

## Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures Grading Practices

The Slavic Department is committed to transparency and fairness in all its grading practices. The following serves as a general guide to grading practices for participation in precepts and seminars, major assignments in courses (papers and class exams), independent work and departmental exams, and language courses. We advise that students pay close attention to the requirements and guidelines for each course.

### Precept and Seminar Participation

As a small department with small courses, participation and attendance in all seminars and precepts is a key to success.

A student receiving a grade in the “**A**” range for participation in precepts or seminars not only attends every class, but also comes prepared to discuss all assigned readings with relevant questions in mind. These discussants respectfully engage fellow students and consistently elevate the level of discussion.

A student receiving a grade in the “**B**” range for participation in discussion in precepts or seminars does not always come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings. A 'B' discussant may consistently wait passively for other students to raise issues. Some participants in this category, while courteous and articulate, do not adequately listen to other participants or relate their comments to the direction of the conversation. A student with one or two unexcused absences may still receive a B for participation.

A student receiving a grade in the “**C**” range for discussion in precepts or seminars may attend regularly but is an infrequent, inattentive, or unwilling participant in discussion. A student with a significant number of unexcused absences from precept or seminar may receive a C.

A student who fails to attend precepts or seminars regularly and is not adequately prepared for discussion risks the grade of **D** or **F**.

### Papers and Exams

An **A** or **A-** thesis, paper, or exam meets highest expectations. Clearly written and well-organized, it formulates a compelling and original argument. It will demonstrate a mastery over its subject material with close attention to original source material, historical context, literary criticism and theory, and in the case of a course, to lectures and discussion topics. Where applicable, it will also demonstrate a mastery of text in the original target language.

A **B+** or **B** thesis, paper, or exam successfully meets expectations. It will contain many of the same features as A-level work but may fall short in one or more areas, including its organization; clarity of writing; use of evidence, theory, and/or criticism; or the formulation and presentation of an original argument. It may also contain some proofreading errors, and errors in target language interpretation and usage. A **B-** thesis, paper, or exam demonstrates a reasonable command of a course or subject and is considered more than adequate. It may demonstrate a strong grasp of the subject matter and context but also contain significant weaknesses in writing, proofreading, argument, organization, use of evidence, and grasp of target language.

A **C+** or **C** thesis, paper, or exam is considered acceptable and meets the basic standards for a course. Work in the C-range relies primarily on summary and recitation of information, and does not offer an original reading or synthesis of the subject material. It may also contain many factual errors, unclear writing, poor organization, inadequate research, and/or little or no understanding of the target language material. A **C-**, while still considered acceptable, falls short of meeting basic standards for undergraduate work.

A **D** thesis, paper, or exam demonstrates serious deficiencies or severe flaws in the student's command of course and subject material. It is the lowest passing grade.

An **F** thesis, paper, or exam demonstrates no competence for the assignment, exam, or course. It indicates a student's neglect, lack of effort in the course, failure to complete an assignment, and/or the submission of work that is not one's own.

Note on incorporation of original (Slavic) language citations: All citations should appear in the original language and in translation. In some instances, published translations are acceptable; this should be discussed early on with the advisor. However, even if a published translation is cited, it is the student's responsibility to check its accuracy. Students are asked to take extra care in their incorporation of Russian, Polish, Czech, Bosnian, Croatian and/or Serbian, language. If quotations consistently contain typographical errors, the grade will be lowered.

All Internet translation services, including Google Translate, are regarded as plagiarism and are therefore a violation of Princeton's Honor Code.

Slavic Department majors should consult the "Guide to Independent Work" for more detailed guide to thesis expectations

## Language Courses and Exams

An **A** or **A-** exam or course grade reflects mastery of all aspects of course material, including a subtle understanding of challenging grammar topics (such as syntax and aspect) and morphology (case endings and verb conjugations), and, at the introductory level, painstaking attention to orthography and pronunciation. Furthermore, students in this grade range demonstrate a creative ability to express themselves smoothly and effectively within the limits of the grammar and vocabulary learned to date, both orally (with almost no noticeable accent) and in writing. They attend class regularly and contribute in an enthusiastic and constructive manner. Typically, an **A-** exam includes more frequent minor errors (for example, spelling errors) and, occasionally, a minor lapse in understanding of the grammar (syntax, morphology, aspect, etc.).

A **B+** or **B** exam or course grade reflects a sound command of all aspects of course material, despite more frequent morphological and orthographical errors, as well as limited misunderstanding of the finer points of such grammar topics as syntax, tense and aspect. The student's spoken language, while expressive, may involve the occasional grammatical mistake (missed endings, problems with subject-verb agreement, etc.) and is often marked by an uneven pace. A **B-** exam or course grade, while demonstrating the same overall level of understanding, reflects more frequent errors of the kinds described above.

A **C+** or **C** exam or course grade reflects an acceptable understanding of course material. In addition to more frequent grammatical errors (morphology, case usage, subject-verb agreement, etc.) and a general lack of attention to detail (spelling in particular), students in this grade range often show more systematic misunderstandings of such grammar topics as aspect, verbs of motion, and case usage. While capable of maintaining an acceptably coherent conversation in the language, students at this level often speak at a highly uneven pace, with a number of grammatical errors, awkward pauses, and failures to understand their interlocutor. Quite often, the performance of students in this range reflects uneven class attendance. A **C-** exam or course grade, while still acceptable, falls short of basic expectations.

A **D** exam or course grade demonstrates serious deficiencies or severe flaws in the student's command of course and subject material. It is the lowest passing grade.

An **F** exam or course grade demonstrates a total lack of competence in the language as covered to date. It indicates a student's neglect, lack of effort in the course, and/or failure to complete assignments.