

### Grading Methodology for MA 161

|                            |              |     |
|----------------------------|--------------|-----|
| Exam 1                     | 100          | pts |
| + Exam 2                   | 100          | pts |
| + Exam 3                   | 100          | pts |
| + Final Exam               | <u>200</u>   | pts |
| = <b>Common Exam Total</b> | 500          | pts |
|                            |              |     |
| Common Exam Total          | 500          | pts |
| + Homework                 | 100          | pts |
| + Quizzes                  | 100          | pts |
| + IMPACT Sections Only     | <u>(90)</u>  | pts |
| = <b>Overall Score</b>     | 700 (or 790) | pts |

A student's course letter grade will be determined from his/her **Overall Score**. The grade distribution will be made uniform across different sections based on the **Common Exam Totals**.

Cutoffs will be applied uniformly across all sections to the **Common Exam Totals**. The number of each course letter grade A, B, C, D (with  $\pm$ ) and F in each section will be based on the number of each grade on the **Common Exam Totals** for the students in that particular section. By ranking students within each section by **Overall Score**, the course-wide cutoffs for **Common Exam Total** are translated into section-specific cutoffs for **Overall Score**. In this way, the number of allocated grades from a common scale will determine cutoffs on the students' **Overall Scores** within each section, and grades will be assigned accordingly.

**EXAMPLE:** Suppose the course-wide **Common Exam Total** cutoffs were 450 for A, 385 for B, 310 for C, and 250 for D. Also, suppose that one particular recitation section has ten students each with a **Common Exam Total** of 450 or more, and twenty-five students each with a **Common Exam Total** between 385 and 450, etc. To assign course grades, students in that section are ranked based on **Overall Score**; the instructor then counts from the top and draws a cutoff line after the tenth student, another cutoff line after the thirty-fifth student, etc.

#### Remarks

- The use of the common exam total in assigning final grades is designed to provide uniformity across different sections under the supervisions of different recitation instructors.
- The  $\pm$  within category are determined (approximately) by the top 30% getting +, the bottom 30% getting -, and the middle no change. Students within a few points of a cutoff line may be bumped up.
- Although advisory letter grades are announced for each midterm, the **Common Exam Total** is a sum of **raw** numerical scores unadjusted in any way. The advisory cutoffs are designed to help students anticipate where they stand before the **Common Exam Total** cutoffs are assigned.
- Homework and quizzes constitute an extremely important part of the course. A poor score on either one of these categories can jeopardize students' effort towards a good grade, especially in borderline cases. On the other hand, homework and quizzes only contribute 200 points to the **Overall Score** while the exams contribute 500 points. Obviously a poor performance on the exams most likely will not be compensated by good scores on homework and quizzes.