Laboratory Sessions

Because this course satisfies University requirements as a laboratory science class and as a writing intensive course, **you must pass the laboratory (with a score of 60% or greater) to receive a passing grade in the course.** The laboratory grade will be based on well-thought-out predictions, collaborative skills as evidenced by effective group work (laboratory and discussion session groups are identical), and well-organized and clearly written technical reports. You will write a total of four laboratory reports. The specific part of the laboratory for which you will write a report will be assigned to you by your instructor at the end of each laboratory topic (about every two weeks). Reports should be about 4 typed pages, including all necessary predictions, graphs, data tables, and calculations. Reports must be given to your laboratory instructor for grading no more than one week after they are assigned. Late reports will not be accepted. Graded reports will be returned to you not later than your next laboratory meeting. During the course of the semester, you will be allowed to resubmit one (and only one) report (the first assigned or completed lab report), to achieve a higher grade. It must be given to your laboratory instructor within one week of the time the original report was returned to you. Lab data is taken cooperatively, but you are responsible for writing your own reports. Copying lab reports can result in a failing grade for the course. Details of the laboratory grading scheme are in your laboratory manual.

Read the relevant portions of the lab manual before attending a lab. Each lab has several components. Your TA will tell you which components to prepare each week. All the laboratory problems have sections titled "Prediction" and "Warm-Up". Give your TA the predictions and the answers to the "Warm-Up" questions two days before your scheduled lab session. Failure to participate in one laboratory will result in -20% of the grade of the following lab report (-40% if you miss 2 labs etc.). **Because the laboratory involves teamwork, no laboratory session make-ups will be allowed. Furthermore, students who miss more than three laboratory sessions will receive a failing laboratory grade and thus fail the class, independent of whether or not these absences are excused in a University-recognized manner.** The rationale behind this policy is identical to that regarding students’ eligibility for taking discussion session quizzes for credit.

A student’s laboratory grade is the product of the percentage of points he or she earns on the four assigned laboratory reports multiplied by the fraction of times he or she attends a full laboratory session (i.e., arrives to lab no more than 15 minutes late and completes as fully as time permits the laboratory assignment along with their lab group) over the course of the semester (provided that this fraction is greater than that for cases in which more than three laboratory sessions are missed). For example, suppose a student receives 90% of the total points on the four assigned lab reports, but has missed three of the semester’s thirteen laboratory sessions. The student’s resultant laboratory grade is thus 90% × \(\frac{10}{13}\) = 69%, a significant reduction.