

## How well do I need to do on future exams in order to get a better grade?

## How well do I need to do on future exams in order to keep my current grade?

To answer these questions in general, you will need to consult your course syllabus to find out how many points the course is worth and what the grade percent cut-offs are. In Fall 2015, my Chm 203 course is worth 700 points (6 exams and a final). The cut-offs are A = 90%, B+ = 85%, B = 80%, C+ = 75%, C = 70 % and D = 60%. Over the 700 points, that translates to:

A      90% of 700 = 630 points

B+     85% of 700 = 595 points

B      80% of 700 = 560 points

C+     75% of 700 = 525 points

C      70% of 700 = 490 points

These are the point totals that are needed for each grade by the end of the semester. Add up your exam scores to see how many points you currently have. Subtract that from the point total for the desired grade. For example, after three exams, suppose you have 231 total points and you want to know what it would take to get a B or B+. To get a B, you need 560 total points and you still need  $560 - 231 = 329$  more points. There are four more exams and you need to average  $329/4 = 82.25\%$  on these remaining exams. Try to calculate what it would take to get a B+. The answer is 91%.

The same calculation is used to compute what you need to keep your current grade. For example, you have 405 points after five exams (81%) and you want to know what you have to average to keep your B grade. A final grade of B requires 560 points and you have 405 of them, leaving 155 points over the next two exams, or 77.5 %.

Lab grades are calculated the same way. The lab is worth 600 points total (12 experiments at 50 points each). The total cut-offs for a 60-point course are:

A      90% of 600 = 540 points

B+     85% of 600 = 510 points

B      80% of 600 = 480 points

C+     75% of 600 = 450 points

C      70% of 600 = 420 points