

Greensheet for Math 114 – Intermediate Algebra

Spring 2010

Class	Math 114.04	Instructor	Bert Lo
Lecture & Lab	MTWThF 8:30am – 9:20am Room S54 (MTuTh) and Room S42 (WF except midterms)		LoBert @ deanza.edu Room S54A (408) 864-8268 http://tinyurl.com/BertLo
Office Hours	Room S43 MTWThF 12:30pm – 1:20pm		

Text

None – **Buy the Enable Math License Package from <http://www.enablemathcollege.com>**

You may consult any intermediate algebra textbook of your choice if you find the explanations in the software insufficient. However, you are responsible for completing the assigned homework sections in Enable. (If you need help determining which sections of your chosen textbook map to the material we are covering in class, come see me in office hours.)

Grades

Your grade will be determined by your points scored on weekly software based homework and additional home assignments, lab quizzes, 3 midterms, a final exam, and personal development exercises.

Personal Development	60 points				
Enable Homework	100 points				
Lab Quizzes	100 points				
Additional Home Assignments	40 points				
Midterms (3)	420 points (140 points × 3)				
Final Exam	280 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	600 – 699 points				
F	0 – 599 points				

Calculator

Recommended (if you will be taking further math classes): TI-83 / TI-84 (Plus and Silver Editions allowed)
Minimum: Scientific calculator

- Bring your calculator to every lecture, lab 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 days you are late, and how many days you are absent. Each early departure will count as an absence.
- You will lose 3 points from your score for each day you are late, and 6 points for each day you are absent. (The only exception to this attendance policy is if your score on all midterms is 80% or higher.)
- If you are absent on the first day, or 2 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.

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 lecture. Homework for Monday and Tuesday lectures will be due by 8:59pm on Thursday night. Homework for Thursday lectures will be due by 8:59pm on the following Monday night.
- 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 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 the next 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.

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 Wednesdays and Fridays.
- There is a quiz during each lab. Quizzes will be opened 5 minutes after the beginning of lab, and will be locked 10 minutes later. As long as you start taking the quiz during that 10 minute window, you will have until the end of lab to complete it. If you do not start taking the quiz during that 10 minute window, you will not be allowed to take the quiz.

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.
- If you score higher on your first midterm than on your second or third midterm, I will replace the lower of your scores on your second and third midterms with the average of that score with the score on your first midterm. So, it is to your benefit to begin studying regularly right away. Only one of your second or third midterm scores can be replaced in this way. The first midterm score cannot be replaced. (NOTE: The attendance policy exception mentioned in the **Attendance** section above is based on the points you actually score on the midterms, before any of your midterm scores are replaced.)

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.)

Personal Development

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

- You will keep a diary of your attendance, scores, and preparation time. If you ever wish to discuss your grade with me, you will be required to bring a copy of your up-to-date diary with you.
- 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 every Friday in lab.
- 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.

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, wait until the end of class to sign in.
- 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.
- 50 points will be deducted from your score each time you text, or use your cell phone or other unauthorized electronic device in class or lab.
- Lab classes are for using the Enable software and doing other class-designated work only. You will lose 50 points from your score each lab class you use the lab computers for any non-Math 114 purpose.

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): communicating with anyone else during any type of test; 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.
- 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 Science Technology Resource 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.

- 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.

- Check my website daily. Any updates are usually made before 7pm. You are responsible for all announcements and handouts on my website regardless of whether they are also announced in class.
- 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, you should spend about 14 minutes on a 14 point question. If a midterm lasts 50 minutes and is worth 140 points, you should spend about 5 minutes on a 14 point question. If a final exam lasts 120 minutes and is worth 280 points, you should spend about 6 minutes on a 14 point question.
- As room scheduling permits, if a test is given at the beginning of class, you may start the moment you enter the classroom, even if it is before the official class start time.
- 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 and give someone from the waiting list an opportunity to succeed. 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 beneath them.

Despite the length and language of my greensheet, I'm actually a nice guy to students who are serious about learning and working hard. If that doesn't describe you, you might find me overbearing and obnoxious.