

## Details about Grading, ECON 222

This document provides details about grading omitted from the main syllabus (consult the main syllabus for the overall grading scheme) and provides a “Frequently Asked Questions” section.

### MobLab Participation

Each lecture, 3 points will be given for MobLab participation. These points will be allocated evenly across opportunities for participation: if there is only one such opportunity during a given lecture, it is worth 3 points; if there are five of them during another lecture, each of those is worth 0.6 points. In order to obtain credit, students must register an answer or game action; the accuracy of the answer or the outcome of the game has no bearing on the number of MobLab participation points earned unless it leads to a warning, as described in the main syllabus.

Students encountering technical difficulties (*e.g.* unable to connect to the network) must immediately advise the teaching staff so that their name can be recorded; this option is not available for students attempting to participate remotely. Students that are unable to participate because they are not adequately prepared to do so (*e.g.* failure to sign up for MobLab, to join the course, to download the app prior to lecture if using a phone/tablet, or to bring a charged electronic device to lecture) will not earn any credit.

Up to 27 MobLab participation points can be earned. Since the two lowest scores are dropped, **no academic concession will be granted for the first two lectures that you miss for a valid reason. Request an academic concession ONLY after three lectures missed legitimately.**

**Your total participation score out of 27 is:**

- if you have 0 or 1 warning, the sum of your 9 highest scores;
- if you have 2 warnings, 75% of the sum of your 9 highest scores;
- if you have 3 warnings, 0.

**Therefore, participating without attending class is risky and strongly discouraged:** because you will not hear the relevant explanations, you are much more likely to get a warning by misunderstanding games and/or getting easy questions wrong. **Also, just coming to class is not enough: you must pay attention and ask questions when you don’t understand!**

### Problem Sets

Problem sets are graded for completeness only, each out of 6:

6	FULLY complete	5	ALMOST FULLY complete
4	MUCH MORE THAN HALF complete	3	ABOUT HALF complete
2	A LITTLE LESS THAN HALF complete	1	MUCH LESS THAN HALF complete
0	NOT HANDED IN, or (ALMOST) ENTIRELY INCOMPLETE		

A question is considered answered if your solution shows that you made a good faith effort. Explain what you’re doing. Just writing the answer and/or gibberish doesn’t count!

**Your lowest problem set score will be dropped. No additional exemptions can be granted UNLESS two or more problem sets were missed for valid reasons.**

### Exam (Midterm and Final) Question Types

- “Regular” (called “basic” in 2019), which should be either familiar (from lecture, problem sets or practice exams) or simple (stating or applying definitions, recalling explanation from lecture, or solving straightforward problems)
- “Challenge,” which are unfamiliar and somewhat complex; these are not part of the denominator, but they aren’t true bonuses since they’re part of the curve; there may be 10-15 challenge points on the midterm and about 20 challenge points on the final.
- “Bonus,” 5-8 points on the final about the book *Game-Changer* (optional reading)

To prepare for exams, practice using **past exams** (especially from recent semesters), available on Canvas, and review **BOTH** problem sets and **arguments presented in class**: while problem sets give you practice using results from class, exams can also ask where those results come from.

### Grade Thresholds

Here is how I will set the grade thresholds:

- Let the exam score E be the sum of a student’s points on exams, including challenge questions but excluding bonus questions.
- Are excluded from the calculation: students with a score of zero or suspected of academic dishonesty on the midterm or the final exam.
- The C- threshold is the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile of E plus 48.
- The B- threshold is the 39<sup>th</sup> percentile of E plus 49.
- The A- threshold is the 78<sup>th</sup> percentile of E plus 50.
- The other thresholds are at my discretion.

Thus, if every student gets 48-51/51 on MobLab and problem sets, and nobody earns any bonus marks, the letter grade distribution will be around the generous end of the department grading guidelines (22% A’s, 39% B’s, 29% C’s, 10% D/F’s).

### Explanation of Grading Scheme

Effectively, exams are “curved” as generously as possible given the department grading guidelines, while everyone is expected to earn 100% on MobLab participation and problem sets completion. To ensure the latter, do not miss lectures or problem sets, especially early on: you may later have to miss some for reasons out of your control, and exemptions are granted starting only with the *second* problem set and *third* lecture missed for a valid reason. Moreover, be aware that MobLab participation opportunities may be unevenly spaced through a lecture, so if you are unlucky, arriving late or leaving early can cost you most or all of the MobLab points for that day.

### Frequently Asked Questions

*The exams are difficult, and the average is much lower than in other courses. Will this hurt my grade?*

No. Exams are generously “curved,” as explained above. Also, in most cases, your numerical grade will be significantly higher than your exam scores due to the generous grading and heavy weighting of MobLab participation and problem sets.

*I didn’t do well on the midterm. Can I still pass this course by doing well on the final?*

Yes, unless you also did poorly on problem sets and/or participation.

*What do I need on the final to get a grade of \_\_\_?*

This will depend on the score distribution on the final exam. You can estimate what you need relative to the class by looking at how much your midterm score is above or below the threshold for your desired grade. If it's below, then you need to improve by enough (relative to the class) to not only get your desired grade on the final exam itself, but also make up the shortfall accumulated on the midterm; if it's above, then you can afford to come down to your desired grade on the final itself, and also have a cushion from the midterm. All this is assuming that you have full problem set and participation marks and no penalties – otherwise, you need to adjust for those as well.