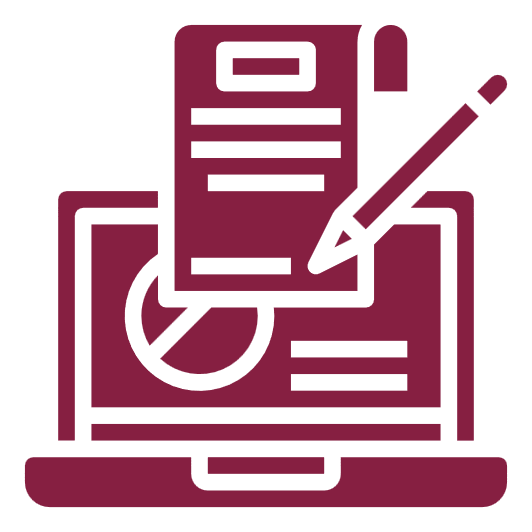
# How Assessment Works

This course does not use letter or number grades on the work you submit. Research[[1]](#footnote-2) tells us grades are a terrible way to measure learning, so I don’t use them. Your work in this course is marked Complete or Incomplete, based on whether the work meets the expectations for the assignment.

### Complete

I mark your work Complete in Canvas when it meets **ALL** of the following requirements:

* Matches the assignment.
* Follows the [Undergraduate Honor System](http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/) and the [Principles of Community](https://www.inclusive.vt.edu/about/vtpoc.html).
* Fulfills all of the criteria for the assignment (all criteria in the rubric are marked “Yes”).

### Incomplete

I mark your work Incomplete when it falls into **ANY** of the following categories:

* Is not submitted.
* Is not finished.
* Does not match the assignment.
* Does not follow the [Undergraduate Honor System](http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/) and/or the [Principles of Community](https://www.inclusive.vt.edu/about/vtpoc.html).
* Does not fulfill all of the criteria for the assignment (one or more criteria in the rubric is not marked “Yes”).

If your work earns an Incomplete, **you can revise and resubmit** as long as you submitted your project by the Target Due Date or the Checkpoint Deadline and submit your revision by the end of the Final Grace Period.

### Complete and Incomplete Notation in Canvas

The Grades tool in Canvas keeps track of your work using a simple binary code:

* Complete work is marked with a one (1) or a checkmark (✔) in Canvas.
* Incomplete work is marked with a zero (0) or an X mark (X) in Canvas.

This binary code does not bear any grade value. Your goal is to earn a Complete on as much work as you need to reach your goal for the course.

### When Is Work Marked Complete/Incomplete?

Use the table below to determine when I mark your work in Canvas Grades. If a personal issue comes up for me (like I get sick), I may not be able to work as quickly as usual. Allow an extra day or two just in case.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Kind of Work | When It’s Marked in Canvas |
| Syllabus Review & Contact Info Form | Marked within 48 hours after the 3-Day Grace Period ends but allow a few days. |
| Weekly Activities (including Check-Ins, Self-Checks, & some Try-Its) | Marked immediately by Canvas after submission, unless noted otherwise. |
| Try-It Discussions and Group Try-Its | Marked within 48 hours after the 3-Day Grace Period ends but allow a few days. |
| Major Project Submissions | Marked after the Target Due Date, by comparing the work to the criteria. Allow a week. |
| Optional Final Exam | Marked after the end of exams. |

# How Course Grades Are Calculated

There is only one letter grade in this course: the course grade I enter for you at the end of the term. Your course grade is determined by comparing the amount of work you have earned a Complete on to the expectations shown in the table below, which serves as a contract for course grades.

### Effort Expectations Contract for Each Grade Level

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade Level** | **Effort Expectations** |
| A | Earn a Complete on the following:   * Five Major Project Submissions * 95% of the Check-In Surveys * 95% of the Weekly Activities (Try-Its, Self-Checks, & Other Weekly Activities) |
| B | Earn a Complete on the following:   * Four Major Project Submissions * 85% of the Check-In Surveys * 85% of the Weekly Activities (Try-Its, Self-Checks, & Other Weekly Activities) |
| C | Earn a Complete on the following:   * Three Major Project Submissions * 75% of the Check-In Surveys * 75% of the Weekly Activities (Try-Its, Self-Checks, & Other Weekly Activities) |
| D | Earn a Complete on the following:   * Two Major Project Submissions * 65% of the Check-In Surveys * 65% of the Weekly Activities (Try-Its, Self-Checks, & Other Weekly Activities) |
| F | Earn a Complete on the following:   * Fewer than two of the Major Project Submissions * 64% or less of the Check-In Surveys * 64% or less of the Weekly Activities (Try-Its, Self-Checks, & Other Weekly Activities) |

### Additional Grade Calculation Guidelines

* There is no math calculation involved. I do not average the percentages or make any other calculation with the numbers to determine your grade.
* I start with your course grade for the Major Projects and then move your grade up or down based on how you did in the other categories.
* The different **categories listed on the Effort Expectations Contract (on the previous page) are not equivalent**. The Major Projects category is the most important category and holds the strongest weight on your grade.
* To earn a Complete for the group projects, you must participate fully in the projects as well as submit documents that meet the basic criteria.
* To earn an A or an A-, you must earn a Complete on all of the Major Projects.
* You cannot pass the course without earning a Complete on at least two Major Projects. If you have an F for the Major Projects category, you have an F as your course grade.

### Checking Your Progress

Use these instructions to determine where your work in the course falls at any point:

1. Find the percentages for the work you have Completed on the **Grades** page in Canvas. Scroll to the bottom of the page to find a table of categories and details on the work you have completed, like this example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Score** | **Out of** |
| Major Projects | 80% | 4.00/5.00 |
| Check-In Surveys | 85% | 12.00/14.00 |
| Weekly Activities | 75% | 27.00/36.00 |
|  |  |  |

1. Check the chart of Effort Expectations Contract for Each Grade Level (on page 16) to find the expected percentages for each category.
2. Compare the percentages on the Canvas Grades page to the expectations on the Effort Expectations Contract for Each Grade Level. For instance, the student in the example image has 85% for Check-In Surveys; therefore, I marked that the student is in the B range for that category.
3. Determine your progress strictly according to the percentage cut-offs. Do not round up.
4. Look at the overall numbers to decide which course grade you are closest to. Keep the Additional Grade Calculation Guidelines listed above in mind.

### Optional Final Exam: Performance Review

At the end of the term and after all work has been marked, I’ll review the work you’ve completed and compare it to the Effort Expectations Contract for Each Grade Level (on page 16). I will fill out the Effort Expectations Rubric, so that you can see your potential course grade. You’ll find this information in the Effort Expectations-Based Course Grade Assignment in Canvas at the end of the term.

After this course grade information is posted, you have two options:

* **If you agree** with the course grade, do nothing. The grade in the rubric will become your course grade. You can skip the final exam.
* **If you disagree** with the course grade, you can propose a different grade by completing the final exam. Use the information in the rubric as the baseline for the course grade you propose in your Final Exam. Use details from the work you have done during the term to support your proposal. Your course grade will be indicated as the grade on the final exam.

The Grades page will compare the effort-based grade to the final exam grade and then show the higher letter grade as your course grade. Canvas makes this calculation automatically.

If you decide to complete the Final Exam, submit your work by 11:59 PM on Wednesday, May 14, 2025.

Make-ups and extensions for the final exam must be approved by the Dean of Students. If you are a graduating senior this term, any make-up or extension may keep you from graduating on time.

### VT Grade Scale with +/-

I enter your course grade as a letter with a + or -, as needed. I do not use numbers at all because I am not doing any mathematical calculations.

Canvas and other systems that show your course grade may convert the letter grade to a number. In that case it is using the numbers from the standard VT Grade Scale with +/-, shown below:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A 93–100 A- 90–92.99 | B+ 87–89.99 B 83–86.99 B- 80–82.99 | C+ 77–79.99 C 73–76.99 C- 70–72.99 | D+ 67–69.99 D 63–66.99 D- 60–62.99 | F 59.99 & below |

er.

1. If you want to learn more about grades and assessment, check out the work of [Jesse Stommel](https://www.jessestommel.com/how-to-ungrade/), [Alfie Kohn](https://www.alfiekohn.org/article/case-grades/), and [Susan D. Blum](https://www.susanblum.com/media). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)