INSTRUCTOR: Dr. John Rasp

OFFICE: 526A Lynn Business Center

PHONE: 822-7444

Please don't hesitate to call. And please don't hesitate to leave a message, if your call is answered by a machine. If I'm meeting with someone in the office when the phone rings, for reasons of courtesy I generally will not interrupt that conversation to answer the phone.

EMAIL: jrasp@stetson.edu

I check email often during the week (not weekends). This is a good way to contact me.

WEBPAGE: http://www2.stetson.edu/~jrasp/

This website contains copies of the class schedule and syllabus, as well as copies of all assignments, various datasets for class use, and other resources. Type the complete URL (as given above) into your browser – links to my page from the Stetson site may not be active. (Alternately, a Google search on “John Rasp” will generally bring this site up first.) This is a website, not Blackboard.

TEACHING SCHEDULE: I am in class at the following times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSAN 111.06</td>
<td>Intro to Business Analytics</td>
<td>MWF</td>
<td>9:00 - 9:50</td>
<td>LBC 317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 201.01</td>
<td>Intro to Business Statistics</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>12:00 - 1:15</td>
<td>LBC 319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 201.03</td>
<td>Intro to Business Statistics</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>12:00 - 1:15</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAT 390.01</td>
<td>Statistical Computing</td>
<td>T Th</td>
<td>1:00 - 2:30</td>
<td>LBC 224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 440.01</td>
<td>Forecasting</td>
<td>M W F</td>
<td>10:00 - 10:50</td>
<td>LBC 223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OFFICE HOURS: Monday/Wednesday 2:30 - 4:00

“Office hours” means that I am generally available to students during these time slots. (There may be minor exceptions, due to faculty meetings or unforeseen emergencies. I expect to give advance notice of these, if needed.) No appointment is needed or accepted during these times – these times are free to all comers. Under normal circumstances, I plan to hold official office hours in the lobby of the Lynn Business Center. Please feel free to meet with me then and there.

I am generally on campus throughout the day weekdays. I am often in my office (526A in LBC) and am available to students anytime the office door is open. I am willing to make appointments as well. I do request, as a courtesy to your fellow students, that you avoid drop-in visits immediately prior to my classes (listed above), as this time is needed for final review and preparation for class. Tuesday (except for class time) is my “research day.” I regret that I cannot generally be on campus or be available for appointments on that day.
INTEGRITY IN THE ACADEMY

“Business ethics” should not be an oxymoron. The recent financial scandals are but the latest examples of a false, and ultimately self-destructive, business ethic that values immediate monetary return above all else. The academy is in part to blame for the situation – for the academy has largely abandoned its role as a moral force in society.

Stetson University prides itself on being a values-driven institution. One way in which the university expresses this is through its Honor System. A central feature of the system is an Honor Pledge, a commitment to uphold high standards of integrity in academic work. The Pledge states:

As a member of Stetson University, I agree to uphold the highest standards of integrity in my academic work. I promise that I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid of any kind on my tests, papers, and assignments. When using the ideas, thoughts, or words of another in my work, I will always provide clear acknowledgement of the individuals and sources on which I am relying. I will avoid using fraudulent, falsified, or fabricated evidence and/or material. I will refrain from resubmitting without authorization work for one class that was obtained from work previously submitted for academic credit in another class. I will not destroy, steal, or make inaccessible any academic resource material.

By my actions any my example, I will strive to promote the ideals of honesty, responsibility, trust, fairness, and respect that are at the heart of Stetson’s Honor System.

A student Honor System Council is charged with responsibility for educating the campus community about the Honor System, and for ruling on cases of alleged academic dishonesty. Full details of the System are available online, at http://www.stetson.edu/other/honor-system/.

Both students and faculty have greater freedom and greater responsibility under an Honor System. Barring clear demonstrations to the contrary, I am willing to trust you not to cheat on exams. (I will not proctor them, but will be available for questions.) I am willing to believe that any absences are justified. (I don’t need to see “doctor’s notes” and similar paperwork.) I am willing to trust you to behave in an honorable manner, and to encourage others to act honorably. I do ask that you take reasonable steps not to place undue temptations before others. (Shield your papers during exams, for example.)

Studying from old exams is permitted (and encouraged). However, sharing information about current exams is not allowed, as this would give other students an unfair advantage. Of course, such egregious violations of academic integrity as plagiarizing a paper or looking at another student’s paper on an exam are clearly forbidden.

You are encouraged to work together on assignments in this class. However, all writeups are expected to be independent productions, in the student’s own words. Remember that collaboration is to facilitate your learning, not to excuse you from responsibility for it. Rule of thumb: if I can tell at a glance whom you worked with, then you have gone beyond the bounds of acceptable collaboration. Submitting a writeup that is identical (or nearly identical) to another student’s is considered an Honor System violation and will be referred to the Honor System Council. My normal practice will be to award an undroppable NEGATIVE grade for the first occurrence. (That is, on a 20-point assignment, you would get a grade of minus 20 points, which could not be one of the low grades dropped.) I will then refer any subsequent violation to the Honor System Council. I will normally follow any recommendations they make, regarding academic penalties.

The Stetson Honor System requests, but does not require, that you report any known or suspected violations of academic integrity. This may be done to me, or to any member of the Honor System Council. (Their names are given on the website, mentioned above.)
WHY TAKE THIS COURSE??

One question you should ask of this course, or any course you take in the university, is: “What can I expect to get out of this class?” The answer should be more than “one-half unit (two credits), and fulfilling a graduation requirement.” The college experience needs to be more than simply jumping through hoops to get a credential.

So what can you expect to get out of a course in “Introduction to Business Statistics”? The Stetson University Catalog states it rather prosaically:

This class focuses on descriptive statistics, including graphical methods, measures of central tendency and variation, probability and probability distributions, sampling distributions, and introduction to correlation and regression. Students are introduced to various statistical computer applications. This course prepares students to take STAT 301. Prerequisite: BSAN 101.

That's boring prose. And, quite frankly, it's not really intended to give you a good idea about the course. (Its purpose is more to let professional educators know what's in the class. That way we can tell whether course content is sufficient for satisfying prerequisites, granting transfer credit, and the like.)

So what should you expect to get out of this course? My primary goal is that you have an appreciation for the usefulness of statistical tools. You should come out of this class saying good things, like “that's interesting stuff” and “I see how this gets used in real life.” You should be more quantitatively literate and computer literate. You should be better able to formulate decision problems in quantitative terms. An important secondary goal is that you be better able to communicate the results of your analyses. The best technical skills in the world are of little use if you are unsuccessful in communicating your findings in a way others can understand.

This course has been designed to prepare students to take the main business statistics course, STAT 301. Hence you will learn a variety of skills and techniques that are essential for sound statistical analysis. Knowledge of these tools is crucial for success in further coursework.

However, the topics covered in this course have a great deal of value in and of themselves, independent of their preparatory value for STAT 301. Here's a (very short and very incomplete) list of issues we'll be addressing in passing, as we work our way through course material:

- why gambling systems don't work on the lottery, but do work at blackjack
- why U.S. News’ “Best Colleges” rankings are somewhat (but not completely) bogus
- why you should be very suspicious of “average income” data
- why world population is not growing as explosively as all those graphs suggest

What should you NOT expect out of this course? First, let's clear up one common misconception. “Stats” is NOT a mathematics course. This is not a class in deriving formulas and manipulating algebraic symbols. The goal is not to memorize an algorithm or to “plug numbers into a formula” to get an answer. Instead, our focus is on the reasoning behind, and interpretation of, quantitative tools. The focus is on concepts. The calculations we will do are NOT an end in themselves. Rather, they are part of an overall reasoning process that focuses on valid analysis and valid conclusions.

As for other expectations: You should NOT expect to do a lot of busy-work. You SHOULD expect to invest time into studies, and into homework that enables you to understand statistical procedures and applications. You should NOT say “I'll never use this stuff again.” You SHOULD be focused on real-world use of the material. Above all, you should NOT approach the course with a sense of worry or fear. The course does not involve advanced mathematics; nor is there an impossibly huge reading list. You SHOULD approach the course with the expectation that you will learn things that are useful and interesting – and that you will have fun while doing so.
WHAT PREPARATION SHOULD I BRING TO THIS COURSE?

PREREQUISITES: The prerequisite for this course is BSAN 101, the introductory Information Technology class. This can be satisfied either by taking the class or by passing the proficiency test.

But your previous coursework (if any) isn't important. What is important is your skill set – what you actually know, either from classes or your own study. In particular, for this course, I assume an ability to do basic mathematics, at the level of a high school Algebra II course. I also assume basic abilities in the use of a spreadsheet program (Microsoft Excel or equivalent) – how cell formulas work, use of intrinsic functions, and relative and absolute addressing.

TEXTS: There is one textbook for this course.

STATISTICS FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS, by Newbold, Carlson, and Thorne. This book is widely regarded as one of the better introductory statistics textbooks on the market today. It is written in part by Dr. Betty Thorne, a Stetson professor. Copies are available in the bookstore. I do not follow the textbook exactly. (I believe that textbooks should supplement the lectures, not provide a substitute for them.) Use of the textbook as a learning tool is encouraged. The textbook also has some supplemental software associated with it. Use of this software is optional. However, students needing and desiring an additional source of structured learning modules may find this software to be a valuable resource. This textbook is also scheduled for use in the STAT 301 course that follows this one.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS: The course also provides several supplemental readings. Some of these will be provided to you in class. We will also read the following book in its entirety. It may be purchased from the university bookstore (or another source).

HOW TO LIE WITH STATISTICS, by Darrell Huff
This short book provides delightful reading on the uses and misuses of statistical procedures in the real world.

EQUIPMENT: We'll be doing a lot of computations in this course. The class is designed to focus one use of a spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel) as a computational tool. You will want to have access to a spreadsheet for use on homework assignments. Just about any spreadsheet program will work. This includes not only Microsoft Excel but also such free open-source alternatives as OpenOffice and LibreOffice.

You may wish to have access to a scientific calculator. Some computations are just easier to do, on a calculator. By “scientific calculator” I mean one that can handle square roots, exponentiation, and logarithms, and is capable of handling numbers larger than eight digits. While use of a “real” calculator is encouraged, your cell phone is quite possibly sufficient (although you may need to download an app).

I strongly recommend that you obtain a looseleaf notebook (NOT a spiral-bound) for the course. This course involves a lot of handouts and assignments. A looseleaf notebook will help you effectively organize this material for study and reference.

If you don't already own a stapler, get one. You will want to staple multipage homework assignments for the course. Owning a stapler is more efficient than scurrying around trying to find one. You will get more longterm value out of a stapler than you will from many of the pricey textbooks you buy for other courses.
HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE COURSE OBJECTIVES?

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS: You are enrolled in the best undergraduate school of business in Florida. This means that you should come out of this course (and this university) having learned more, and being better prepared for the workplace, than your peers at other institutions. We both have a role to play in this.

You may expect me to be well-prepared for class. You may expect me to structure the class to facilitate your mastery of the material. You may expect me to be sensitive to your time needs. (I will not assign “busy work.” I will provide sufficient course structure so that you may plan appropriately.) You may expect me to be available outside of class time. You may expect me to provide you with adequate and timely feedback. Most of all, you may expect me to do what I can to make this course a successful learning experience for you.

Likewise, I may expect you to make reasonable effort at mastering the material. I may expect you to come to class prepared. I may expect you to invest the necessary time and effort into homework and studies. (Learning does not happen, after all, by my simply unscrewing the top of your head and pouring the knowledge in.)

GENERAL PRINCIPLE: It is well known that we learn by doing far more than we learn by hearing. Moreover, we remember what we do for far longer than we remember what we hear. The course is structured around this basic principle.

Most weeks, the last 25 minutes or so of the class period will consist of a lecture presentation on new material (the “hearing” part). This presentation will cover basic concepts and computations associated with some statistical topic. The first “doing” will happen in a homework assignment. This is designed to reinforce those concepts and give you practice on the basic computations. The assignment is due at the beginning of the following class.

Then in class the first 50 minutes or so will consist of an in-class activity (often, a group activity). The activity is the second “doing.” It will take the concepts and calculations which you have learned, and apply them to a real-world problem. In this way you should achieve a solid understanding of the material, and do so in a way that facilitates your long-term retention.

HOMEWORK: Most weeks you will have a homework assignment on the new material for the week. (Sometimes, the homework will be based upon an outside reading). These are always due the beginning of the following class period. LATE HOMEWORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

HOMEWORK SUBMISSION: Professional standards of communication are expected. Use standard-sized (8.5 by 11 inch or thereabouts) paper. If you are taking the paper from a spiral-bound notebook, then trim the “ruffled edge.” If the assignment involved just text-based answers, then the paper should be typed. If there is extensive computational or numerical work (which will normally be the case), then things may be neatly handwritten. Multiple pages must be stapled together. Indicate your course section (Monday or Wednesday) on your paper.

ACTIVITIES: Most weeks there will be an in-class activity on course material. The intention is that sufficiently prepared students will be able to complete the activity within the allotted time. However, if you are unable to finish things within class time, you may turn things into my office (LBC 526A), no later than 2:00 p.m. on the following day. LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. If you are unable to attend class, you may complete the activity on your own. The same deadline applies.

MISSED ASSIGNMENTS: As indicated above, homework is not accepted late in this course. However, I realize that there may be occasional circumstances where you are providentially hindered from completing class work by the deadline. Moreover, there may be rare occasions in which it is not feasible for you to come to class. As an allowance for these circumstances, you may drop grades from TWO homework assignments and TWO in-class activities.
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: These accommodations for missed assignments should be sufficient for the overwhelming number of students in the course. However, I recognize that there are rare circumstances where greater flexibility is warranted. (Examples might be a serious illness or injury.) I am willing to negotiate exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis.

PROFESSIONALISM: Professional behavior is expected of all students in the class. This includes regular, punctual classroom attendance; attentive and constructive participation in class discussion; conscientious out-of-class study habits; and neat and timely submission of class assignments. The work habits you have, or develop, in college are those you will take into the business world. Failure to abide by these norms may result in a failing grade in the class.

ATTENDANCE: You are expected to attend class during each scheduled class meeting. If you cannot, for any reason, you are expected to inform the instructor in a timely manner. Failure to do so will jeopardize your grade in the class. Generally speaking, one unexcused absence puts you in jeopardy of failing the course. Additionally, habitual tardiness or absence (even if nominally “excused”) may result in a failing grade.

PLEASE NOTE THIS, BECAUSE IT IS DIFFERENT THAT WHAT YOU EXPERIENCE IN MOST OF YOUR CLASSES.

(1) If you let me know about it in advance, it is excused no matter what the reason. I don't need to see doctor's excuses, or your grandmother's death certificate, or a note from your mom. Simply the fact that you let me know in advance that you weren't coming to class is sufficient. I suggest you contact me by email (jrasp@stetson.edu); a message left on my office phone is also sufficient (386-822-7444). If you must miss a class, I encourage you to attend one of the other sections of the class meeting that week.

(2) If you don't let me know about it in advance (and I realize it is not always feasible to do so), then I'm going to make a judgment call based upon the nature of the situation and the time in which you told me. Generally, if you let me know later in the day, and if the situation is one in which it was not reasonable to contact me ahead of time, then it will be considered “excused.” (Example: You overslept. I get an email or phone call from you two hours after class. I'll excuse that. However, if you wait two days to let me know, I probably won't excuse that … you could easily have let me know earlier.)

This policy is not intended to be harsh. Rather, it is simply intended to mirror “real-world” employment practices. Your boss will expect you at work, on time. You don't get “extra credit” for meeting this basic professional requirement; it is expected of all employees. And while you may occasionally need to miss work, you can't just come when you feel like it and you will be expected to notify the boss in a timely manner if you miss work. If you decide simply to take a couple of days off, then stroll in the next day to grace the company with your presence … well, you're not likely to be employed there for long.

TIME REQUIREMENTS: The standard expectation for a university-level class is that the student devote approximately two hours outside of class each week for every credit hour. This is a two-credit class; a semester lasts 15 weeks. This gives 60 out-of-class hours over the course of the semester. I will plan semester activities accordingly. Understand, however, that you are not on a time clock. Remember that the goal is getting an education, not putting in hours.

COLLABORATIVE WORK: We're here to learn. To that end, students are allowed, and encouraged, to work together on homework in this course. You will often learn more from working with others. However, a separate writeup is expected from each student, in his/her own words. (Do NOT submit work identical, or nearly identical, to that of another student. Collaboration is to facilitate your learning, not to excuse you from responsibility for it.)

Submitting a writeup that is identical (or nearly identical) to another student's is considered an Honor System violation and will be referred to the Honor System Council.
STUDYING FOR EXAMS: You should understand that the instructor does not believe in “studying for exams.” There are two reasons for this. The first is about the goal. College should not be about doing well on exams. It should be about learning. (If you learn, you should do well on exams. But the converse is not necessarily the case.) The second reason is about the process. If you “cram” the night before a test, the material goes into short-term memory and is quickly forgotten. This is counter-productive (and downright stupid) – we're here to learn, not to forget. However, if you've kept up with the material throughout the term (and that's what the weekly homework assignments are supposed to facilitate), you should not need a major “cram” the night before an exam. A brief review should be more than sufficient.

EXAMS: Exams are designed to assess student knowledge of course material. All exams are cumulative. You may use one standard-sized (8.5 by 11 inches, both sides) page of notes on the test, as well as a calculator and a spreadsheet. Some portion of each exam will require use of a spreadsheet.

MAKEUP EXAMS: The two in-class tests are structured in different ways, and so will have different makeup policies.

The first test (given during Week 5) is the “Basic Skills Test” (which is discussed more extensively elsewhere in this syllabus). Since you take the test until you pass it, no special provision for a makeup test is needed.

The second test (given during Week 12) is a traditionally structured exam. If you miss this test for any reason, you may take a makeup exam either (1) at noon on Friday, April 21 (Week 13), or (2) during the final exam period.

FINAL EXAM: The course has a required cumulative final examination. You must take, and pass, the final examination to receive a passing grade in the course. Both sections of the class are scheduled to take the test at the same time. This creates some logistical difficulties, as there is no way we can fit everyone in the same lab at the same time. (And we will need to use the lab, since much of the course material requires spreadsheet use.) Accordingly, I am stretching out our assigned 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. time slot, and dividing it between the two sections. The test is scheduled as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday noon section</th>
<th>Saturday, May 6</th>
<th>7:30 to 9:00 a.m.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday noon section</td>
<td>Saturday, May 6</td>
<td>9:00 to 10:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As with the regular exams, you are allowed to use one page of notes, as well as a calculator and a spreadsheet.

ACCOMODATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS: If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of a course, you should meet with me to discuss ways to ensure full participation. If disability-related accommodations are necessary, you must register with Academic Success through the Accessibility Services Center located at 209 E. Bert Fish Dr. (386-822-7127; http://www.stetson.edu/administration/academic-success/) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. The student, course instructor and Academic Success will plan how best to coordinate accommodations.

PLEASE NOTE: The above text is the boilerplate that all faculty are expected to include in syllabi. But I mean this seriously. I'm more than willing to work with you, to make this course work for you. And while I'll get an “official” notification from the Academic Success people, it will also help me immeasurably if you also briefly chat about things with me personally. This is the best way to insure that we do what needs to be done.

CAVEAT: I reserve the right to make minor modifications in the course schedule and mechanics, as the situation warrants. I will announce any such changes in class. (I don't anticipate any problems, but in today's litigation-filled world you often have to say explicitly what a reasonable person would normally simply assume implicitly.)
WHAT IS THE MOST CRUCIAL PART OF THIS COURSE?

GENERAL PRINCIPLE: All knowledge is useful. However, some things are more crucial than others. This particular course is intended (in part) to prepare students to take STAT 301, the main business statistics class. Accordingly, there is a core set of tools covered in this class that will be used extensively in further coursework. I have termed these the “Basic Skills” and have structured the early part of the course to facilitate mastery and retention of these skills.

WHAT ARE THE “BASIC SKILLS”? Everyone will come out of this with rock-solid ability to do the following basic statistical computations:

a) Computation of a standard deviation, by hand, for a small set of “nice” numbers (small integers with an integer mean).

b) Computation of a mean and standard deviation for a large set of “real” data, using spreadsheet intrinsic functions.

c) Knowledge of the “empirical rule” for normal distribution probabilities (the amount of data lying within one, two, and three standard deviations of the mean).

d) Computation of probabilities and boundaries associated with the normal distribution (both “forward” problems where we use the cutoffs to find a probability, and “backward” problems” where we use a probability to find a cutoff).

e) Computation, by hand, of the sample covariance, correlation, slope, and intercept, for a small set of “nice” numbers.

f) Computation, using spreadsheet intrinsic functions, of the sample correlation, slope, and intercept, for a large set of “real” data.

HOW WILL MASTERY OF “BASIC SKILLS” BE ASSESSED? Everyone will pass a “basic skills test” at a high level of mastery. You will keep taking the test (outside of class time, and a maximum of one time per week) until you achieve that mastery. In particular:

FIRST CHANCE. A test on the basic skills will be given in class during Week 5 (Monday, February 13 or Wednesday, February 15). A grade of 90 or higher is required. If you achieve this, you have satisfied the “Basic Skills” requirement for the class, and (regardless of your actual score) you will be credited with a grade of “100” for this portion of your course grade.

SECOND CHANCES. If you didn't show mastery of basic skills during the in-class test, you keep taking the test until you do so. You may take the test once per week, outside of normal class time. As before, a grade of 90 or higher is required. As before, computation of the course grade depends on WHEN you passed the test, not on the exact score you got.

- If you pass during Week 6, you'll be credited with a “95”.
- If you pass during Week 7, you'll be credited with a “90”.
- If you pass during Weeks 8 or 9, you'll be credited with an “85”.
- If you pass during Weeks 10 or 11, you'll be credited with an “80”.

THIRD CHANCES. We're getting toward the end of the term here. The Basic Skills test will not be given during Week 12 (since there is a regular test scheduled that week). Thereafter, you may still take the test once per week (Weeks 13, 14, and 15 of the semester), outside of normal class time. Passing grade is now an 80 or higher. And regardless of your grade, you'll be credited with a score of “70” in computing the course grade. (If it has taken this long, your mastery of basic skills is shaky at best.)

FINAL CHANCE. If you haven't passed the Basic Skills Test by the end of the course (end of Week 15), you'll be credited with 70% of your best grade, in computing your course grade. (Thus, if your best score on all your Basic Skills Test grades was a 60, in computing your course grade I'll use 70% of 60, or 42 points. If it takes all semester and you still haven't mastered the basics, then there's little warrant for high assessment of your skills in the course.)
**HOW WILL YOU BE EVALUATED IN THIS COURSE?**

**GENERAL PHILOSOPHY:** I am very much of the opinion that grades are overemphasized in contemporary academic practice. I like the following quote (which I stumbled across in a professional journal).

> It is not difficult to understand why students might come to the conclusion that instructors overly stress grade orientation and give only short shrift to learning orientation. Almost every syllabus contains descriptions of how grades are calculated; few address the need to find excitement in course material. Colleges regularly establish remedial classes for students receiving poor grades; they rarely, if ever, offer remedial instruction for students unable to find excitement in English literature or physics. Grades are a required part of every class, but instructors are not obliged to stimulate interest in course content. In fact, it is possible for someone to teach for an entire career and not excite interest in his or her discipline; any instructor who failed to assign grades would be dismissed after only a short tenure.

Howard R. Pollio and Hall P. Beck, “When the Tail Wags the Dog”  
*Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 71, no. 1 (Jan/Feb 2000), p. 93

I will grade you fairly and objectively. I will not inflate grades. I will make every effort to provide prompt feedback. And I will maintain a focus that the grade is a means (to identify strengths in learning that can be acknowledged, and deficiencies in learning that can be remedied), rather than an end.

**GRADES:** Course grades represent the instructor's assessment of the student's mastery of the material. Grades are assigned according to the following interpretive framework:

- **A** - An “A” indicates that the student has demonstrated outstanding mastery of the subject material. S/he shows a deep understanding of the material's concepts, implications, and applications.

- **B** - A “B” indicates that the student has demonstrated a good solid competence in the mechanics of the subject matter, but is weak in understanding of the underlying motivations of the material.

- **C** - A “C” indicates that the student has demonstrated basic ability in course concepts as reflected by foundational capability in calculation, but has marginal capabilities with material beyond these fundamentals.

Grades of “D” and “F” represent unacceptably low levels of course mastery, and will be assigned as required.

**GRADING:** Assessment of student mastery of course material will be on the basis of the following:

- Homework assignments 30%
- In-class activities 30%
- Two regular exams scores 20%
- Comprehensive final exam 20%

Note the special grading provision on the “Basic Skills Test”. For purposes of computing your course grade, I will not use your actual test grade. Rather, you will be assigned a certain number of points, based upon when during the semester you passed the Basic Skills Test. (Details are in the section of this syllabus that describes the test.)

A scale of 90/80/70 will be used. All course assignments and exams will be written and graded with the interpretive framework and scale given above being kept in mind.