

PRECALCULUS

Syllabus for Math 120 A, B Winter 2008

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Office hours are times when you can speak to me without making an appointment - just stop by. My office hours for this quarter are listed at the web page above (or will be soon!).

Send me email or talk to me if you need to meet me at some other time, or have any questions or concerns. When emailing me, please indicate which course and section you are in (for instance, Math 120 DA) in the *subject line*. Also, start the email message with my name so I know who you think you are writing to, and sign it so I know how to address a reply.

Purpose of the course: This course is designed to prepare you for learning calculus. This is not a course about concepts and mechanics as much as it is a course about problems. This course will help you develop the skills and stamina necessary to solve lengthy, multi-step problems, involving a variety of pre-calculus mathematical concepts.

Text: *Precalculus, A First Course In Problem Solving*, 2007-2008 edition, by D.H. Collingwood & K.D. Prince, Available at Professional Copy 'n' Print, 4200 University Way NE

Lectures: There are lectures each Monday, Wednesday and Friday. You are responsible for knowing all that goes on in lecture, but you are not explicitly required to attend.

Quiz Section: You will have quiz sections on Tuesday and Thursday with a teaching assistant (T.A.). Discussing homework problems is the main purpose of quiz section. You should come to quiz sections prepared to ask questions.

On most Tuesdays in quiz section, part of the period will be used to prepare for exams by working and discussing problems taken from an actual past Math 120 exam. Participation in this is required, and will make up a small portion of your grade in the course.

Homework: You should visit the class website to find out what homework has been assigned. Homework will be due on Friday in most non-exam weeks.

The homework is the most important part of the course. Generally, homework corresponding to the previous Friday, Monday and Wednesday lectures will be due on the next Friday. You should expect to spend approximately 15 hours a week working on problems in this course.

Late homework will not be accepted. However, you are allowed to miss *one* homework assignment without penalty to your grade.

Answers (but not solutions) to most problems can be found in the text. Thus, your homework will not be graded on the bottom line answers, but on the work which led to the answer. So, *you must show your work!*. This is the same way exams are graded: by the work shown. So homework is a good place to practice showing all work.

Since you should have lots of time to work the homework problems (and to seek assistance if necessary), I will be expecting you to complete and have accurate write-ups of **all** assigned problems. Hence, only a sample of problems (usually one for each chapter) will be graded.

I strongly encourage you to work with other students in the class. The Math Study Center (MSC) is an ideal place to do this. You will learn the material faster and understand it better by discussing it with others. I recommend working with others to find solutions to problems, then going away and writing up the solutions individually from your own mind.

Exams: There will be two midterm exams and a final exam.

Midterm 1	Thursday, January 31
Midterm 2	Thursday, February 28
Final Exam	Saturday, March 15

The midterm exams will be 50 minutes long and will be given at your usual quiz section classroom.

The final exam location and time will be announced later and posted on the class website.

Exams are cumulative: you may be asked to solve problems using techniques discussed at any prior point in the course.

Make-up exams will not be given, so don't miss exams. If you miss an exam due to some unavoidable, unforeseen event (e.g. sudden illness, traffic accident, etc.) you should contact me *as soon as possible* to have the best chance of arranging some kind of adjustment.

Calculators and notes: Graphing calculators are allowed on exams, but a simple, scientific calculator is sufficient. Other electronic devices are not allowed.

You should show all work not doable on a scientific calculator. For instance, when you solve a quadratic equation, steps must be shown even if your graphing calculator can produce the solutions. Reading a numerical solution from a graph on a calculator is never sufficient.

A single, **hand-written** 8.5 × 11 inch sheet of notes is allowed during exams. You may write on both sides.

Grading: Your grade will be made up of the following:

test prep participation	2 %
homework	11 %
midterm exams	27 % each
final exam	33 %

Grades **are** curved in that your course grade will reflect your performance relative to the rest of the class rather than relative to some fixed percentage scheme (e.g., 90-80-70-60 etc.). Historically, the median grade in Math 120 has been in the range of 2.5-3.0.

A failing grade of 0.0 in the course is possible if your work is not up to the level of 70% of the class median.

If you feel that an error in grading has occurred, you have **one week** after the exam or homework is returned to bring it to Dr. Conroy's attention. You should stop by Dr. Conroy's office hours to discuss it.

Resources:

- A link to the class website can be found at:

<http://www.math.washington.edu/~conroy>

You will find various bits of useful information there, including a homework schedule, past exams and quizzes, etc.

- The Math Study Center (Communications B-014) is open to students in MATH 120. The Center provides a comfortable place and a supportive atmosphere for students to come together and study, in groups or individually. The center is staffed by TAs and instructors. Follow the link on the class website to the MSC website for more information.
- The University of Washington is committed to providing access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities. To request disability accommodation contact the Disability Services Office at least ten days in advance at: 206-543-6450/V, 206-543-6452/TTY, 206-685-7264 (FAX), or dso@u.washington.edu.
- The Student Counseling Center academic skills workshops on a variety of topics including stress management, test anxiety and time management to help you succeed at the University of Washington. Check out their offerings by following the link on the class website.