



Memo re: Standards-Based Grading

Physics 112, 122 and Chemistry 112

2018 - 2019

Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

This year, with the support of the school administration, I am piloting a new grading scheme in Physics 112, 122 and Chemistry 112. It is called standards based grading and will place the focus on the course learning goals and away from percentage marks.

All class assessments will be evaluated on a six (6) point scale with a percentage grade determined only at report periods and through a conference with the student. Tests and the final exam will also be standards-based and a student conference will be held before the final (much more detail will be communicated as we get close to our first test and exam review). Percentages will not be calculated with a math formula. They will be based on a collection of student coursework. How the standards-based grading will convert to a percentage is on the back of this page. Students will earn one of the marks listed in the table (albeit, I recognize there is a big difference between a 95% and 100% in grades 11 and 12. Should a student be graded at level 6, I will take a very close look at assessment results, observations and conversations so a student could score anywhere from 95% to 100%).

Students will be given a Learning Target Tracking Sheet early in the semester and they will regularly self-assess. As we complete summative (quizzes, tests, assignments, investigations) and formative (student-teacher conversations, student-student conversations, regular learning checks) assessments, students will keep a portfolio and use a collection of evidence to self-evaluate their grade. This means a conversation between myself and a student is not just me dictating the grade, it is an actual conversation about their learning and their collection of evidence. Also, there will be opportunities to have quiz and test do-overs as learning a concept can happen at a time after a test has been given. Again, this is all about students having many opportunities to demonstrate their learning.

I am excited to implement a grading scheme that focuses on student learning and not mark percentages. I know this could take some time to fully understand and grasp, and at any point during the semester I am happy to discuss assessment with you. Email is a good way to contact me, however, a detailed discussion can be difficult in that medium and I may request we talk on the phone or face-to-face.

Have a great school year and welcome to Physics and/or Chemistry 112 at JMH!

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Standards-Based Grading: A Six Point Scale

Each unit in the course will have learning targets that will be graded on a six point scale. As a student, you will keep a portfolio of your work towards understanding course concepts. This will be important in determining a percentage grade (which you will only receive on report cards). Tests, quizzes, concept-checks and the exam will all be scored using the system below:

Expert	6	Near perfect demonstration of understanding/skill; high confidence; mastery of learning standard	"You could teach this."
	5	Strong demonstration of understanding/skill; high confidence; slight error involved	"Almost perfect, just one little error."
Apprentice	4	Good demonstration of understanding/basic skills; confidence evident; a few errors	"Good understanding with just a few errors."
	3	Satisfactory demonstration of understanding/basic skills; key concepts are lacking; errors common	"You are missing some of the key concepts, but have achieved the bare minimum to pass."
Novice	2	Minimal understanding of key concepts and rudimentary demonstration of basic skills; many errors	"You are starting to understand, but have not shown enough to pass."
	1	Inadequate understanding key concepts and little to no demonstration of basic skills; errors throughout	"Credit or pass not possible at this time."

Near report card time we will meet and agree on a percentage score (although, as teacher I do have final say based on your work) using the table below:

Learning Category	Classification Level	Only shortly before report cards will a percentage mark be discussed and determined		
Expert	6	95	97	100
	5	86	90	94
Apprentice	4	73	80	85
	3	60	66	72
Novice	2	50	56	59
	1	0	25	49

Remember, each learning target will be scored 1 – 6 and it will be possible to improve a score through continued practice, conversations, and assignments, projects, re-quizzing and re-testing.

A sample student learning tracking sheet is below:

Learning Target Unit: Kinematics	Score (1 – 6)						
I can identify the frame of reference for a given motion.	Date:						
	Score:						
I can use vectors to represent force, velocity, and acceleration.	Date:						
	Score:						