

## College Algebra, Section 53

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Mathematics 714

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*“A mathematician, like a painter or poet, is a maker of patterns. If his patterns are more permanent than theirs, it is because they are made with ideas.”*

- G. H. Hardy

### About the Class

This course is designed to teach you basic algebra and its applications to the real world. It will prepare you to take further mathematics courses, and you will learn mathematical skills that are necessary in many other fields. Just as importantly, you will learn to think critically, abstractly and logically about real-world situations.

For many of you, this will be one of the first college courses you take. As such, it may differ from the courses you took in high school. The primary difference is one of responsibility. I will try to explain the topics your text covers, and I will assign practice problems in an effort to guide you through the material. However, **your grade is your responsibility**. It is your responsibility to read the text, to make sure that you understand the topics covered, and to ask questions, in class or during office hours, about things you do not understand. **No extra credit is permitted in this class**. This means you must work towards the grade you want from day one, and on every assignment. Finally, the workload in this course may be different from what you are used to; expect to work **2-4 hours** outside of class for each hour in class.

### Exams

In addition to the final exam, four in-class exams will be administered. These exams are designed to test your understanding of the concepts covered in class, not your ability to replicate homework assignments. The questions on the exams may differ in format and presentation from those you have seen in the homework.

Exams are tentatively scheduled for September 11, October 8, November 6, and November 29, and will include both long-answer and multiple-choice questions. The percentage of multiple-choice questions will go up with each test; the final is all multiple-choice.

**Barring verifiable extenuating circumstances, no makeup exams will be administered.**

Makeups will be given at my discretion. If you are dissatisfied with your grade on an exam, you must discuss it with me during my office hours (not during class time), **within two weeks** of receiving the exam.

### Homework and Quizzes

In order to learn mathematics, you must practice it. By working through math problems, you discover the subtleties of definitions, if and when rules have exceptions, and how to handle new and challenging problems. In addition, both quizzes and homework give the instructor and the student feedback about their understanding of the material and their performance in the class. **Homework and quizzes will comprise twenty percent of your grade in this class.**

Homework and quizzes will be given in tandem. Homework will be assigned regularly. Read the relevant sections of the textbook and try your best to answer each question. **I will answer questions about the homework only on the day before it is due.** Homework must be handed in at the beginning of class. On the day the homework is due, a quiz will be given on the material covered in the homework.

### *Grading Policy*

Selected problems from the homework will be graded. **In order to receive full marks for a problem, the correct answer and all intermediate steps must be shown.** Your homework and quiz grade will be calculated using the following formula, up to a maximum of 150 points:

$$\frac{\text{(Your total score for all homework and quizzes)}}{\text{(Total points for homework and quizzes – 10\% of the total points)}} * 150$$

### *Homework Format*

Your homework should be written neatly on 8 ½ by 11 inch loose leaf paper – do not rip paper out of a spiral notebook. If there are multiple sheets, **staple** them together. Write both your name and the textbook section number on each page of your homework, and write down the question number of each problem before you answer it. Answer the problems in order, and show all the work that goes into each answer. Circle or box your final answer. **Illegible problems will not be graded.**

### *Lateness Policy*

**Late homework will not be accepted under any circumstances, and makeup quizzes will not be given.** If you know that you will be absent from class, you must hand the homework in early to receive credit.

### Classroom Conduct

College students are expected to know how to behave themselves in class. Unfortunately, this is often not the case, and so I will mention a few points here.

### *Attendance & Punctuality*

Attendance will not be factored into your grade. However, I expect every student to attend every day of class, on time. **If you are more than fifteen minutes late to class, don't bother showing up.**

*Preparedness*

**Read the relevant sections of the textbook before coming to class.** Bring your workbook and calculator (TI 83, TI 84 or TI 86) to each and every class period.

*In-Class Behavior*

Except for emergencies, no student is allowed to leave the classroom before the end of the period. **No outside reading or conversations will be permitted during class time;** if you feel that your conversation or reading is more important than what the class is doing, don't come to class. **Turn off all cell phones during class.** If you have a question about what is going on in class, please ask me, not your neighbors. **If your question is not about class, save it until class is over.**

Office Hours

Office hours are on Monday from 3-3:50, on Thursday from 12:30-1:30, and on Friday from 1:30-2:30. My office is Mathematics 714 (on the seventh floor, to your left as you exit the elevator).