
Instructor: Dr. Laura Taalman
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Class Times

Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30–4:45 in Burruss 033.

Office Hours

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30–3:30, or by appointment, in Burruss 127.

Textbook*A First Course in Abstract Algebra*, by John B. Fraleigh, Seventh Edition (Addison Wesley).**Class Website**www.math.jmu.edu/~taal/430_2005.html**Grades**

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

Daily Quizzes	10 pts each	× 26	260 pts
Take-Home Tests	100 pts each	× 4	400 pts
Final Exam	200 pts	× 1	200 pts

Total: 860 pts

I will use statistics and common sense to give you a letter grade for the course based on your numerical average. Please note that I do *not* use an arbitrary 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+).

Structure of the Class Hour

- You are expected to read the material in each section *before* the lecture for that section. Lectures will not cover all of the material in the reading, 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.
- Every third day of class will be a “discussion” day where we will talk about the material from the previous two sections. You may be asked to go to the board to present solutions, or to be the leader in solving a problem. Be sure you have worked through the homework problems *before* these discussions. Your participation on 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 final exam will be based largely on these homework problems.
- I encourage you to work together on the homework assignments, and to talk about mathematics as much as possible. Get a study group together *now*.

Daily Quizzes

- At the beginning of almost every class there will be a short Daily Quiz worth 10 points.
- Daily Quizzes will be based on the reading for the section we will be covering that day (see the course syllabus). Most of the time the Daily Quiz will ask you to give a mathematical definition, state a theorem, or give examples or non-examples of mathematical things. You will get one point on the Daily Quiz just for being in class for the quiz.
- Notice that the Daily Quizzes together are worth more than the final exam for the course. Take these quizzes seriously!
- ***You cannot make up missed Daily Quizzes.*** Note that if you come to class late you will miss the Definition Quiz for that day. However, I will drop your three lowest Daily Quiz scores; this means you can miss up to three Daily Quizzes without penalty.

Take-Home Tests

- Each of the four Take-Home Tests will be handed out on a Thursday three weeks before their due date. Each Take-Home Test is due at the *beginning* of class on the day that it is due (see the syllabus).
- 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.
- I strongly encourage you to ask me questions about the Take-Home Tests. Please don't wait until the last week to ask me questions or there may not be time for you to complete the test properly.
- ***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. Do not get outside help. 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 even slightly suspect academic dishonesty, 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.)

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 leave me a phone message at home or the office, I probably won't hear it for a few days, so try again.
- It will be difficult for me to see you outside of my scheduled office hours, since I have a very young baby at home to take care of. Here are some pictures of my new son Calvin Grey Riley:

