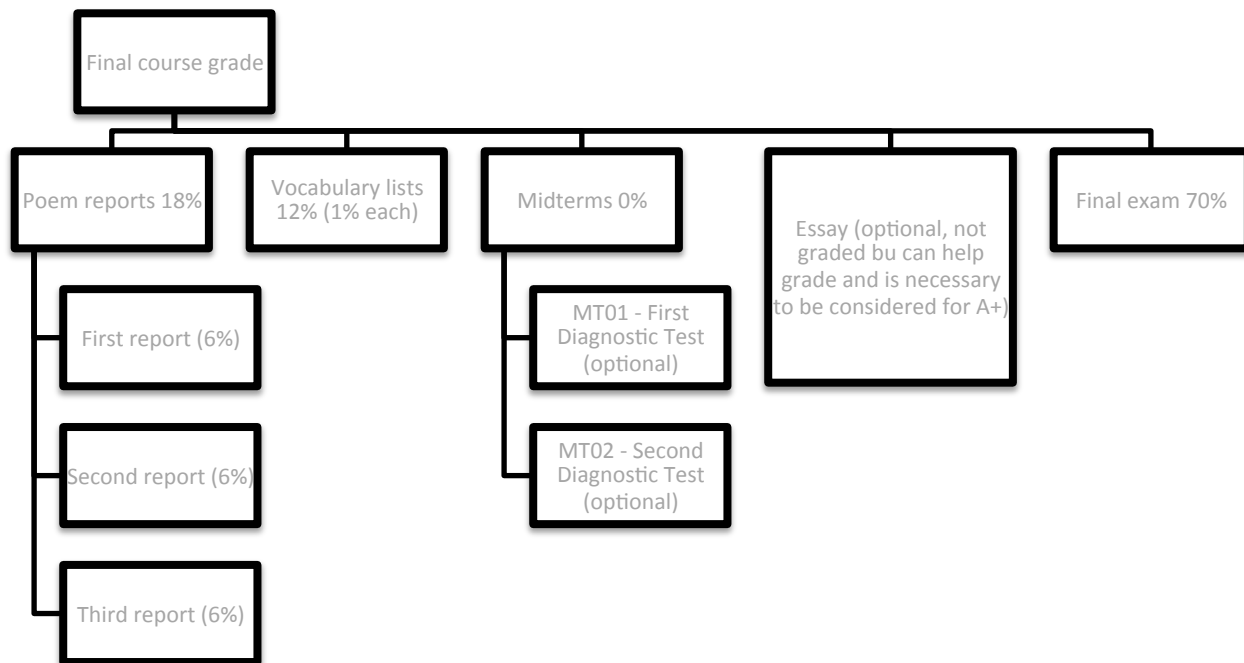
Estimating grades

The student can generate various final grade scenarios by using the "Grade estimator" link on the Course Home Page sidebar, when provided. This is usually towards the end of the term. If we are in the last three weeks and I have not yet made an estimator available, please feel free to remind me to do so.

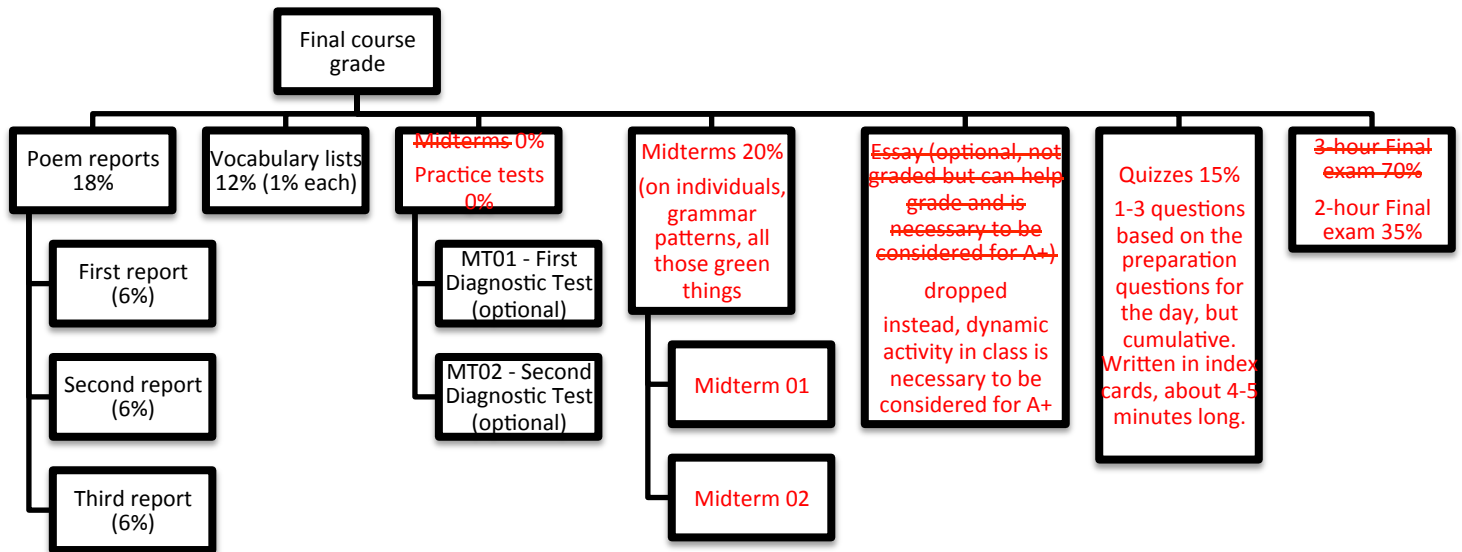
Please show some restraint in asking me to project a final grade for you towards the end of the term. (Basically I like all grade issues to be discussed in person. However, I understand that there might be times when this is not workable.) I will speak only in general terms, so if your question is, for example, whether I think you will get an "A" or an "A-", I can't answer that question. (This is true for P/NP students, too, when they are close to the borderline.) Also, if you are just curious, please wait for the reported grades. That being said, there are situations when such questions are legitimate. Please include "gradeissue" in your subject line. If I do not answer your email it either means that I don't think your situation warrants an answer or I am simply too busy to do so. I will give it serious consideration and respond as quickly as possible if appropriate. However, please remember that it will not be entirely accurate since there are many calculations involved in the final weeks, including balancing your performance against that of other students after all grades have been calculated (usually something that happens in the last 48-72 hours before grade submission). Estimating an individual grade before I have entered into the phase of considering the class as a whole is a time-consuming process since it is not just a matter of running numbers.

Grade scheme and grade weights

Old version



After class restructuring Sept 25



Grade category details

Grade Category—Attendance, Preparation & Participation

While none of these activities are tracked or formally evaluated by me, your overall level of participation is noted and influences grade decisions. This class is built primarily around two simple questions: “Can you appreciate a premodern poem as a poem, to a certain level of sophistication?” And, “Have you learned some of the basic history of premodern poetry, on the limited point of the poets and poem collections we covered?” I believe that class attendance, preparation and participation will go far in building these skills but I will not be trying to answer these questions on a session-by-session basis. I will look to your performance on the final exam for an answer. **Unlike many of my classes that have extensive information online, information, analytic approaches, will be presented only in class. Your well-organized class notes will be the basis for preparing for the final exam.**

Grade Category—Practice tests

Since the final exam is 50% of the course grade, I plan to give two “practice” midterms that will be similar in structure to that exam. There are optional. I will grade them and give you advice but I will not use the grades in any final course calculation. They will just give you a sense for how I will grade the final. I think you will find that my expectations are somewhat high, so I suggest you test the water with one or both of these tests. I will give one early in the term, to help you understand what I want you to be getting out of each session. I will give the second near the end of the term, so you can check how well prepared you are for the final, having finished nearly all class sessions.

Grade Category—Midterms

Two midterms will check basic factual information, cultural information, grammar points and such.

Grade Category—Quizzes

Quizzes are unannounced and usually closed-book. That take 5-10 minutes of class time on specific factual points as presented in class or on session pages or more analytic in nature to explore your ability to read and appreciate the poems of that session.

Grade Category—Vocabulary lists

Each student completes the vocabulary lists for 12 poems. Each of these is graded individually. The details will be on the web page.

Grade Category—Poem reports

I would like you to spend some time with one or several poems—finding out all you can in published materials, determining the vocabulary, stating the grammar, finding useful graphics, sound or other links, writing your opinion, and so on. How many you do will depend on the simple formula “number of poems covered (currently the number is 80 and that probably won’t change)” ÷ “number of students (which I expect will be twenty-something)”. Since there will be “left-over” poems, students will be invited to do a third poem, or whatever, if they want. The category grade is the average of the first two; further poems are considered “general extra credit” (see below).

Poem reports will be due about one week before the poem is covered in class so that I can use some of your material for class if it is useful. Deadlines will be strict, late penalties will be severe. Who is assigned which poem(s) and when the report is due will be posted online.

It is difficult to say how long these reports should be. Different poems have different needs and if we have already covered, say, 霞 (kasumi, spring haze) in class you probably should not include it extensively in your report, since it will be repeating information. (If you provide new, valuable information, that is a different situation.) But, as a ballpark guess, these are probably in the 2-4 page range with quite a bit of white space on those pages. (The layout is predetermined by me, so I already know the basic layout.)

Poem reports are graded based on both the written submission and how well the student is able to explain aspects of the poem on the day that poem comes up in class.

There are three poem reports for each student. When they are due is on our course web page.

Other details are online.

Grade Category—Final:

There is a two-hour final exam that is a combination of checking factual material and interpretation with clear emphasis on interpretation. (It is just that interpretation is grounded in being well-informed and so in some cases these needs to be tested as well.)

Grade category—Extra Credit (on tests and such), Major Extra Credit (additional, substantial assignments), General Extra Credit (little things that you do), “A+” as course grade, and “gradeissue”:

I use three types of extra credit in my classes.

- ◆ The first is a type you are used to encountering—**on assignments and tests** where students are given the opportunity to answer more challenging questions or include information beyond the usual expectations of the assignment. This type of extra credit influences directly the grade on the assignment.
- ◆ The second type also a type you sometimes see, I think: **extra assignments** that include a challenge of some sort. I call this “Major Extra Credit” and identify the assignments as such. Completing Major Extra Credit in **excellent form** will change your final grade cutoff lines from n.5 to n.3. (Whereas in a usual scenario you must have a course final grade of 11.5 to round up to a 12, an “A”, for the class, under this scenario, your grade is rounded up to an “A” if you have 11.3 or higher.) Completing Major Extra Credit in **good form** will change your final grade cutoff lines from n.5 to n.4. (Whereas in a usual scenario you must have a course final grade of 11.5 to round up to a 12, an “A”, for the class, under this scenario, your grade is rounded up to an “A” if you have 11.4 or higher.) Completing Major Extra Credit **mechanically as if only done for the course grade** will not change your final grade cutoff lines. Some of my courses do not have major extra credit opportunities.
- ◆ The third type of extra credit is something more ineffable and you probably have not had this as an explicit grade category in your classes although I imagine it does work behind the scenes in some of your classes. These are little **things that you do that indicate an enthusiasm for the class**, or more than the usual attentiveness to assignments, or acts that help the teaching environment. This might be web links you find that are of special value, or an extended comment you send by email about something that interested you, or finding an error in my Web site or other instructions. I acknowledge these things with an email that includes the keyword “**extracredit**”. **This type of extra credit is only valuable if, one the whole, you seem to be participating very well in the class. It cannot replace assignments. Indeed, it might work against you if I**

conclude that you are only interested in your grade and believe the extra credit can substitute for work on the regular assignments. This is an opportunity to show enthusiasm and share ideas and help others, not polish your grade although, indirectly, it does have that effect sometimes.

At the end of the term: In my gradebook, there are columns directly next to the final grade box. They list details for extra credit, various grade issues you have discussed with me (that have the gradeissue keyword in the subject line, no others), and notes I make during the term about you (such as multitasking during class, or special circumstances). After the grades are calculated mathematically, I consider these issues.

I consider giving one or two “A+”s in a course. Extra credit is usually necessary to qualify being considered for this, and the content and quality of the extra credit is definitely a factor in choosing among students who are on the short list. I do not assign “A+”s strictly based on the highest final grade score.

Table: Equivalents of 12-pt scale numbers to letter grades

When a “12-pt scale” grade is reported on bSpace or elsewhere, the letter grade equivalent to that number is:

13 / A+	10 / B+	7 / C+	4 / D+
12 / A	9 / B	6 / C	3 / D
11 / A-	8 / B-	5 / C-	2 / D-
			0 / F

Table: Conversion of 12-pt scale course average to letter grades for the final course grade

At the end of the term, the 12-pt scores for each grade category are calculated together, according to weight, for the final grade. That mathematical result is then rounded to the nearest letter grade step. In other words, an 11.50 is rounded up to 12 while an 11.49 is rounded down to 11, and so on. Below are the cutoffs for each final course letter grade. *(May 20, 2012: I have noticed that my grade profiles recently have been generating, at the end of the term, fewer grades in the “A” band and, for those grades in the “A” band, the vast majority are “A-minus” not “A”—such as 3 “As” to 15 “A-minuses”. While I am not against the idea of there being more “A-minuses” than “As” I have been adjusting the basic scale below to a 11.4 or 11.35 cutoff to generate final grades that are closer to and equal number of “As” and “A-minuses”. I don’t seem to have the same phenomenon in the case of the “B” or “C” band, so those cutoffs don’t change.)*

Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university
When given, usually highest 1-2 class averages, with general EC taken into consideration	A+	≥ 9.5	B+	≥ 6.5	C+	≥ 3.5	D+ (NP↓)
≥ 11.5	A	≥ 8.5	B	≥ 5.5	C	≥ 2.5	D
≥ 10.5	A-	≥ 7.5	B-	≥ 4.5	C- (P↑)	≥ 2	D-
						< 2	F

Table: Start point in defining cutoffs for grades when “percent correct” is the criterion used to determine a letter grade (multiple-choice tests and such)

≥ 100	A+	≥ 86.5	B+	≥ 76.5	C+	≥ 66.5	D+	< 60	F
≥ 93	A	≥ 83	B	≥ 73	C	≥ 63	D		
≥ 90	A-	≥ 80	B-	≥ 70	C-	≥ 60	D-		