

In large part, the following discussion relates to questions / complaints raised by a small minority of prior class members who believe I failed to adequately justify the reasons for assigning the grade that they eventually received.

In this course, grading feedback involves mutual respect. Specifically, I respect that your time is both valuable and in short supply. I believe mine is, too.

Regarding course grades, if you are unable to submit interim assignments before the initial due dates - for whatever reason - I will do my best to assign the appropriate grade to you in an unbiased manner.

Regarding grades, while some courses lend themselves to discreet grading distributions (e.g., all could earn "A" course grades for clearing an existing quality benchmark); historically, that has not occurred in the classes that I remain willing to teach (e.g., this class).

My view is that assignments are more interesting when they involve some form of realistic business situation.¹ When the subjective nature of accounting measurement (and how these measurements influence organizations) is put into a realistic context, responses are not only interesting, but they also tend to vary in quality. In order not to sound like a 'scary' grader, please note that past grade distributions have contained more than fifty percent "A" course grades (with "B" grades comprising substantially all of the remainder). This relatively high grade distribution (relative to typical graduate accounting courses) is a reflection of why your time is valuable.²

Regarding interim assignment feedback, all class members who submit assignments by the initial due date will receive personal feedback explaining my assessment (with an opportunity for clarification and, if necessary, debate) at some point during our final weekend meeting. Typically, contributions received prior to the final weekend make class much better than it would have been otherwise.

Assignments submitted after the initial due date will receive a grade based on my memory of the quality distribution formed by the class. Put more bluntly, after our final weekend, I will not 're-read' all cases in order to specifically identify issues that I am willing to explain and defend regarding why one assignment is better or worse than another assignment.

Again, if you are unable to submit assignments by the initial due date, I will do my best to assign the appropriate grade (i.e., rank your assignment relative to my memory of all assignments) in an unbiased manner.

Assuming I receive approval, I'll post a few past assignments (an "A" vs. "B" comparison) to make the preceding discussion more concrete (approval is needed for confidentiality reasons).

¹ That said, I acknowledge the need to evaluate basic bookkeeping skills and standard accounting mechanics in all sections of A5301.

² if you are interested, when we meeting in September, I'll show you a "value of time" comparison using my first MSA class assignment... not good based on what I've seen so far.