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**Office Hours**

Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30–3:30, or by appointment.

**Class Times**

Section 01: MWF 1:25–2:15 in Burruss 034.

**Textbook***A First Course in Abstract Algebra*, by John B. Fraleigh, Seventh Edition (Addison Wesley).**Class Website**

www.math.jmu.edu/~taal/430\_2004f.html. Material will be posted throughout the semester.

**Grades**

Your grade for the course will be determined based on your performance on the assignments and exams listed in the table below.

Definition Quizzes	5 pts each	×40	200 pts
Take-Home Tests	100 pts each	×3	300 pts
In-Class Tests	100 pts each	×3	300 pts
Final Exam	200 pts	×1	200 pts

I will use statistics to give you a letter grade for the course based on your numerical average. Please note that I do *not* use an arbitrary, meaningless predetermined scale such as 90=A, 80=B, etc. In addition, your class participation could change your course grade by as much as a third of a letter grade (for example, from C+ to B–, or from B– to C+).

The last day to withdraw from the course with a W is Thursday, October 21. After that day, assignment of WP or WF is solely at the discretion of the instructor. I will give grades of WP or WF if requested on or before Friday, November 12. ***After that day I will NOT assign grades of WP or WF; you will have to accept your earned grade. Also, I will only assign a grade of WP if your earned grade is a C or better.***

**Structure of the Class Hour**

- There are two days on the syllabus for every section of the book. The first day will be a lecture. The second day will be a discussion of some of the harder concepts and homework problems.
- You will be expected to read the material in each section outside of class, preferably *before* the lecture for that section, and then a second time *after*. Lectures will not cover all of the material in the textbook, and will be more of an overview of the section being covered. Effectively reading, understanding, and learning from the textbook may be the most challenging part of this course for you if you have not taken a class like this before.
- On “discussion” days you may be asked to go to the board to present solutions, or to be the leader in solving a problem. Sometimes I will be the one at the board, taking suggestions as to how to proceed from the class. One major goal of discussion days is to get *you* to talk through the material, so you are going to be put on the spot a lot! Be sure you have worked through – or at least attempted – the homework problems *before* these discussions. Your participation in discussion days will be a part of your grade for the course.
- Please bring your book with you to class on every “Discussion” day. You do not need to bring your book to class on “Lecture” days.

## Homework

- On the syllabus, homework problems are listed according to the day that they are assigned.
- Homework will *not* be collected. However, your performance during discussion days will most likely depend on the amount of time you spend on the homework. Moreover, the in-class tests will include many of these homework problems.
- I encourage you to work together on the homework assignments, and to talk about mathematics as much as possible.

## Definition Quizzes

- At the beginning of almost every class there will be a short Definition Quiz worth 5 points.
- Terms for the Definition Quizzes will be chosen randomly from the list of Definition Quiz Terms, available at [www.math.jmu.edu/~vanwyk/courses/430/defs.html](http://www.math.jmu.edu/~vanwyk/courses/430/defs.html).
- I will drop your three lowest Definition Quiz scores. This means you can miss up to three Definition Quizzes without penalty.
- ***You cannot make up missed Definition Quizzes.*** Note that if you come to class late you will miss the Definition Quiz for that day.

## Take-Home Tests

- Each of the three Take-Home Tests will be handed out on a Friday two weeks before their due date. Each Take-Home Test is due at the beginning of class on the day of the corresponding In-Class Test.
- The Take-Home Tests will be challenging, and will often ask you to extend your thinking past what is in the homework and in the book.
- You may ask me questions about what is on the Take-Home Tests, but I may or may not answer completely.
- ***For the Take-Home Tests, no written information may be exchanged between students.*** You may discuss strategies out loud with each other, but only if no written information is shared in any way. Talk to each other without pens, pencils, etc, and then walk away. Do not show another student anything you have written. Do not look at anything another student has written. You may not discuss the Take-Home Tests with anyone besides current 430 instructors and students. If this is unclear, ask me to explain further. If you violate these rules you may end up talking to the Honor Council (see below).
- ***If I there is even the slightest suspicion that you might have cheated, I will hand over any evidence I have to the Honor Council and let them deal with you.*** This is not personal. It is for your protection and mine. I absolutely will not tolerate any cheating on the Take-Home Tests.
- ***I will not accept late Take-Home Tests.*** I will, however, accept them early. Contact me as soon as possible if you have an emergency or special situation. (Note: I mean CONTACT me, don't just TRY to contact me.)

## In-Class Tests

- The In-Class Tests will consist mostly of definitions, theorems, and concepts from the reading, proofs of theorems covered in class or in the reading, and homework problems. In general they will be more straightforward (“easier”) than the Take-Home Tests.
- Obviously you should not cheat on the In-Class Tests either. No “crib sheets,” notes, calculators, books, assistance, or material of any kind is permitted during the In-Class Tests.

- ***I do not give make-up In-Class Tests.*** Look at the test days on the syllabus NOW, and see me right away if you think you may miss an exam. If you miss an exam and have not spoken with me in advance, you should contact me immediately. (Note: Again I mean CONTACT me, don't just TRY to.)

### Getting Help

- Note that you can reach me in my office, by email, over IM, and by phone.
- For time-sensitive matters please feel free to call me at my home phone any day of the week (including weekends) until midnight.
- I do usually check email multiple times a day. I'm often available through IM in the evenings. I am not usually at my office phone.
- If you don't reach me the first time you try, please try again.

### Random Advice

- You can drop this course before Friday, August 27 without any record on your transcript. Carefully evaluate your position and ability in this course before this date, especially if you have not yet taken or are concurrently taking Math 310, 312, or 315.
- Do not fall behind in this class. If you do, it may be impossible for you to catch up.
- Come to class on time and ready for the definition quizzes. Notice that the points from the definition quizzes add up to as many points as the final exam!
- Read the book carefully and make sure you understand the material and how it is developed. If you do not read the book you will quickly become very lost in this class.
- Be sure that you know basic definitions, examples, counterexamples, and theorem statements. Such things are the heart of mathematics.
- Math is about *understanding*, not memorizing; if you are memorizing a lot of things you may be studying the wrong way.
- Do homework problems as soon as possible after class. Work in groups and discuss the mathematics out loud! Although homework problems are not collected, the amount of time you spend working on homework problems may be the most significant predictor of your grade in this class!
- Don't forget that your participation on discussion days counts towards your grade. Be prepared and ready to discuss the material and homework problems.
- Start working on the Take-Home Tests as soon as possible. If you wait until the last minute you will not be able to finish in time!
- Start reviewing for the In-Class Tests days or weeks before the exam day (cramming just doesn't work in upper-level mathematics).
- Notice that each Take-Home Test is due on the SAME DAY as the corresponding In-Class Test. Prepare accordingly and give yourself enough time to both complete the Take-Home Test and prepare for the In-Class Test.
- Please participate in class! Ask lots of questions!! It makes class more interesting, forces me to slow down a bit, and helps the other students in the class. The point of lecture is for me to help you learn, not for me to bore and confuse you to death.
- It is my job to help you learn the material any way I can. However, ultimately it is *your* job to learn the material. Take responsibility for your learning!! That means take the time to actually think about the material and seek help when you need it.
- Stay in touch with me; let me know if you are having problems in or out of class. I am always happy to talk to you about any issue.