

Hi everyone,

The test went very well in my opinion, and I am very pleased with the way everyone seems to be focused on learning the material they missed. Additionally, many people express appreciation for being able to make corrections and retake some of the questions. The test was longer than it should have been, and many of you indicated that this created stress and prevented you from doing as well as you might have done. I will make note of that for MT#2. Thanks for the feedback.

How are the midterm corrections going to work? Class is going to go on next week as usual. However, with 25 minutes to go Monday, I'll ask, "who wants to take question #1?" and all these people will go to the inside wall (to your left as you look at the front desk), and take the quiz again while the others continue doing what they wish. This will allow you to have considerably more time with each question than on the original midterm. My original plan was to allow people to make up questions only for a "B" or lower. However, I realized that time was a factor for many students, and so for this MT1, I'm allowing many students to retake questions for an "A".

Some students ask for additional practice problems. I've posted access to more problems on the main website.

The evaluation process was interesting for me. I initially graded each question A, B, C, D, F, and some of you see 4 grades on the front of your test scribbled out. I was planning on averaging them for a final grade when it occurred to me that doing so was just imposing my habituation from numerical. And how do you average letter grades? And then I looked at the syllabus and wondered how I could average "consistently". It didn't make sense. This is the first time I've graded this way, and I see myself learning at a ferocious pace.

Some students have expressed that they think I don't want them to ask me questions. I have to inquire myself how I feel, because it's not clear to me. There are many different kinds of questions I receive: physics concept clarification (why?), computational (how?) procedural clarification (like if calculators are allowed – they are), requests. There's also questions to me in front of the class, alone, or from a group – so there's a wide variety of questions and environments. I'm very protective of time – your time to be precise. I want to use our precious 50 minutes to our best advantage - and usually I think that this is with you working and talking in groups. When there's a question, I habitually evaluate if this is something I should discuss as a class, or defer it. Additionally, I think it is in the student's best interest to solve a question by themselves, or with a group, or wrestle with it before the answer is illuminated. This way the path to the answer may be better recalled than when provided by "the instructor". So, for a number of reasons, I may not immediately answer a question – and I may look kind of confused myself because I'm not sure exactly how to respond. I imagine that this can be confusing, frustrating, and it may seem as though I don't care, or that I don't want you to learn. This is certainly not the case. I think that the pondering, the arguing, the confusion *is* the learning, and I don't want to stop this learning process with an authoritative "truth". So, I don't want to answer a question as soon as it presents itself to you, but only after you've thought about it and discussed it. It's not that I think it's below me to be there to immediately answer a question, it's because I think that you're best served through thought and discussion. If the group needs help, or if I see an opportunity to engage the class with something that is ripe for discussion, that's when I think it's the best time for me to illuminate a new thought or strategy.

Thanks, Pete

"I enjoy the talking time you give us in class because my peers are smart and we always enjoy working together."