

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

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NOTE: You are required to inform the instructor in writing that you have read and understood all course requirements.

Attendance and Class Participation

Attendance is an integral part of education, and all students are expected to show up for class. Any students who cannot attend classes on a regular basis and on time are urged in no uncertain terms to drop the course. You should not enroll in this class if your job or personal matter interferes with your class work. It makes absolutely no sense for any students to not fulfill their most fundamental obligation (i.e., attendance) and thus waste their time and money while taking class seats that should have gone to other students.

Showing up late, walking in and out, or leaving early may be viewed as non-attendance. You must use common sense and show respect for your classmates. The classroom is not a flea market. Finish your personal business before or after class--not while the class is in session.

If you show up late, you must inform the instructor at the end of that class period. It is not acceptable for a student to claim later (e.g., an hour or a day later) that he/she forgot to inform the instructor that he/she arrived late.

If your non-attendance is excessive (i.e., missing more than 5 scheduled classes that meet twice a week), that can be construed as either an "unauthorized drop" or an "incomplete." It is important to note that class participation is expected and that it can affect your final grade. It should be obvious that you cannot participate in class discussion without being physically present.

After almost 40 years of teaching, the instructor has witnessed a significant and steady decline in student performance and professional obligations. While the CSU system appears to tolerate and may even take pride in accommodating the lower grading/learning standards, the instructor will not tolerate the lack of attendance, participation, and study. If, in the view of the instructor, your attendance and participation are unsatisfactory, you may be dropped from class during the instructor drop period. After this period, the instructor may choose to give you either "incomplete" or "unauthorized drop." If a letter grade is assigned, it will be significantly downgraded.

Lectures

The reading materials (e.g., textbook) are used to supplement lectures and class activities, not the other way around. Students are responsible for all materials discussed in class. If you miss any class, it is your responsibility to obtain the lecture notes from other students--not from the instructor.

Since no credit will be given to the student who uses his or her inaccurate notes to support one's answer, you should compare or exchange notes in order to make sure that your class notes are complete and accurate.

Exams

All exams carry equal weight. The final exam is not comprehensive.

Many questions are included in each exam in order to: (1) cover the materials thoroughly, (2) make the measurement of knowledge more stable, and (3) evaluate your performance fairly by not putting too much emphasis on only a few questions. As such, luck should play only a small part in determining your performance.

You will have to be concise and relatively quick in answering questions. Above all, you must know the materials. The time allotted is reasonable and adequate. However, you can perform well only with good preparation which should be done over a period of time; cramming is not helpful.

There will be no make-up exam unless: (1) you have a good reason for it and (2) an arrangement is made and approved by the instructor at least 24 hours before the exam. Thus, regardless of what your reason or excuse is, make-up tests are given only at the instructor's discretion and only when the above requirements are followed.

Grade Policy

Final grade will be based on your average of the total accumulated points over all exams and, if any, a term project. The plus/minus grading system will be employed. The cut-off points for each grade (based on an average) are as follows:

90 or more	=	A-, A, A+
80-89	=	B-, B, B+
70-79	=	C-, C, C+
60-69	=	D-, D, D+
59 or less	=	F

A cut-off point for each grade may be lowered, only at the instructor's discretion, if there is a natural breaking point (i.e., you are very close to--but below--a particular cut-off point, and there is a significant distance between you and the next person with a lower total score).

While exams (and term project, if any) are the major determinant of the final grade, consideration may also be given to other factors such as class participation, attentiveness, tardiness, evidence of effort, significant improvement or decline in performance over all exams, etc. A failure to attend class and participate in class discussion can lower your grade by 20%.

Extra work for extra credit will not be given.

There will absolutely be no adjustment of score upward or downward (i.e., no curving). To compete against a reasonable and predetermined set of standards is of primary importance; to compete against fellow students is secondary. It is thus irrelevant to complain about too many students having low (or high) test scores. Curving is a two-edged sword. Certainly, it should not be used to reward mediocre work.

Very Important

The instructor has been unfairly criticized by some students over the years that he is a tough grader, that he does not collect enough information to assign grades, that he does not use fair grading methods, and that he does not show concern for students.

The above criticisms are highly related but lack merit. First, at least three separate measurements are made to assess each student's knowledge and performance, and the three measurements are very adequate. Second, the tests are reasonably valid since they clearly ask questions about the materials which are covered in class and/or in the textbook. Finally, even students who complained are still likely to admit that they have learned a great deal from the course.

It is apparent that certain students' unfavorable reactions stem from their preoccupation with grades and their dissatisfaction that they did not get the easy grades that they have been accustomed to. When they could not measure up to the more rigorous (but reasonable) standards, they then complained that more tests should have been given to give them more opportunities to improve their grades. Students must realize that the real world, more often than not, does not give them a second chance to make up for their poor effort. Also more measurements will only serve to distract students from doing the work properly. There is too much testing already and not enough of teaching and learning. Since each exam or each term paper is very important, the obvious solution is that you must give each test or term paper a serious attention that it deserves. In addition, it is ridiculous for students and instructors to go over test materials before an exam. It is useless to have an exam if questions and answers are known in advance.

Conventional wisdom states that you need to spend two additional hours of study for every hour in class. So if you are taking five courses, it means that you must spend about 45 hours a week for your study. If you are also working 40 hours a week, it means that you must subtract your 45 hours of study and 40 hours of work from your 168-hour week. You must then see whether the remaining number of hours will be able to accommodate your sleep, rest, eating, commuting, and many other chores--not to mention your family obligations. Certainly, your work and other activities should not take anything away from your study time.

The instructor is very sympathetic to the fact that many students have to work because of financial reasons. If you are one of those people, I applaud you for striving to do your best. It is exceedingly difficult to have to deal with employment, school, and family matters at the same time. Of course, students should not neglect their jobs and families, and the course has reasonably taken those factors into account. On the other hand, these personal matters cannot be used to justify why the course requirements are not being followed. Keep in mind that your good

excuse, when used a number of times, is no longer reasonable to justify your absences and poor preparation.

It is most gratifying if you can satisfactorily handle all the conflicting demands. But if you cannot handle them all, you will have to prioritize your needs. It makes no sense to try to tackle so many things at once and do them all *poorly*. If you cannot devote enough time to the course, then you should drop the course and wait until you can provide adequate time and effort.

Academic Dishonesty

Any student caught cheating or plagiarism will be assigned a grade of "F"--not just for that assignment or test but for the course. There will be no warning. If the course requires a project or term paper, it must be your own work. You are not allowed to consult anyone else, except the instructor.

Cheating is an academic misconduct which may result in further sanctions such as suspension or expulsion.

You should report any cheating incidents to the instructor so that the cheater will not gain an unfair advantage.

Incomplete

Usually, a grade of "I" will not be given.

Dropping the Course

If you so choose, it is your responsibility to withdraw yourself in a timely manner. Students should not assume that the instructor will find time to drop them for the failure to show up during the first few weeks. Be familiar with the University's new drop policy.

This Course Is Not for Those Who:

1. are not serious about the course and/or education. This course requires a great deal of effort. However, any student should be able to perform satisfactorily if he or she has adequate time, effort, and perseverance.

2. think that there will be a fixed and definite answer for each question or problem. An answer is good only when: (1) it takes relevant factors into consideration, (2) it is logical, and (3) it increases the probability of making a correct decision. If you do not agree with certain statements made in the textbook or by the instructor, you should bring it up for discussion before the exam. Too frequently, students base their answers on their casual experience (which is not acceptable) rather than theoretical and empirical evidence.

3. believe that either memorization or understanding alone is the only determinant of performance and grade. Learning requires both memorization (repetition) and understanding.

4. are super sensitive. "Political correctness" (whose value is a subject of debate) cannot be allowed to run amok. It is not correct for political correctness to be extreme. A few students with extreme sensitivity should not dictate what the great majority can or cannot hear when the relevant concepts provide educational value to the mainstream. College education requires an open mind and a tolerance of varying ideas and perspectives.

Other Policies

It is your responsibility to sign up for the course properly. You should complete all reading assignments in advance and must familiarize yourself with all course requirements.

For those who are willing to work, the instructor is accessible and will be happy to help so that all can benefit from the educational process. Students are expected and encouraged to discuss any problems with the instructor so as to attempt to come up with satisfactory solutions. Many students either wait too long or fail to take advantage of this option. If you have a problem, the instructor prefers that you have carefully thought about the problem and that you come to the instructor with some possible suggestions or solutions to your problem. The role of the instructor is to assist you in making a decision that is best for you, but you must make a final decision. Be reasonable to yourself before the instructor can be reasonable to you.