

Course Rules and Procedures, Michael D. McGinnis

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Below are the policies and procedures in effect for my undergraduate courses at Indiana University. (I apologize for the officious tone, but I have learned that making these things explicit at the outset is a good idea for all.) For information on other applicable rules, students should sources in this [department](#), [college](#), [campus](#), and [university](#). Also, please feel free to speak with me if you have any questions or concerns.

General Information

- Students are encouraged to check [On Course](#) regularly for course announcements. The official course syllabus posted there will be updated to reflect any changes.
- All changes to the schedule of assignments will be announced well in advance. No changes to due dates of assignments will be made without approval of the class.
- My office hours are available for drop-ins or appointments. I am available to meet by appointment at other times; please contact me by email: mcginnis@indiana.edu.
- The easiest ways to contact me are (1) see me before or after class, (2) by e-mail (mcginnis@indiana.edu).

During Class

- Students are expected to come to class every day and to complete assignments on time. Attendance will be taken at irregular intervals, usually at the beginning of the period. Students arriving late may not be counted.
- Class discussion is encouraged and questions are always welcomed. Don't be deterred by concern that you are asking a "stupid question." If you are confused or uncertain over some point, it is almost always the case that several other students are having the same problems or confusion. If in doubt, just raise your hand.
- Comments in class must remain respectful of other people's opinions. Be assured that this requirement applies to the instructor just as much as to any student. Please let me know if you feel any comments in class have been unfair to you or to anyone else.
- **Students are allowed to use laptops, tablets, cell phones or similar devices during class, but ONLY if they do so in a respectful manner.** These devices may be used to take notes, check readings, download course-related material from OnCourse, or even to do a quick search on a topic to support a question or comment. However, extended use of these devices to surf the web for funny cat videos or to compulsively check e-mail (or other diversions) is disrespectful of the instructor and other students. As instructor, I reserve the right to ask any student to share with the class what is on their screen at any moment, and to insist that anyone not following these restrictions turn off the offending device immediately. With a second infraction the offending student loses the right to use electronic devices in any future class session. Be advised that in courses for which an **Assistant Instructor** has been assigned, the AIs are empowered to monitor student use of electronic devices and to bring serial violators to the instructor's attention.
- Please try to arrive to class on time. Late arrivals can be very disruptive, and may not be counted as present.
- If you know you are going to have to leave class early, please let me know at the beginning of class and sit near the exit so you can leave with as little disruption as possible. If you expect to receive an important call during class time, please sit where you can exit the room without too much disruption.
- Please refrain from talking to each other during class. This can be very distracting to other students and to the instructor. (Be advised that this is one of your instructor's pet peeves!)

Grading Procedures

- Numerical grades will be assigned for each exam and major assignment. (Quizzes or in-class assignments may be graded as acceptable, not acceptable, or not submitted.) At the end of the semester, an overall score will be calculated according to the weighting scheme specified in the syllabus.

- *Final letter grades* will be assigned based on these overall average scores. In making these assignments, I use the standard numbering system (A+ 100-98, A 97-93, A- 92-90, B+ 89-88, B 87-83, B- 82-80, etc.) as a basis, but may make adjustments (upwards) as necessary. For example, an overall average of 80 will be awarded at least a grade of B-, but the threshold for that letter grade may be lowered, depending on the overall distribution.
- I am willing to *re-grade* any assignment, as long as the student can provide a compelling reason to do so. Upon re-evaluation, the grade may be revised upwards or downwards or it may remain the same, whichever is appropriate. I promise to explain my reasons for making or not making a change in grades.
- *Grades for group projects.* I typically assign a base grade to all members of the group, based on the overall quality of the report and/or presentation. I then make adjustments (up or down) in the grades assigned to individual members based on whatever additional information may be available. Relevant sources of information include my own evaluation of each student's contribution to the group's presentation in class and confidential evaluations provided by other members of the group..

Examinations

- A *study guide* will be distributed approximately a week before each scheduled exam. Unless otherwise specified, exams will be held in class with no notes allowed.
- Special circumstances may justify *late assignments or make-up exams*, but students should get permission from the instructor in advance, whenever possible.
- If students miss a *quiz or other in-class assignment*, they have until the next class period to complete that assignment, for half-credit.
- Students should notify the instructor of *reasons for absences* in advance, if possible. Absences for valid reasons (including medical emergencies and observance of religious holidays) will be excused.
- *Religious Holidays.* Students are encouraged to honor their own religious tradition by observing official holidays. For details concerning IU policies on religious holidays, please consult <http://www.indiana.edu/~deanfac/holidays.html>.
- Even for excused absences, students are encouraged to complete any assignments (if possible). These assignments typically have some pedagogical value, and we may refer to them later in the semester.
- Unless announced otherwise, the final exam will be held at the time scheduled and in the same classroom. The final exam will be comprehensive, covering all material included in this course.

Written Assignments

- On exams, papers, and other assignments, each student is expected to complete his or her own work. Students caught *cheating* on exams or committing *plagiarism* (misrepresenting someone else's work as your own) will receive a failing grade for that assignment and may be subject to additional disciplinary procedures (including failing the course). If you use the words of another, you need to give that author credit by the use of quotation marks and appropriate citations. For more information, see <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>.
- I am not a stickler for any one citation style. My primary concern is that references be sufficiently clear, unambiguous, and complete to allow a reader to track these sources down with minimal trouble. It also helps if the citations are relatively consistent within any single report. Information on acceptable citation styles is available at http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/apa_style.shtml
- *Citations to material found on-line* should include the author (or organizational source if no individual author is provided), the organization responsible for maintaining this site or for responsible for this particular information (if possible), the date the information was posted or last revised (if available), the date the website was accessed, and the complete URL address. More detailed suggestions are provided by the IU Library at <http://www.indiana.edu/~libugls/Publications/APA.html>.
- The **IU Writing Tutorial Service** is an outstanding resource for information and advice concerning writing and editing papers; check their web page at <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/>

This version revised January 6, 2015