Introduction

At one point or another in life, most people make a conscious decision to be successful. Perhaps this is your moment. If not, I urge you to consider that choice as one of the best you can make.

Having chosen a desire for success, you probably already know that learning is a cooperative effort. As your instructor I am committed to provide you with the opportunity to learn. You must also be committed to avail yourself of every opportunity to learn in order to receive maximum benefit. In an age of personal choice, you have many opportunities to choose wisely how you will spend your time and where you will place your effort.

Let me be clear from the beginning: The grades you earn in any of my courses are based upon demonstrated performance. Grades are not, and cannot be, based upon the amount of effort you expend, the intensity of your feelings about what you know, your employer’s reimbursement policies, or the implications to your scheduled graduation date.

What follows is a series of guidelines. If you follow these guidelines carefully you will maximize your learning in my classes. Please read the course syllabus carefully. Like this document, it also contains specific instructions you will need to be successful in the course.

Prerequisites

In this course, you will be expected (as needed) to use skills and knowledge gained from all the courses listed as prerequisites in the catalog description for this course as well as all the courses that are prerequisites for those courses. That means you may need the course texts, class notes, and equipment and parts bought for those prerequisite courses. It is possible that there has been a significant time lapse between your completion of the prerequisite courses and the beginning of this course. In fact, if you haven't already done so, now is a good time to get those materials out and review them in preparation for this course. If you did not take and pass the prerequisite courses as well as the prerequisites for those courses you should drop this course now. If you earned a low grade in one of those courses, you may want to consider repeating it before attempting to take this course. If you are a transfer student and have credit for those courses, it is possible that you will not have exactly the same knowledge as the students who took the courses at RIT. It is your responsibility to dig out the information needed to fill the holes in your knowledge in order to carry on with this course. Please contact me for suggestions about where to find the resources to do this.

Special Needs

If you have special needs as a student, the Americans with Disabilities Act section 504 guarantees that you can obtain reasonable program and academic accommodations. Unless you are already classified as deaf or hearing impaired and noted as such on the class roster, RIT policy provides for you to obtain a Disabilities Services Agreement (DSA) through RIT’s Disabilities Services Office. This will allow me to plan ahead to best serve you. Working through the Disabilities Services Office, all special needs requests and arrangements are negotiated with the student and then documented in a written DSA. A DSA will document the reasonable accommodations for which you are approved. These may include extra time on exams, special exam-taking conditions, services of a scribe, etc.). Because of the likelihood of misunderstanding in such cases, RIT policy does not have a provision for verbal arrangements apart from the written DSA. Therefore absent a valid written DSA, verbal requests for accommodations will not be
honored. Your DSA should be presented to me as soon as possible at the beginning of the course - but certainly before the first exam or other graded assignment.

Attendance in Lab and Lecture

**Lab-only courses or courses with an integrated lab component**

Attendance in lab is required and is part of the grade. You must arrive on time because there may be a short lecture or other assignment at the beginning of the period. If not, your lab team partners will have to delay work waiting for your arrival. The lab assignments are often coordinated with the associated lecture course materials. Therefore, if the labs are not performed when assigned it is possible they will be of limited educational value to you. Since lab skills are central to the engineering technology programs, unexcused absence from lab will result in an "F" grade for the course. Make up labs will only be arranged when you have some good reason to be absent and you have notified me (or the lab instructor if that is someone else) in a timely fashion. Call me or send e-mail. If that fails, leave a message with the ECT-ET department secretary.

All labs must be completed or you will receive an “F” grade for the lab. For labs that are an integrated part of a course, an “F” for the lab portion of a course will result in an “F” for the entire course even though you may have a high average in the lecture portion of the course.

**All on-campus lecture sections**

Attendance at the lecture will not usually be formally documented - but some courses state exceptions to this policy in the syllabus or course assignments file. If there is an exception to this policy, it will be stated in writing. However, I still expect you to be there on-time for every lecture, diligently taking notes, and actively participating. If, for some reason you cannot attend lecture or if you are late, it is your responsibility to get some other student's notes, thoroughly study them, and discuss the lecture with them until you understand it fully.

**Notes, Class Participation, Reading Assignments, and Homework**

It will be necessary for you to participate fully and take notes during class (or while interacting with course material in Online Learning classes) to effectively learn the course material. During class you should work along on calculations and examples as they are performed in lecture. Please have your calculator in hand and textbook open so you can actively participate in the lecture. A general objective of the course is to have you demonstrate that you understand the concepts that are foundational to using the course material. The best way to start toward that objective is to interact with the course material in class. By contrast, the objective is never to have you simply echo back homework problems, textbook examples, or class notes. You should expect exams, quizzes, and in-class questions directed to you that will require you to apply the course material in the context of solving a variety of problems. In the lecture I will usually cover the main concepts you will need to master to successfully use the course material. I will also point out concepts from the reading and homework that students have found difficult to grasp. By contrast, not all details of the assigned reading and homework material in the text will be covered in lecture. Therefore, you are expected to study the assigned reading, understand what you read, and relate what you learn to material you already know. I may also cover some principles and applications that are
not in the text – that is called “Value Added” material. You are required to know and understand those principles and applications, too.

On exams and quizzes, you will be expected to use what you have learned while reading, participating in lecture, and performing lab assignments. For most exams (not quizzes) unless otherwise stated you will be allowed to bring a single 8.5"x11" equation sheet. An “equation sheet” means it contains only “equations” so you don’t have to memorize details. An equation sheet has no worked-out problems, no graphs and no other figures – it just contains equations. Please do let me know if that is ambiguous. You can probably use your class notes and textbook to identify the important equations for your equation sheet, so the quality of your notes may be very important. If you are not a good note taker, consider contacting the RIT Learning Development Center for assistance. If you are at a distance from the RIT campus you might be able to locate another nearby resource to take a short course on effective note-taking.

During the course, assignments will include new reading from the text. It is important that you do the assigned new reading and, for best effect, discuss it with your classmates in person, by phone and/or online to make sure you understand it. This should be done when scheduled and certainly before the next lecture since the next lecture will assume that you know everything from the last lecture plus the new reading assignment. If you don’t keep up with this process diligently you will quickly fall behind and you may not be able to recover. To insure that everyone has the opportunity to understand each lecture I will usually ask at the beginning of each lecture (or chat session if applicable) if you have any questions about the last lecture. So, it is a good idea to make a running list of questions that come up during the reading. Use this list in your discussions with your classmates and bring the remaining questions to class (or the chat session) to be answered before the next lecture. If you find that you still do not understand the material, get help right away - do not wait until later in the term because it will be too late and the only option for you at that time will be to take the course over the next time it is offered.

Some Comments about Learning and Asking Questions

Sometimes when a new learner asks a question, he or she just wants a simple and plain answer. But, that is not always the best way to prepare a new learner for a professional career because a professional needs to learn how to seek out their own answers when necessary. For a new learner seeking to become a skilled professional, learning the method for answering questions is arguably as important as discovering the answer itself. So be warned. When you ask me a question, instead of giving you the answer I might try to guide you through the process of producing your own answer by asking you questions that a skilled practitioner would normally ask themselves to get to the desired answer. This is known by various names, but if you ever heard about the Socratic Method, this would be it. For the immature learner, this process can be irritating if all they care about is the short-term goal of getting a good grade. However, my long-term goal - and one that I hope you share - is for you to be able to work independently in your professional field and exceed your future (or current) employer’s expectations and experience success in your career. If you can master the method to discover answers, you may be less susceptible to downsizing, missed promotions, and low/no pay raises. You may also avoid ruining an employment opportunity for a future RIT graduate that has to overcome the bad reputation imputed to RIT by your inadequate performance. No, in case you were that naive, in society and education it is actually not just all about you.
Another objective that is important in your profession is that you be able to create solutions from incomplete information. You must learn to address complex problems that contain ambiguities. Every day as a professional in your field you will be asked to solve ill-defined problems that are not “the odd-numbered textbook problems” for which there is answer key in the back of the book. Therefore, in my classes you will often be faced with problems in need of a solution for which you may not have all the needed information at hand. You will, therefore, need to seek out appropriate resources and/or make appropriate assumptions as would a practicing professional. In my classes I try to teach you the substantive theory and practice and also try to help you learn the skills needed to identify what information is missing and how to find it or work around it.

In this course there may also be homework assignments from the textbook and sometimes you are asked in advance to hand in some of that work. You are expected to perform these assignments and compare your solutions with your classmates and with the posted answers when available. Questions about these problems will normally be answered at the beginning of each lecture. For courses with an integrated lab, or for stand-alone lab courses, a large component of homework is the work you do in preparation for the lab exercises. If you wait until the scheduled lab period to work on the assignment you are likely to miss the learning opportunity – and equally likely to get a reduced lab preparation grade. You will not be given time extensions for the lab work since performing it later will not support the lecture schedule. Late lab work is of little benefit to the learning process.

Timing and Deadlines
It is expected that the average student will need to spend around 15 hours every week working on a 4 credit hour course. For example, if there are 3 lecture hours and 2 lab hours you should expect to spend 10 or more hours each week preparing for the lecture, prelab work, and lab report. If you are a less than an “average” student it is likely that more time will be required. You must put this effort in EVERY week to be successful. If you wait until just before a test to study, you will likely be confused about the information and you will almost certainly not retain the information long enough for it to be useful in later courses.

A very important objective in your courses at RIT is learning to bear the responsibility for meeting deadlines. Deadlines are an important aspect of a professional’s work because others with interlocking tasks cannot produce results if their co-workers fail to meet deadlines. For this and other reasons, projects and assignments in my courses have deadlines. Building your skills to manage your work to meet deadlines will enhance your ability to succeed in industry. I expect all of my students to be responsible in scheduling their tasks to meet all deadlines established in this course.

Exams and Quizzes
In technical courses, generally in-class quizzes, homework assignments, and exams will be given during the term. For on-campus classes, homework assignments and exams will generally be announced at least two lecture sessions before the due date. Quizzes can occur unannounced at any time. It may be possible to negotiate a different date for the exam if a date can be found that does not impact any other student in the class. Likewise, but with much more advance notice due to the required logistics, online classes will have exam dates posted in the course materials in plenty of time to make arrangements for taking the tests. Sometimes prelab quizzes will be given at the start of lab periods. All prelab work needs to be available in your bound lab notebook at the start of lab.
Online courses will have quizzes and hand-in homework scheduled and you should anticipate something to hand in at least once each week after the course starts. Check the assignments for what and when.

Strategically, the exams and quizzes are designed to test your ability to demonstrate the principles and concepts studied in the course. Knowing how to solve a specific homework problem may not be very indicative of success on exams and quizzes unless you take the time to learn and understand the underlying principles and concepts and then develop the ability to apply them in other situations. Always ask yourself how the main principles are applied and how a skilled practitioner might use them.

A final exam may be given at the end of the term during finals week. Check the course syllabus for details. The dates of the final exam week are published by the Institute. The exact date and time of the final exam will be scheduled by the university scheduling officer around the middle of the quarter for all day sections. The schedule will be available for you to view from the Student Information System (SIS) main web page. Evening classes will take the final exam during one of the regularly scheduled class meetings that occur during final exam week. Online classes will have a schedule posted and a deadline for completion. Do not schedule personal activity during final exam week that would preclude your attendance at or completion of the final exam. RIT policy will not allow changes in the on-campus schedule and generally makeup exams will not be given. Exams and quizzes will be cumulative and may also include questions and problems that are of greater depth and complexity than on previous assessments since the final exam period allows more time for thinking.

I recommend that you reserve finals week and reading day exclusively for the goals of studying for and taking of final exams - especially since this is RIT's policy. In order to avoid distraction from these goals, it is my policy that ALL lab and lecture assignments are due and must be completed before the end of scheduled classes. If you don't have your labs and other assignments finished and handed in before the end of regular classes it is too late to submit them. Due to the need to prepare, grade and submit final course grades for my classes, I may not be available during finals week. Therefore the last day of classes will be the last scheduled time you may have to ask questions for preparation for the final. Please plan accordingly.

Professional Behavior
You are expected to act in a professional manner in the on-campus classrooms and laboratories. Where applicable, this also applies to online email or chat sessions. All students must treat everyone with respect and keep a positive attitude. Please don't do anything, say anything, or write anything that is disrespectful of others. Please don't act in a disruptive manner such as exhibiting loud behavior, playing audio equipment, engaging in physical roughhousing, or behaving in a way that causes unnecessary interruption of class or chat sessions. Also, please reserve class time for learning. If you have complaints (and don't we all?) the appropriate place and time for voicing those complaints is during my office hours – in person, by phone, or by email. It is unacceptable to use public chat sessions or class time for airing complaints and personal issues. If you have such concerns, please contact me privately so we can work out whatever human frailties we each exhibit. The rare case of persisting unprofessional or disruptive behavior will be handled by expulsion from the course or RIT judicial action as described in the university Governance Library. The even rarer cases of illegal activity by adults include a wide range of behavior that is addressed by the laws of the State of New York and federal law. Most adults realize that they are not exempt from these laws just because they are on a college campus or in a classroom. To the contrary,
some laws place more severe penalties on those behaviors while on a college campus. “This isn’t Kansas [or high school] anymore, Toto.”

Let’s talk a bit about cooperative efforts on graded assignments. For all assignments, exams, quizzes and lab projects: If you are not explicitly authorized to work in teams for the specific assignment in question and produce a collaborative work product, you are required to produce individual solutions to the problems you are asked to solve. If you are working on a collaborative project in a team then you are allowed to collaborate with your teammates to work out a solution. However, unless otherwise specified in the written assignment, for lab work and other course assignments you are required to write up your own problem solution, prelab, discussion and conclusion for each lab. By limiting yourself to only engage the material in a group setting or, worse, if you stoop to academic dishonesty, you may be able to get a good grade without creating the solution yourself. But, if you don't make the personal individual effort to fully understand the material you will probably get poor grades on the quizzes and exams. If I observe a student not contributing significantly to the team's effort in lab I will require that student to work independently for the remainder of the term. Any solutions presented by you but created by others must include a reference notation (i.e. a “citation”) giving credit to the person(s) who generated the solution. Failure to do individual work when required (otherwise known as academic dishonesty) will result in a grade reduction - at least a zero on the assignment in question but not to exclude the possibility of a grade of “F” for the course and expulsion from RIT. Academic dishonesty also includes the use of unauthorized materials on an exam or quiz. Finally, submitting fraudulent work (e.g. “fudged” lab data, modified work re-submitted for grading, and any other attempt to mislead) will be handled as academic dishonesty.

Grading
Your overall earned grade on course assessments will be adjusted to the following course grade scheme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;93%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;90%</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;87%</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;83%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;80%</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;77%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;73%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;70%</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;60%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Minimum Passing Grade</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Paraphrasing Dorothy in “The Wizard of Oz”
Partial credit on assessment problems will be given in most cases unless the particular problem states otherwise. My assessments are designed to allow you to demonstrate your comprehension of key concepts and show your ability to apply the concepts to solve problems. Students who have done a thorough job on their assignments by developing their skills and who thoroughly understand the underlying concepts will find that they do well on the tests. Others do not do well because the lack of practice has caused them to neglect the "skills" and “concepts” aspect of the lessons. When this happens, it causes many bright students in my classes to get grades lower than "A". To develop these skills and concepts may take you many hours of study and practice.

On the topic of legibility: I consider all assessments and written assignments to be professional communications from you to me. If you don't show how you arrived at the answer clearly - or if your writing is otherwise below professional standards - you will lose points on your grade to remind you of how seriously I take written communication. Furthermore, if I can't read it or follow it, it will be deemed wrong. Make no mistake - you will be heavily penalized for unreadable work.

In regards to grading: If for some reason you believe that I have made a mistake grading any assessment, I will reconsider it if the entire exam is returned to me within five working days after the date the test was returned to you. Remember that the grading reflects actual demonstration and communication of your ability to apply concepts - it is not a measure of effort or feelings you expended. If you ask for reconsideration of an exam grade, you must clearly explain to me in writing why you believe I have made a mistake. If you plan to resubmit work for re-grading, be absolutely sure you did not change anything. Changing your work and then resubmitting is fraud and will be handled like severe academic dishonesty. I will not discuss the grading of a test until you have taken it home and made sure that you understand the correct solution. Be sure that you understand the problem before you bring it back to me because I may ask you questions (in person, by phone or email) to determine your level of understanding. If, in my opinion, you do not understand the problem as well as I had assumed when I issued the partial credit I may reduce the partial credit even more. The judgment I apply to grading has been developed over years of teaching and other professional experience. My experience allows me to calibrate your grades so that a skill level of "D" means that you may have some hope of eventually being useful dealing with the course material in industry. "C" and "B" generally mean that you WILL be useful and an "A" means that you may one day provide technical leadership.

The “I” (incomplete) grade will only be awarded in cases where you can show that some extenuating circumstance out of your control has occurred AND I have agreed with the written plan you presented for making up the work to clear the incomplete “I” grade. If I don't have enough material from you at the time I turn in the course grades, or if the grade of "I" hasn't been approved by me, an F will be awarded and recorded with the registrar.

I know that you (or perhaps others on your behalf) are paying a lot of money for you to attend my classes. I have also invested heavily in technical and professional preparation to guide you through this course and I will take all reasonable measures to assure you are provided with an opportunity to learn. If you fail to follow the above guidelines carefully, all my efforts for your benefit will be in vain and you are sure not to get your money's worth. So, please take these expectations very seriously. Almost every year one or two students fail my courses because they either choose not to follow course policies or ignored these guidelines that are inherent in the objectives of this course. It is your responsibility as both an adult and
an aspiring professional to adhere to these policies without any more urging from me during the quarter. I sincerely hope “My Expectations for Your Success” will help avoid any misunderstanding about what I expect from you: The expectation that you will be successful. If you will take on the responsibility to make this happen as a true professional, it should be a rather enjoyable quarter for both of us as we get to know one another for the primary purpose of assisting you to achieve your full potential.

Toward that end, please accept my best wishes for a successful quarter.

William P Johnson, Professor
Electrical-Computer-Telecommunications Engineering Technology Department

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