



Great Oak Chemistry Prep-Tests

At Great Oak we want you to succeed and we're going to do everything possible to help you do so. Sometimes a little "tough love" is needed. Our experience indicates that often students do not take advantage of the study and review opportunities (aka homework). Sometimes it gets skipped and sometimes it merely gets copied. Unfortunately, this means your test performance may suffer. You may start to fall behind, get further discouraged and fall further behind. We want to help you avoid this (and we are going to help you avoid this!). We are going to reduce your homework load, but we are also going to make it much more meaningful.

Here is how it will work:

Each chapter will be assessed by mainly by a combination of lab work, prep-tests and tests. Other assignments will be given also. Rather than giving you a lot of book-work problems we will give you a "prep-test" assignment. This contains questions very similar to those you will have on the corresponding test. You will have usually one to two weeks to work on these problems. You may use your book, notes, ask us for help, come to tutoring, etc. You will receive a grade for this assignment.

Now, here comes the fun part:

Your corresponding test grade will be affected by your prep-test grade. Your test grade could remain the same, it could go up, or it could go down. It depends on your diligence in completing the prep-test assignment. Here are the rules: If there is more than a 20% variance (up or down) between the prep-test and the test grades, we will subtract half that variance above 20% from your test grade. For example, if you had a 28% variance and scored 72% on the test we would reduce your test grade by 4% (28% - 20% and then divided by 2 = 4%) so that your test score would be 68%.

On the other hand, if your variance was less than 10% then your test grade would increase 5%. In the previous example, your test score would increase from 72% to 77%. There is no grade change for a variance between 10% and 20%.

Why are we doing this?

Our experience has shown that students who diligently work on the prep-test and take advantage of the resources we offer will have a variance less than 20%. Students who copy work, ignore the assignment, etc. will have a variance greater than 20%. We want to reward students who are using the skills necessary to be successful in life (as well as this class) and we want to use "tough love" to encourage students not using those skills to start using them. We have also found that this reduces your overall homework load and increases overall success rate in chemistry.