

Late Work, Make Up, and Grading Policies

Grading System: Teachers use a variety of grading systems in their courses. The system I use is often called the "total point system." In this grading system each piece of work a student turns in for a grade is assigned a point value (5 points for a simple homework, 10 points for a quiz, 70 points for a test, 100 points for a major project, etc.). Different point values may be assigned for work in the same category depending on its length and difficulty. A student's grade at the end of a quarter is calculated by adding up the number of points she has earned for all of her work and dividing that total by the total number of possible points she could have earned with perfect scores in all assignments. Multiplying this quotient by 100 gives her average for the quarter. A student can calculate her current grade at anytime by following this procedure for work done up to that date. Below is an outline of the major categories of assignments your daughter will be assigned in my courses. Student grades and class attendance reports will be available on line at my class pages. You will need to use the student's password and student code to access this information which were sent home at the beginning of the year. This information will be updated approximately every 7 to 10 days.

Homework/Writing: The primary homework assignments for students enrolled in Ecology & Natural History will be essays and other types of writing based on readings from their texts. Students will be given a detailed syllabus of this material as we begin each unit of study. These syllabi contain the topics covered in the unit, important vocabulary, concepts, readings, and homework assignments. Students are expected to keep abreast of the class work by reading the assigned material before class. Students are encouraged to outline their readings and keep these notes in their folder. On days when no written assignment is due, students are expected to catch up on their reading and writing. In other words, **students have homework every day** whether or not there is something to pass in to me! The typical essay assignment will be worth 100 points (equivalent to a unit test) including a grade for the first draft, comments to other students' work, and the final draft.

Homework is important! Most students who fail my classes would have passed if they had done all their homework on time.

Quizzes: Most quizzes are unannounced. They are intended to encourage students to keep up with their readings and homework. Students should expect at least one quiz a cycle. These quizzes are based on recent lecture material, reading assignments, and homework. The point value of quizzes varies from 10 to 15 points. The total number of points per quarter can be worth more than a unit test.

Unit Tests: Since the primary assessment for the Ecology & Natural History class is based on the students' writing, there are no tests scheduled for this course. However, I reserve the right to schedule tests anytime I determine that the students are not participating in the class discussion, keeping up with their readings, and/or failing to take their writing assignments seriously.

Lab Reports: Students will be required to write a lab report on their work. These reports are usually due the following lab period. A rubric for writing and grading lab reports will be given to students at the beginning of the year. Each lab report will be worth 50 points. Although students work in groups during the lab, each student is expected to produce a lab report that reflects her own work and thinking.

Lab Tests: Some lab work lends itself to evaluation by testing rather than lab reports. In this case students will take a short test covering the material and concepts studied during the lab. The point value of these lab tests ranges between 20 and 40 points.

Article Summaries: During the quarter students will be required to read articles from the popular press and magazines on various topics of science. They will then write a critical summary of the article reviewing and evaluating its content. A grading rubric for these summaries will be given to students at the beginning of the year. Article summaries are worth 15 to 20 points.

Semester Projects: The traditional semester exams in this course are replaced by extensive projects that students work on in small groups and as individuals. All students are expected to participate in these semester projects including seniors. Guidelines for these projects will be posted on the class blog. The semester projects are worth 20% of the student's final grade for the year.

Late Work: Unless a student misses class because of an excused absence, all assignments are expected at the beginning of class the day they are due. Students are expected to turn in their assignments without being reminded by me. The essays and most other assignments in this course will be posted to the class blog. Work posted after the start of class on the day they are due will be considered late. Essays, lab reports, etc. will be penalized one letter grade for every school day they are turned in late beginning with the day the assignment is due. This penalty for late work applies whether or not the student's class meets. Posting comments to other students' essays is the one exception to this policy. Students depend on their classmates to promptly post comments on their work in order to write the final draft of the assignment. Therefore, students who fail to post comments by the due date will receive a zero for that portion of their grade. Extenuating circumstances will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Under no circumstances should a student leave her work on my desk, in my mailbox, with another teacher or student. Students must post their work to the class blog or, when appropriate, hand me their work to me in person. Students who fail to follow this policy are entirely responsible for any work lost, misplaced, or stolen. In such a case the work will be considered late when it is finally turned in.

Make Up Work and Snow Days: The Student/Parent Handbook outlines Fontbonne Academy's policy for making up work missed because of absences. The Science Department will implement this policy in the following manner. We realize that this policy can be an inconvenience to both students and their parents. However, it is important that students make up missed work as soon as possible with as little disruption to our extra help periods and classroom time as possible.

Make Up Policy

1. Any student who misses a test, quiz, or other work due to an excused absence must make up that work on the Tuesday afternoon following her return to school. The Science Department make ups will be held at 2:10 PM in room 204 every Tuesday.
2. The student must make arrangements for this make up with her teacher the day she returns to school.
3. Conflicts with extra curricular activities, sports practice, and work will not be considered as adequate reasons for missing the Tuesday make up date.
4. A student who cannot make up her work at this time because of extenuating circumstances must make alternative arrangements with her teacher in advance.
5. Students and their parents are responsible for making alternative transportation arrangements home after make ups.
6. A student who does not make up her work as scheduled will be subject to a failing grade for that work.

Snow Day Policy

The Science Department has the following policy with regard to the make up of work missed due to inclement weather or other unexpected school cancellations.

1. Students are expected to anticipate the cancellation of school when poor weather is predicted and bring home all study materials necessary to be prepared for class upon their return.
2. If students miss an exam, quiz, or other work due to poor weather or other conditions, they should expect to complete that work during the first class after their return.
3. If students are scheduled to take a test, quiz, or other work the day they return to school after period of canceled school days, they should expect to complete that work as scheduled.