

MAT-321 Spring 2020

2nd Half Policies

My Philosophy

MAT-321 is a content heavy course, by which I mean that most of the learning goals revolve around learning specific content. As such, we absolutely must get through a set amount of material before the end of the semester.

Having the self motivation and discipline to work independently from home is very difficult for humans when conditions are good, let alone when the world around you is pretty much a dumpster fire. Most of us will likely be craving structure in our lives and clear goals we can work towards. I will, therefore, continue to set explicit deadlines for each homework, and enforce homework and exam deadlines. I anticipate this will be beneficial for almost all of you.

That being said, these are very strange and difficult times. If anything comes up which makes it hard for you to keep up with the work in this class (e.g., illness, travel home, or family obligations), let me know and I can work with you to make another plan.

We are all going to have to deal with unexpected interruptions, technology not working right, and just generally bad days. **It's imperative that you keep up good communication with me if you run into issues or have questions.**

One note on the S/D/F option. Generally, I see no down side to choosing this option if you would like to remove a bit of stress from your life. That said, there is no way to "sort of" learn advanced math. You will still need to put in the hours of deep thinking to keep up with the class content. Please do not become complacent.

Basic Structure

I have roughly split the content for the rest of the semester into two sessions per week. I will host hour long conversations on WebEx (see Technology section) on Mondays and Wednesdays at 1 PM Grinnell time (our regularly scheduled class time). I will also have the alternate times of Tuesday/Thursday 8:30-9:30 AM to go over the same content again, particularly for those of you in Asia. Monday and Tuesday will be the same content and roughly half of what we should cover in a week, and then Wednesday and Thursday will be the other half of the content.

As with the class so far this semester, you are not required to attend any particular session, but I would highly encourage you to attend as many as you possibly can (one each from the M/T and W/Th pairs).

The class webpage has a tentative schedule for the rest of the semester (currently grey color font). Reading the book ahead of time becomes absolutely essential at this point. I will not be lecturing during our sessions, but I will discuss questions you have (some of which you will post beforehand --see below on participation), and talk with you through some of the proofs and ideas of the reading for that day. I have a tablet which I can draw on with the screen projected to you through WebEx. So I will be able to draw pictures, point out alternative proofs, etc.

Office Hours

I will have a few "drop in" office hours on WebEx each week. These will be "open" meetings where I am happy to discuss any algebra content and you may join or leave the meeting at any time. They will be Wednesdays 9-10 AM, Thursdays 11:30-12:30 PM, and Fridays 10-11 AM. The link for these will be on PWeb.

If you would like to talk to me about something privately (like grades for example) email me and we will set up a time to talk one-on-one on WebEx.

Grading

The percentage each type of grade is worth will remain unchanged. However there are some changes in the details.

PARTICIPATION

Instead of emailing me questions before the class session, you will post questions you have to the "Class Discussion" tab on PWeb. This is a system called Piazza. You can (and should) anonymously post, but I will still be able to see your name. You should not post questions about how to solve homework problems there, those should be emailed to me or come to office hours.

HOMEWORK

Homeworks will still be due on PWeb every Friday (except for the week of the exam) by 7 PM Grinnell time (UTC-5) I highly recommend you learn to LaTeX (if you haven't already). Otherwise you will need to scan your homework in **black and white into one .pdf file** and then submit it via PWeb. See the "Technology" section below for information. Do not take pictures of the homework and email those. Picture photos tend to be very large and harder for me to annotate.

I will grade and return HW to you on PWeb just as I've done so far. Also note that I will likely not check email after 5 PM on Fridays so make sure to email me earlier with questions you have.

EXAMS

There will be an exam on Friday, April 24. The exam will be available for you to "check out" from PWeb for 3 hours of your choosing within the 24 hour period of that day (based on Grinnell time). You will be able to use your book and personal notes and homework solutions, but nothing else and you cannot communicate with other students. You may send me email questions asking for clarification, but be aware that I will only be answering emails from 7:30 AM to 9:30 PM that day. The exam will look like parts 2 and 3 of the in-class exam. More details as we get closer to the 24th.

There will be a final exam. Expectations will be similar to the exam on April 24, but you will be able to choose a window to do it in over the four days of finals week.

Technology

I will be regularly checking email 7:30 AM -7:30 PM Grinnell time on weekdays and a bit on the weekend. Don't hesitate to email me with questions or issues you run into.

Otherwise, there are three basic types of technology you may need for the class.

WEBEX

I will use this program to hold class sessions and office hours. There is an app for desktops and phones/tablets which I recommend you download. You will get an invitation for all the class sessions with a link (there will be a password associated with those sessions) and there will be a URL posted on PWeb which you can use for office hours. You are not required to have audio or video on, there is a chat window you can type questions if you don't have audio. If you do have audio on your device, please wear headphones if at all possible to avoid nasty feedback loops.

A note on recordings. There are screen record options with WebEx. I don't generally plan to use it, but there could be occasions where I start talking about something and decide it is worth recording my explanation for other students. I will do my best to let you know the session is being recorded if that happens.

PIAZZA ON BLACKBOARD

On the class PWeb page, there is now a link for "Class Discussion". This leads to a page for Piazza a program for asking and answering questions. Shortly after sending this email, I will add your email address to their list so you can log into the system. You will post your daily question(s) before class there. If someone has already posted one of your questions there, just click "good question", don't re-ask the same question. You should post your questions anonymously (although note that I will still see who you are). You should also tag your question with the appropriate folder for whichever chapter the question is from. You are welcome to answer other students' questions, but you will be graded solely on the questions you ask, not the answers you give. Again, do

so anonymously. I have populated the page with some of the questions you asked me via email right before break. You will notice I have left a few unanswered for the moment.

SCANNING

If you really don't want to learn LaTeX and don't have a tablet to write and submit handwritten pdf, you will have to scan your homeworks as a pdf and submit them on PWeb.

If you have an iPhone or iPad you can scan using the "Notes" app. Click on "Notes", open a new note, click on the camera icon at the bottom. Then click "Scan Documents", make sure you are on "Black and White" option at the top, and hit the white button. You will then get a box you can move around to crop the picture to the right size. If you're happy with it, save it and then take the next page. When you're done, you can click on the "Share" button and email it to yourself, or Air Drop or however you want to share it.

If you have an android phone, there is an app called "CamScanner" which has been recommended by several students. You should be able to use the free version and not have to pay for a subscription: <https://tinyurl.com/quwbfhr>. **Don't forget, black and white, and one page for the whole document.**