8.325 Grading System

Michael McNeil Forbes

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The grading system for the assignments this year will be based on an augmented letter system. Problems with well defined physical concepts and ideas will be assigned one of the following grades:

α Physical understanding seems to be correct.

β Something is wrong: some physics is not understood or incorrect, but basic idea is there.

γ Physics is wrong.

These will be augmented with $\pm$ depending on whether or not the explanation and presentation was good $(+)$ or confusing $(-)$. These are very subjective: a negative sign might mean that I am a moron and did not understand your perfectly clear explanation. In any case, I hope that these are useful by showing you what I thought was clear (i.e. if you every try to teach something like this to someone like me.) They will not affect your grade in the course.

Also note that a β^- might indicate that I think you have something wrong (hence the β) but I could simply be confused by your explanation. In this case, please come see me if you think I simply misunderstood you.

Problems with direct numerical answers etc. will be marked out of numerical points for correct results and/or mistakes. Ultimately though, these points will probably be less important than the letter grades for physical understanding.

For all results, please try to explain the physical meaning. I doubt that I will have time to go through all the results to find all of the sign errors, factors of two etc. If you can explain why your answer is physically reasonable, or why there is obviously a mistake somewhere, it will make my job much easier (and hopefully help you learn more). Also, if you have physical insights or ideas about a problem, please write them down or explain them to me so that I can learn more too: anything that I notice or learn I will try to explain in recitation or in the solutions.

Finally, as I am the only T.A. in this course, I do not have a lot of time to write up detailed solutions. Thus, I would like to use sample solutions from those that are handed in, supplemented with comments. Please let me know if you have any objections to me posting your solutions. If you do not let me know, I will assume that you do not mind.

One more things, please let me know if there is anything else I can do to help make your experience in this course as good as possible. Feel free to drop by anytime, or send me email.

Michael. Room 6-211: mforbes@lns.mit.edu