Maxwell's Grading Tips for Lab Assignments/Projects

What is a *B*+ lab?

An *B*+ lab contains all of the pieces set out in the assignment description:

- Programs/design documents clearly written & organized
- Example program output, or a demonstration that the design worked as expected
- A concise and well-written abstract of the lab work
- A concise and well-written description of the problem and the design process
- A concise and well-written description of any problem(s) you had and your solution(s)
- A concise and well-written discussion on whether your circuit worked and how you determined whether it worked correctly.
- A brief section on what you learned and how the lab could be better

The meaning of "concise and well-written"

This phrase, to me, means that you say as much as you need to say and no more. Narrative prose is not really appropriate for a lab write-up. I need to know what you did, and how you did it, and I need enough information to determine a grade. I don't really need to know how long you struggled with a particular aspect of the assignment (although this might be appropriate when writing about how the lab might better, if you think something could be improved). The "well-written" aspect has three components to it: comprehensibility, grammar, and spelling. I need to understand what it is you are trying to say, and good grammar and spelling are part of that equation. Good writing is worth up to half a grade plus or minus.

What is an *A* lab?

An *A* lab contains all the pieces of a *B*+ lab, but with additional extensions to the lab work. The flavor of *A* is determined by both the quality of the overall write-up and the difficulty of the extension(s). For me to give credit for any extensions, the lab write-up must tell me about them. Therefore, in addition to the components listed above, the *A* lab write-up must include:

- A concise and well-written section describing the extension(s) or improvement(s).
- Programs/design documents for the extension(s), clearly written & organized
- Example program output or demonstration of functionality for the extension(s).

What is a *B* lab?

A *B* lab is usually not as well organized or well-written as a *B*+ lab, although it will usually contain similar actual work (program/code/design elements). A very well-written report describing lab work that is close to complete may receive a *B*-.

What is a *C* lab?

A *C* grade generally means the lab group has not completed all of the required work, or that their program/design does not work correctly. The flavor of *C* depends upon the amount of work completed and the quality of the write-up (although write-ups are much more difficult when your program/design is not working).

What is a *D* or *F* lab?

A *D* grade generally means the lab group has completed some of the work and turned in a minimal description of the work they did. To receive an *F*, a lab group must do little or no work and may or may not turn in anything resembling a write-up.