

General Test/Exam guidelines for my courses

Pete Whittington, Sept 29, 2014

The most important thing to note is that these are *guidelines only*. Any percentages listed are subject to a ± 100 range, meaning that the test/exam could end up being 100% based on lecture, or book, or lab work, or 0% (or any combination), or 100% easy, or 100% hard etc.

Question difficulty

Typically, I like to split the test into easy, medium, hard, and very hard questions in the following way:

- Easy – 50%
 - These are basic regurgitation type questions to test a minimal knowledge of the required content to pass.
 - If the test was open book, the answer would be plainly visible.
- Medium – 25%
 - These are questions designed to ensure you have a good level of knowledge with a fairly high degree of skill.
 - If the test was open book, the answer would require some thought to answer, but would be mostly available in the book/lecture notes.
- Hard – 15%
 - These are “tie the concepts together” type of questions, designed to take two or more aspects of the course to test a thorough knowledge of the material with a high degree of skill
 - Even if the test was open book, you would not be able to find the answer directly.
- Very hard – 10%
 - These are “think outside the box” type questions designed to test a thorough knowledge of the material with exceptional skill and originality.
 - Even if the test was open book, you would not be able to find the answer directly, if at all.

They are weighted like this as the wording for each difficulty correlates with the wording in the marking guidelines grid from your course syllabus (e.g., Good, 75%, “Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course” thus if you are able to answer the Easy and Medium questions, you will get a “Good” mark).

Types of questions

Generally, there will be NO multiple choice. I like short to medium length answers to explain key terms and concepts. Occasionally, there will be a long answer type question. You can absolutely expect calculation based questions, so bring a calculator. I also like to have diagrams (or have you draw diagrams) and have you explain various parts of the diagram. Unit conversions within the metric system will not be provided, nor will unit conversions for time. However, for any numbers given in imperial (e.g., inches), a conversion to metric will be given. Basic area and volume conversions (used previously in class/assignments) will not be given.

Question sources

- Lab 25%
 - These will be questions based on the material that the lab assignment tested, so there will be overlap between this category and the next two
- Book 15%
 - These will be questions solely from the textbook, generally not covered at all, or covered in a perfunctory manner.
- Lecture 60%
 - Concepts taught/explained in the lecture notes, and/or my drawings/side notes on the black/white board.

I appreciate spelling is hard while writing, so no marks for spelling will be deducted (unless I can't read it). However, grammar etc. will be evaluated and marks deducted for atrocious grammar.