

EEB 208 (Introduction to Conservation Biology) - Grading Policies

Distribution of points: Grades will be based on two midterms (each worth 15% of the final grade), a final exam (worth 40% of the final grade), a short writing exercise (worth 10% of the final grade), very short in-class writing exercises (collectively worth 10% of the final grade) and participation in class discussions of assigned readings (worth 10% of the final grade).

Grade assignments: I do not grade on a curve, because that approach limits the number of students who can get high grades and can therefore disadvantage students who work hard and learn all of the material: if everyone gains a superior understanding of the material, then everyone will get a good grade. Grades will be assigned according to the following scheme, assuming a total of 100 points for all course work:

Points	Grade	Interpretation*
> 90	A	Excellent
88-90	A-	Excellent
87-88	B+	Very Good
82-87	B	Good
80-82	B-	Good
78-80	C+	Good
72-78	C	Average
70-72	C-	Fair
68-70	D+	Poor
62-68	D	Poor
60-62	D-	Merely Passing
< 60	F	Failure

*The interpretation is based on the undergraduate catalog's description of each letter grade.

Re-grading of exams: I will happily re-grade any exam if a student feels that I have made a mistake. Re-grading will involve a fresh assessment of the entire exam, to ensure that I have not made any other errors. If you would like me to re-grade your exam then you need to provide me with a written description of the problem you perceive, explaining the problem in light of the correct answers I have provided. If the problem is that I could not read, or understand, what you have written, then you are unlikely to get points (clear communication is important in life and is your responsibility in exam answers). If I have simply added up points wrong, please let me know so that I can fix things.

Make-up exams: Taking an exam outside of the designated time will only be allowed under extraordinary circumstances (e.g., a serious health problem or family emergency) and even then only with some sort of formal documentation. I am sorry to take such a draconian attitude, but I have encountered too many problems in the past with exam excuses and this policy is the only way I can make things fair and consistent for everyone. Recreating a completely new exam for a make-up is extremely time consuming, and so make-up exams may involve long-form questions, which will require you to synthesize information across the course material into a clear and coherently argued essay. Please also note that I am not authorized to reschedule final exams. Consequently, I will only consider allowing a make-up on the final if you have already obtained permission from the Registrar's Office.

Academic misconduct and plagiarism: The penalties for anyone found to have committed plagiarism or any form of academic misconduct are severe. All students should read the [Student Code](#) with great care. In particular pay attention to [Appendix A: Academic Integrity in Undergraduate Education and Research](#) which describes acts that constitute academic misconduct, and the penalties that can be

imposed. Note, especially the following quote from section B2a in this document: “The appropriate academic consequence for serious offenses is generally considered to be **failure in the course**” (my emphasis).

If you have questions about academic misconduct, please consult the on-line FAQs (Click on the link to “Community Standards” available at [here](#), then click on “Academic Misconduct FAQ”) or come and talk to me about the issue. Understanding what does and does not constitute academic misconduct is your responsibility.

For useful information on plagiarism and the proper use of sources and citations, see “Writing With Sources: A Guide for Harvard Students” which can be downloaded [here](#).

For the purposes of this course anything that you write that is not phrased in your own original words is considered plagiarism. Minor reorganization of someone else’s words is plagiarism. Any time that you use someone else’s words, those words should be enclosed in quotes and be attributed, or their use will be considered to be plagiarism. Extensive quotation of someone else (even if attributed) is not acceptable for any of the work in this class and will also be considered to be plagiarism. And, yes, I take this very seriously and will give you an F if you plagiarize.