

Greensheet for Math 114 – Intermediate Algebra

Winter 2009

Class	Math 114.01	Math 114.02	Instructor	Bert Lo
Lecture & Lab	MTWThF 7:30am – 8:20am Room E34 (MWF) and Room S42 (TTh)	MTWThF 8:30am – 9:20am Room E34 (MWF) and Room S42 (TTh)		LoBert @ deanza.edu Room S54A (408) 864-8268
Office Hours	Room S43 (Math Tutorial Center)	MTWThF (time to be determined)		http://nebula2.deanza.edu/~bert

Text None – Buy the Enable Math License Package from the bookstore

Grades Your grade will be determined by your points scored on weekly homework, lab and home quizzes, 3 midterms, a final exam, and a diary.

Homework	100 points
Lab Quizzes	100 points
Home Quizzes	100 points
Midterms (3)	450 points (125 points \times 3 + 125 points – 50 points) (see Midterms section below)
Final Exam	250 points

A+	at least 970 points	A	930 – 969 points	A–	900 – 929 points
B+	870 – 899 points	B	830 – 869 points	B–	800 – 829 points
C+	770 – 799 points	C	700 – 769 points		
D+	670 – 699 points	D	630 – 669 points	D–	600 – 629 points
F	0 – 599 points				

Calculator TI-83 / TI-84 (Plus and Silver Editions allowed)

- Bring your calculator to every lecture, individual (not group) quiz and exam (except when instructed otherwise). Always carry a complete set of extra working batteries.
- During lectures and office hours, I can only provide help using the listed calculators. I do not provide any calculator help during quizzes and exams.
- Calculators which do symbolic mathematics (eg. TI-89/92) are not allowed on quizzes or exams. You may use a TI-89 or TI-92 for lectures and homework, but you must have access to and know how to use one of the permitted calculators for quizzes and exams. If you only bring a TI-89 or TI-92 to a test, you may need to complete the test with no calculator.
- You may use a TI-82, TI-85 or TI-86 in place of the listed calculators. However, I do not provide help with those.
- You may not share calculators during quizzes or exams. You may not give another student your calculator if you finish a quiz or exam early.
- I do not lend out my own calculator.

Attendance Regular and punctual attendance is important to succeeding in any math class. However, since this is a software based learning system, self-motivated students can work ahead independently.

- Every class you attend, you are expected to arrive on time, and stay for the entire class.
- When you come into class, you will sign in on a spreadsheet at the front of the class. The spreadsheet will keep a running total of how many minutes you are late, and how many days you are absent. Each early departure will count as an absence.
- For each 60 minutes you are late or 3 days you are absent, you will lose 20 points from your score. You can get those points back by meeting with the counselor for this class. Each confirmed meeting you have with the counselor will result in one 20 point deduction being reversed.
- There is one significant exception to my attendance policy if you are late or absent, or leave early, 2 or fewer times during the first two weeks: if you complete each week's homework assignment by its Sunday night due date, and you maintain an average of at least 80% on the quizzes and midterms, you will not lose attendance related points regardless of your attendance. However, if your average on the quizzes and midterms ever drops below 80%, you will lose points for all lates and absences from the beginning of the quarter. You can get those points back as described above.
- If you are absent on the first day, or 3 times during the first week, I will drop you from the class, unless you have contacted me beforehand.
- The only other circumstance under which I will drop or withdraw students myself is disruptive classroom behavior (see below). If you do not want to stay beyond the 8th week, you must officially withdraw from the class at Admissions and Records before the end of the 8th week. If you stop attending and do not officially withdraw yourself, you will receive an F for the course.

- If you are not present during any part of any lecture, you are responsible for getting all lecture notes, homework assignments, handouts and announcements missed. You should arrange to get these from your fellow classmates. (I will not repeat lectures, during office hours or at any other time.)

Readings

Reading the online textbook every day helps you understand what we discuss in class. It also helps clarify the material by giving examples which you can study at your own pace.

- You are expected to read the sections of the textbook every day, before the corresponding lecture, and before you attempt the homework. You may not understand everything the first time you read it, but it will help you be more comfortable with the language used in class, and make it easier for you to focus during lecture. It will also give you a chance to prepare your questions to ask in class.
- Some concepts are presented differently in the textbook than in lecture, in ways which you may find more in line with your learning style.
- I believe that reading the textbook daily accounts for about 20% of your learning in a math class. If you do not read the textbook each day, you should not expect to score higher than a C, and you may likely score worse.

Homework

Doing homework on a daily basis helps you to really understand the material, and makes lectures easier to follow. It allows you to discover and correct your confusions and misunderstandings, so you'll be less likely to make the same mistakes during quizzes and exams.

- Online homework will be assigned each day, and will be due by 8:59pm on the first Sunday night immediately after the day it was assigned.
- Homework will be assigned for each section. You should do as much of it as possible that day, ask questions about it the next day, and have it completed by the second day after the lecture.
- You should expect to spend at least 10 hours a week outside of class on homework, or an average of at least 2 hours per day. Each day, you should be finishing yesterday's homework, doing as much of today's homework as possible, and reading ahead for tomorrow's lecture.
- Don't let the homework pile up. Because we operate on the quarter system, we will cover the material fairly quickly. If you fall behind in homework by even just a few days, the lectures will get harder to understand, and the homework will take more and more time the further behind you get. So, a 2 hour homework set might take 6 hours to complete if you are behind by a week, and that still doesn't include all the other old homework you have to finish up.
- Give each question a solid effort before you start using help or hints. You will learn much more from trying to solve a problem yourself, than from watching someone or something solve it for you. (I can watch other people play basketball all day long, but I will only really improve when I pick up a ball and start shooting baskets myself.) Reread the notes or textbook, or search for similar examples for ideas on how to proceed, then try again. **IF YOU ONLY FOLLOW THE SOLUTIONS IN THE TEXTBOOK, BUT YOU DO NOT LEARN TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS WITHOUT HELP, YOU WILL PROBABLY FIND THAT YOU HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY WITH THE PROBLEMS THAT APPEAR ON TESTS.**
- I believe that homework accounts for about 50% for your learning in a math class. You should not expect to pass the class if you do not keep up with the homework. If you don't think you can commit at least 10 hours a week to this class, take it another quarter when you can make that time commitment.

Diary

Keeping a journal encourages you to take responsibility for your own progress and success.

- You will keep a running record of your attendance, scores, and preparation time.
- You will also complete self-assessment questionnaires regarding your study habits, including identifying suggestions for improvement and mistakes to avoid repeating.
- You will submit your diary the class after each midterm.
- You will receive points for the correctness of your attendance and scores.
- You will receive points for the completeness of your preparation time and self-assessment.

Quizzes

Quizzes are designed to motivate you to keep up to date on the homework.

- All quizzes will be online. Lab quizzes can only be taken during the lab sections on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Home quizzes can be taken wherever and whenever is convenient for you. However, each home quiz will have a deadline.
- All quizzes must be finished by the deadline stated, because the software will close your quiz automatically.

Midterms

There will be three midterms during the quarter.

- Midterm dates will be announced at least 3 days before the corresponding midterm is given.
- Midterms will begin promptly when class starts, and will last 50 minutes.
- There will be no makeup midterms. No midterm scores will be dropped. I will not reschedule midterms for individuals.

- There will be demerits if your phone, pager, PDA or other noisemaking device makes a distracting noise (subject to my definition) during a midterm or final exam. The demerit will consist of 10% of all points available on the test.
- The higher of your second and third midterm scores will be doubled, and the lower of those two scores will be weighted only 60% (75 points, instead of 125 points). So, if you have other responsibilities which conflict with the later two midterms, the impact to your grade will not be as severe. However, your first midterm score will not be altered, replaced or dropped, so you must be fully prepared for the first midterm.

Final Exam

There will be a comprehensive final exam during the 12th week of the quarter.

- The final exam will last 2 hours.
- No arrangements will be made to reschedule the final exam. If you do not take the final exam, you will automatically receive an F for the quarter, regardless of your other scores. Do not plan on traveling out of the area before the final exam. (If a serious personal emergency prevents you from taking the final, you may request an incomplete beforehand.)

Enrolment

You are responsible for handling all issues related to your enrolment.

- If you wish to drop/withdraw from the class, do so at Admissions and Records before the end of the 3rd/8th week.
- If you do not pay for your classes on time, you will be dropped from the class. If you then wish to re-enroll, you will be moved to the end of the waiting list.
- I will check the class list frequently. If you are not enrolled, I will not grade your work, and I will give your seat away.

Classroom Behavior

Respectful participation in the classroom learning process is strongly encouraged.

- Feel free to ask questions to the instructor, and answer questions asked by the instructor. Discussions are to be focused on the class material, concepts, homework and policies. Private conversations can wait until after class. (If you feel you might need a friend to translate during lectures, please talk to me about your situation this week.)
- In order to encourage participation, you may earn up to 20 bonus points based on your level of participation, which will be added directly to your score for the quarter. If you are uncomfortable with speaking up in class, you can also earn the bonus points by asking questions during office hours.
- Disruptive, distracting or disrespectful behavior in the classroom is unacceptable. You will be asked to leave. If I have to ask you to leave twice (for the same or separate incidents), I will act to have you suspended from my class.
- If you arrive late, quietly take a seat near the door and do not disturb the rest of the class.
- Turn off all noisemaking devices before you enter the classroom. This includes phones, PDAs, pagers, and other such items. You may set them to vibrate mode only if you are expecting an urgent call.

Academic Honesty

Cheating is the act of trying to get credit for work that is not yours. I have a **zero tolerance** policy towards cheating.

- Cheating includes (but is not limited to): copying or submitting work from someone else or from any source (eg. book, website); altering or interfering with grading or attendance taking; using any electronic equipment during quizzes and exams that has not been authorized (eg. cell phones, PDAs, pagers, symbolic calculators); helping another student cheat. For a list of other examples of cheating, please ask me.
- NOTE: Working with members of your homework group during a group quiz **IS NOT** cheating. Talking to members of other homework groups, or looking at their work, during a group quiz **IS** cheating.
- My zero tolerance policy towards cheating is: if you are caught cheating, I will give you an F for the course (no second chances).
- In addition, if you are caught cheating, you will be reported to the division dean and Student Development, who may impose much stricter consequences (eg. probation, suspension, expulsion).

Help

DeAnza College wants you to succeed, and we will help you as much as possible.

- Get help as soon as possible. Don't wait until you are 2 or 3 weeks behind class before asking for assistance.
- I will do all I can to help you, if you ask for help first. You must take responsibility for seeking assistance – it will not come looking for you.
- Some students begin using the help services during the 1st week. To start, learn where the services are located, when they are available, and if you have to follow any special procedures to use them.

There are three primary sources of help if you are having difficulty with the material in this class.

- Software: The software has built-in help features.
- Office hours: I have office hours every weekday (except holidays), no appointments necessary. If my office hours are not convenient, I can occasionally schedule other times to meet. Just ask.

- Math Tutorial Center: Free tutoring is available on either a drop-in basis, or a regular weekly basis (with a designated tutor). Ask in S43 about schedules and applications. If enough people ask for it, I will work with the tutorial center to try to get a special group tutoring set up for this class.
- Also, there is a counselor especially assigned to this EnableMath class. The counselor can help you with personal, financial, family, religious, work or other non-mathematics issues that might be impacting your academic success.
- Additionally, if you have or think you might have a disability, the Disability Support Services (DSS) and Educational Diagnostic Center (EDC) offer additional services. In addition to helping students with dyslexia, attention deficit disorder and other commonly recognized learning disabilities, these services are also designed to help students whose abilities and efforts significantly exceed their actual achievement. If you feel this describes your situation, please talk to me, so I can put you in touch with the appropriate people.

General Notes

Some general advice on succeeding in my classes.

- When taking written tests of any type, first glance quickly at all questions and their point values, so you have a sense of what is expected.
- Try not to spend too much time on a problem in excess of its point allocation. For example, if a quiz lasts 20 minutes and is worth 20 points, each minute is roughly worth 1 point, so you should spend about 10 minutes on a 10 point question. If a midterm lasts 50 minutes and is worth 100 points, each minute is worth roughly 2 points, so you should spend about 5 minutes on a 10 point question. If a final exam lasts 120 minutes and is worth 200 points, each minute is worth roughly $\frac{5}{3}$ points, so you should spend about 6 minutes on a 10 point question.
- I do not curve any tests, even if the class median is an F. I have found that when I curve, students actually do worse later on. When I don't curve, the students who are serious about getting A's and B's make adjustments to their study habits and earn those grades outright anyway.
- If you do not start studying regularly during the first week, you should probably consider dropping the class today. If you fail the 1st midterm, that score will **NOT** be replaced (see **Midterms** section above), and could result in an overall drop of an entire grade for the quarter.

Things which really annoy me to no end, and which I will address in no uncertain terms:

- students who cheat – they have no regard for their fellow students' efforts, nor for the time I waste dealing with the disciplinary process.
- students who don't study, fail the quizzes and midterms, and then ask for extra credit – there is already a lot of credit on the quizzes and midterms; work on earning that credit FIRST.
- students who don't read the textbook, do their homework and attend class regularly, yet walk into class late, make a spectacle of themselves, and act as if the instructor, the material and the rest of the class are not worthy of their respect.