

GRADING BENCHMARKS

The University of Michigan-Dearborn seeks to provide greater clarification as to the characteristics for each grade level. The descriptions below provide general achievement targets for each grade level.

The grading benchmarks do not establish a campus-wide mandate for faculty grading or grading outcomes. Instructors at the University of Michigan-Dearborn have the autonomy to formulate their own grading standards and system. Students should discuss and confirm with their instructor the grading system and requirements employed within their course(s).

Benchmarks ¹	Grade	Grade Point
Superior Achievement		
Outstanding	A/A+	4.0
Excellent	A-	3.7
Good Achievement		
Very Good	B+	3.3
Good	B	3.0
Generally Good	B-	2.7
Adequate Achievement		
Satisfactory	C+	2.3
Sufficient	C	2.0
Marginal	C-	1.7
Limited Achievement		
Poor	D+	1.3
Very Poor	D	1.0
Extremely Poor	D-	0.7
Inadequate Achievement		
Failure	E	0.0

¹ The University of Michigan-Dearborn has adopted the "Grade and Marking System" employed by St. Olaf College: catalog.stolaf.edu/academic-regulations-procedures/grades/

Grading Benchmark Achievement Levels

Superior Achievement (A level)

The grade of A recognizes exceptional performance and achievement that exceeds course expectations and consistently demonstrates, where applicable, many of the following characteristics:

- Thorough, deep, and mature understanding.
- Genuine comprehension, insight, and synthesis.
- Significant mastery of challenging topics and issues.
- Extensive familiarity with relevant literature and previous work.
- Highly developed communication skills.
- Thorough preparation and extensive, thoughtful class participation.
- Integration of knowledge, concepts, and principles across disciplines.
- Originality of analysis and interpretation.
- Technical competence in skills and procedures.
- Precision of ideas and clarity of expression.
- Thinking that is independent, creative, and focused.

- Understanding of nuance and subtlety.
- Consistent coherence in argument and discussion.

Students who receive the grade of A consistently demonstrate, where applicable, the ability to:

- Analyze arguments using specific examples and original sources.
- Think logically, draw inferences, and make predictions in complicated situations.
- Communicate reasoning clearly and concisely.
- Think abstractly.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in arguments, policies, and practices.
- Integrate information to draw well-founded conclusions.
- Connect course content to issues of other courses and world affairs.
- Use models appropriately; recognize their strengths and accommodate their inherent limitations.
- Foresee and evaluate consequences of proposed policies and actions.
- Use technology creatively and effectively.

Good Achievement (B level)

The grade of B recognizes work that meets course expectations and typically demonstrates, where applicable, many of the following characteristics:

- Clear understanding without much originality.
- Competent grasp of course materials and subject matter.
- Familiarity with relevant literature.
- Competence in communication skills.
- Regular preparation for and participation in class.
- Integration of course knowledge, concepts and procedures.
- Some evidence of critical and creative thought.
- Clear connections between inferences and evidence.
- Care in the use of evidence and quotations with only occasional thinness in argument, detail, or precision.

Students who receive the grade of B typically demonstrate, where applicable, the ability to:

- Extend ideas by connecting with personal experiences, reading, or world events.
- Analyze data in various forms and from varied sources.
- Utilize information to explain events, draw conclusions, and apply results.
- Present comprehensive answers in a clear and logically correct style.
- Understand and compare various models.
- Distinguish inputs from outputs, and causes from effects.
- Recognize consequences of complex interactions.
- Use technology effectively.

Adequate Achievement (C level)

The grade of C recognizes work that is sufficient to prepare for continued study in the field and generally demonstrates, where applicable, some of the following characteristics:

- Adequate grasp of course concepts.
- Partial mastery of knowledge and skills required for understanding.

- Incomplete familiarity with relevant readings or references.
- Writing that lists facts rather than develops well-reasoned arguments.
- Frequent neglect of important information.
- Partial appreciation of the meaning or implications of a question.
- Answers that are insufficiently developed.
- Minimally complete assignments with many areas for improvement.

Students who receive the grade of C generally demonstrate, where applicable, some ability to:

- Assimilate and communicate simple knowledge and procedures.
- Extend ideas by making simple inferences.
- Make connections among and draw conclusions from course concepts.
- Interpret simple information provided in various formats.
- Organize and display data in tables and graphs.
- Use technology competently.

Limited Achievement (D level)

The grade of D indicates a lack of readiness to continue in the field. Students' work usually demonstrates, where applicable, some of the following characteristics:

- Minimal understanding of the subject matter.
- Poorly developed communication skills.
- Inability to apply subject matter understanding in other contexts.
- Little evidence of critical or creative thinking.
- Lack of apparent seriousness.
- Frequent carelessness in fulfilling assignments.

Inadequate Achievement (E)

The grade of E indicates that course work is insufficient to merit academic credit. Students who receive an E usually demonstrate some of the following characteristics:

- Inadequate understanding of subject matter.
- Inadequate or inconsistent preparation.
- Frequent failure to complete assignments in a timely manner.
- Little evidence of critical thought.
- Very poor communication skills.
- Frequent misunderstanding of facts or references.
- Little or no analysis.
- Confused or incomprehensible writing.
- Little or no work offering evidence that course objectives have been met.