

Math 235 Policy Information

Fall 2010

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Class Times

Section 11: MWF 10:10–11:00 in Roop 105 and Th 11:00–12:15 in Roop 129.

Section 14: MWF 11:15–12:05 in Roop 105 and Th 11:00–12:15 in Roop 129.

Office Hours

MWF 2:00-3:00 in Roop 123, or by appointment, or by IM/email discussion, or whenever you can catch me. I will not be available on Tuesdays.

Textbook

Taalman/Kohn Calculus, softcover custom book published by W.H. Freeman and available for about \$20 at the JMU bookstore. Please note that this is a different text than the one that is used in some other sections of Math 235. If you go on to Math 236 with Taalman or Kohn then you will buy another inexpensive softcover custom book for that course. If you go on to Math 236 with a different instructor then you will have to buy the three-semester book for their course.

Structure of Class

You are expected to carefully read and think about each section of the textbook *before* the class period in which it is covered, as listed on the Syllabus. Each MWF class day will begin with a reading quiz to test your understanding of the section. The remainder of the class hour will be a lecture/discussion with breaks for you to work with a partner on various questions and examples. You will choose your class partner in the first week and keep that partner for the entire semester or until I call for a change of partners.

On Thursdays we will meet in a larger room with both sections of the course combined. I will assign groups of four students consisting of two partner pairs, one from each section. These groups will change each week. Class will begin with a quiz that you take with your group. I will ask challenging questions and expect very good work on these quizzes since there will be four of you working together to answer the problems. The remainder of the Thursday class will be a problems day, sometimes with me doing problems at the board for the entire class, and sometimes with groups working on problems around the room at various blackboards. You may stay for as much or as little of the problems portion of the Thursday classes as you like.

Grades

There will be numerous reading quizzes worth 2 points each, ten quizzes worth 20 points each, three in-class tests worth 100 points each, and one cumulative final exam worth 200 points. Homework will not be collected except as part of your class Notebook; see the Notebook Guidelines for more information.

At the end of the course you will get the grade that you earn based on your level of performance and understanding. I do not use a predetermined scale. Your grades will not be on Blackboard and it will not be possible for you to approximate your grade numerically throughout the semester. I am happy to discuss your performance in the class with you at any time. Your final course grade will be determined from your performance levels, statistical methods, the class average, and historical class averages. I reserve the right to decide borderline grades based on factors such as participation, effort, and improvement.

Absences

You do not need to notify me about missing MWF class days. If you miss class it is your responsibility to get notes and announcements from your partner or another classmate. Reading quizzes cannot be made up, but missing one or two will not hurt your grade. If you will be absent for a prolonged period of time then you should let me know, and provide documentation.

All quizzes and tests are on Thursdays, beginning at the start of the class period. I do not give make-up quizzes or tests. If you have a problem with a quiz or test date please notify me beforehand. If an emergency causes you to miss a quiz or an test, you should contact me and explain your situation. My sympathy with your plight will be determined by how quickly you contact me.

Technology

A graphing calculator is recommended for this course, but not required. However, calculators will not be allowed on most quizzes and exams. Any Texas Instruments graphing calculator is probably fine, as are many others. As a free alternative you might consider learning how to use the website www.wolframalpha.com, which is an online tool that can do much more than a standard graphing calculator, including symbolic differentiation and integration, with steps explained. Cell phones may not be used as calculators or clocks or in any capacity during tests or class.

Honor Code

I completely support and encourage working together in groups on homework assignments outside of class. Having said that, I take the Honor Code very seriously, so you should know the difference between collaboration and academic dishonesty. This is sometimes a subtle distinction and it can vary from classroom to classroom. For example, in my class it is *not* cheating to work together and each write up your own answers in your Notebooks. On the other hand, it *would* be considered cheating for you to copy problems into your Notebook from a friend the night before an exam, or to hide old exams or printouts in your Notebook without writing them in your own hand. In my class it would *not* be considered cheating to consult www.wolframalpha.com to help figure out how to solve a problem and to put that in your Notebook, because in my class homework is just a learning tool and is not collected for a grade. Of course, it *would* be considered cheating for one group to help another during a quiz, or for one group to eavesdrop on another during a quiz to get answers, or for a student to look at another student's test paper, or for a student to gain information about exam problems in advance. Any instances of suspected cheating or academic dishonesty will be referred to the JMU Honor Board for investigation.

Getting Help

The Science/Math Learning Center in Roop 200 is open 10–8 MTuWTh, 10–2 F, and 5–8 pm Sat. The SMLC should be your first line of defense when working out homework problems. Many students just choose to do their homework in the SMLC all the time, so that help is always available when they need it.

I also recommend working as much as possible with other people when doing homework. Students who attend regular study/homework groups tend to do better on quizzes and tests, and thus in the course as a whole. You will be independently deciding how much homework to put into your Notebooks, and a group atmosphere can motivate you to do more work than you might do if you attempted it stuck in your room by yourself. There is blackboard space in Roop 119 and Roop 103 and in many other places on campus, including study and group working spaces in the libraries. Discussing mathematics out loud will significantly increase your understanding.

I also encourage you to ask me questions by instant message or email at any time, and to visit me during my office hours or by appointment. I can usually respond quickly to IM and email. I almost never check my office phone voicemail, but that phone number is a good tool to check if I am in my office if you are thinking of stopping by outside of my office hours.