



Grading Tips

1. Save yourself some time prior to grading:

- Rushed work is rarely high quality work. Incorporate a peer review activity to encourage students to complete drafts of papers ahead of time.
- Ask students to complete and sign a procedural checklist (paper stapled, font guidelines met, length guidelines met, etc.) and require it for assignment submission. This will help them to double-check that all formatting guidelines have been followed.
- Utilize student knowledge by asking students to preface work they hand in with a self-evaluation. For example, ask students to comment on the strongest and weakest parts of their work.

2. Bump up your grading efficiency:

- Use only as many grade levels as you need. Ask yourself what makes the most sense for each assignment – do you really need 13 levels (A-F, including +/-), or would a four-level system work better (check, check plus, check minus, no check)? Smaller assignments can even be graded as complete or incomplete.
- When grading labs and exams, instead of grading each lab or exam individually, score the same question for all students before moving on to the next question. You'll move through the questions more quickly, and your grading will be more consistent.
- Do not comment on every issue or error. Instead, focus on a few major points related to the purpose of the assignment. Instead of writing out lengthy words or sentences for each error, consider using shorthand for common errors, and give your students the key. Discuss common problems in class. Do not waste time on careless student work.

3. Plan ahead for student complaints:

- Establish a 24/7 policy for grade complaints – students must wait 24 hours before making a claim for a higher grade, but they must make this claim within 7 days of receiving the assignment back. This allows for both a cooling off period and a limit to the amount of time grades can stay open.
- If students request a re-grade, ask for the student to write a paragraph explaining why they deserve a different score. This can reduce spurious re-grading requests.

4. Refer students to external help:

- If you feel that a student needs more specialized support than you can offer, you can refer them to Penn State Learning for individual or small group tutoring in math, writing, and/or foreign languages.
- If you feel that students should be assessed for learning accommodations you may suggest they visit disability services.