

## Use Your Syllabus to Track Your Grades

Here are the **grading criteria** from a sample course's syllabus:

**EXAMS:** Midterm Exam 1 (100 points) in class on Friday, October 19th  
 Midterm Exam 2 (100 points) in class on Friday November 2nd  
 Final Exam (140 points), to be taken during exam week.

**DISCUSSION SECTIONS**  
 Attendance + in-class writing: 100 points (10 classes x 10 points each class = 100 total points)  
 Higher stakes writing: 50 points  
 Active participation: 10 points

**GRADING:** The final grade will be the sum of the 2 midterm exams (100 points each), final exam (140 points total), discussion sections and writing assignments (160 points).

**GRADING SCALE (total points)**  
 A: 460-500 = 4.0 A-: 440-459 = 3.7 B+: 425-439 = 3.3 B: 400-424 = 3.0  
 B-: 385-399 = 2.7 C+: 370-384 = 2.3 C: 345-369 = 2.0 C-: 325-344 = 1.7  
 D+: 310-324 = 1.3 D: 290-309 = 1.0 F: below 295

As you read this syllabus, you'll see that there will be a total of 500 possible points in the course. Of these points, 100 (apiece) come from each of the two midterms, 140 come from the final, and 160 come from the discussion section.

If you figure out the percentages associated with these assignments and their point values (100 points is what percentage of 500, etc.), you can fill out a Grade Tracker for this course as follows:

✓	Description (quiz, test, essay, homework)	Due Date	% Value	Grade
	Midterm 1 (100 pts)	Oct 19	20%	
	Midterm 2 (100 pts)	Nov 2	20%	
	Final (140 pts)	Finals week	28%	
	Attendance + in-class writing (100 pts)		20%	
	Higher stakes writing (50 pts)		10%	
	Active participation (10 pts)		2%	

Say you got a 84 on the first midterm, a 91 on the second, you missed two classes, got 45 (of 50) points on your higher stakes writing, and you felt you participated pretty well in class. Fill your points in on the chart above. With 78% of your grade your grade pretty much determined, **what would you need to get on your final to receive an A- in the course? Figure it out:**

- Here's what you've earned thus far, in points:  $84 + 91 + 80 + 45 + 10 = 310$ .
- The syllabus states that 440 is the lowest point value that will get you an A-, so subtract your total number of points thus far from the points needed for an A- ( $440 - 310 = 130$ ), and
- You need to earn 130 of 140 total points on your final to get your A-. **That's a 93% on the final exam.**