

## **Optional: Final Grade Extra Credit**

Here is an opportunity to get **5% added to your final course grade**. That's right, whatever your total grade is after the final exam, you can add up to five full percent to that total.

Of course, it's not going to be easy...

The assignment is to **write a 5 page paper about linear algebra**. How it is developed, why it works, some of the difficult concepts of it, what it is used for, etc.

You've probably never written a paper about math, and I've never graded one, either. I want you to impress me. I will allow for freedom of creativity, but I do expect a well-thought-out manuscript, demonstrating an overall grasp of the subject matter. Displaying some computations or illustrations can be useful, but it needs to be a readable essay, not just a long list of computations.

The paper must be typed, double spaced, 12-pt font, with 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch margins. You must have at least one word on the sixth page, but no seventh page. An excellent paper should probably have 8-10 pages of material cut down concisely to fit in 6 pages. If it feels like you are stretching to get to the minimum length, you will receive less credit. Please print 2-sided (and of course staple). Therefore, every document will have exactly 3 sheets of paper.

If you do not have time to thoroughly pursue this assignment, then please don't do it. A thrown-together rehash of the textbook will receive no extra credit. What will get full credit is an insightful piece of work, perhaps with outside research used, perhaps with clever applications, perhaps with enlightening historical references. Outside references are not necessary for full credit. It is up to you. If you have an idea for a paper that doesn't seem to fit what's described here, ask me about it. You may discuss general ideas with other students, but not collaborate specifically. It must be written in your own words. If I feel like your paper demonstrates a solid grasp of linear algebra, you will receive the full 5% bonus.

**Due:** The next-to-last day of class, Wednesday, December 6th.