

Welcome to Section LN04 of MATH-0950 (Beginning Algebra) at Southeast Community College in the Summer term of 2016.

Contact information

Instructor: Toby Bartels.

Web page (for course policies and assignments): <http://TobyBartels.name/MATH-0950/2016SU/>.

Email: TBartels@Southeast.edu.

Voice mail: 1-402-323-3452.

Text messages: 1-402-805-3021.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:00 to 11:00 in LNK V06 through August 12 but in ESQ 112 from August 15; Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM in LNK V06; and by appointment.

Assignments

This will be a mostly flipped classroom; that is, I'll assign you readings to do outside of class, and you'll spend most of the time in class working on problems together. So for each assignment, I'll assign some readings (from the textbook if nothing else, but also often some notes of my own, videos of examples, etc). I'll also assign a few basic problems due in class for each day. Each week, I'll assign more problems from the textbook (and occasionally some problems of my own), but you don't need to do those at home (although you may want to look at them). Instead, I'll randomly split you into groups each week, and you'll work on the assigned problems together in class, with my help when you need it. Finally, you can take the problems home if you need to finish up.

As you work on problems, whether before, during, or after class, you can use your textbook and any notes that you took during your reading. I encourage you to talk to the other people in your group for problems in class; you're supposed to be working on them together! You can also talk to other people outside of your group, and in fact your group should help other groups if you finish before them. You can also use calculators (unless explicitly forbidden). Finally, you can ask me for help if necessary, and I'll be coming around the room to see who needs my help.

There will also be biweekly exams (usually on Thursday), taken individually and closely based on the problem sets that were written up that week. When taking the exams, you may use calculators (but not communication devices such as cell phones) and any notes that you wrote yourself (including the problem sets that you did in class), but *not* your textbook or anything else not written by you.

There will be a comprehensive final exam on September 20 Tuesday. To speed up grading at the end of the term, the exam will be multiple choice and filling in blanks, with no partial credit (except possibly on extra credit problems). For the exam, you may use one sheet of notes that you wrote yourself. However, you may not use your book or anything else not written by you. I will have a mock exam ready at least two weeks before the actual exam.

Grading

You can see your current grade by logging in to the Moodle site.

Here are the assignments that contribute to your grade, with their frequencies and percentage of the final grade:

- Reading homework (one for almost every day), graded for correctness: 20% total;
- Problem sets (one for almost every other week), graded for completeness: 20% total;
- Exams (almost every other week), graded for correctness: 40% total;
- A comprehensive final exam (September 20 Tuesday): 20%.

Nothing else directly affects your grade. However, there will sometimes be extra-credit problems on the problem sets, which I will grade for correctness.

Strictly speaking, there is no curve, so you are not competing against your fellow students. In fact, you'll be working on a lot of your assignments together! However, if grades don't turn out as I expect,

then I'll consider whether an assignment was more difficult than I intended and adjust the grades accordingly (usually by making a hard problem extra credit).

Sometimes you will be required to show some of your work; make sure that you read and follow the instructions! To get as much credit as possible, it's good to explain your answers as clearly as you can, even when the instructions don't specifically ask you to. If you can convince me that you know what you're doing, then you'll get some credit. But if it looks as if you just pulled an answer out of thin air (or the back of the book), then you won't get credit.

I also suggest that you cross out (and *not* erase) any significant amount of work that you decide is incorrect, in case you later want to look at it after all; this also makes it easier to read the paper later. Along the same lines, I'd appreciate it if your papers are cleanly detached (not torn out of a spiral notebook). Finally, if your papers aren't properly fastened together, then make sure that you have your name on each sheet.

Attendance

I need to take attendance every day for purposes of financial aid; if you fail the class, then I must report your last date of attendance. If this is too early, then this can affect your financial aid. If you don't show up at all during the first week, then you'll be automatically dropped from the class at the worst possible time (when you'll still have to pay for it but almost certainly won't get financial aid for it). On the other hand, if you decide to drop the class after you show up, then you'll need to fill out a withdrawal form to do that. But check with the financial aid office before you drop; in fact, sometimes it's best not to drop at all if you're going to take the class again and pass it.

I will normally use your turned-in work to take attendance, so make sure that you sign the attendance sheet if you don't turn anything in. (On the first two days of class, I'll pass around the attendance sheet.) If you expect to be absent, then tell me ahead of time! That way, we can arrange for you to ask any questions that you need and to make up work. If you can't contact me ahead of time, then contact me as soon as possible. Once I grade an assignment for correctness, you won't be able to make it up, but I can delay grading it or arrange an exception if you're in touch with me. You can turn in problem sets for completeness at any time through the last day of classes (September 21 Wednesday), but they'll be easiest if you're in class to do them.

I'm not concerned with the reasons for your absence or tardiness; what's important is that you communicate with me about it. On the other hand, if you want a late drop or an incomplete, then you will need a good reason with unusual circumstances, such as a serious administrative error by the college or a major disruption out of your control.

Schedule

The first day of class (July 12 Tuesday), I'll discuss the administrative aspects of the course and give a brief introduction to the basic ideas of the course. If you miss this day, then you shouldn't suffer too much for it, but you'll want to get the administrative information. The next day (July 14 Thursday), the class will begin in earnest.

The official textbook is the 3rd Edition of *Beginning & Intermediate Algebra* written by Sullivan et al and published by Prentice-Hall (Pearson). We cover Sections 8.6 and 8.7 and all of Chapters 1–5, *except* for Section 4.6. Here is the complete list of covered sections: 1.1–1.8, 2.1–2.8, 3.1–3.7, 4.1–4.5, 5.1–5.6, 8.6, 8.7. Here they are again, in the order in which I intend to cover them:

- 1.1, 1.2: All;
- 1.3: All except set notation;
- 1.4, 1.5: Only opposites, reciprocals, and word problems;
- 1.6: Units;
- 1.7: Exponents;
- 5.4: Only arithmetic;
- 1.7: Order of operations;
- 1.6: Arithmetic identities;
- 1.4, 1.5: Using identities to do arithmetic with signed numbers and fractions;

- 5.2, 5.4: Only identities;
- 5.6: All;
- 1.8, 5.1, 2.4: Evaluating expressions and formulas;
- 1.8, 5.1: Terms and coefficients;
- 1.8, 5.1: Simplifying expressions;
- 3.1, 3.2: Graphing points and formulas;
- 2.5: Only expressions;
- 5.1: Only word problems;
- 2.1, 3.1, 3.7: Testing solutions;
- 1.3: Set notation;
- 2.8, 8.6: Solution sets;
- 2.1: All remaining except word problems;
- 2.2, 2.3: All except word problems;
- 2.8: All remaining except word problems;
- 8.6: Compound inequalities;
- 2.1, 2.2, 2.3: Only word problems;
- 2.5: All remaining;
- 2.8, 8.6: Only word problems;
- 2.6, 2.7: All;
- 8.6: All remaining;
- 8.7: All;
- 2.4, 3.1, 3.2: All remaining;
- 3.4, 3.3, 3.5: All;
- 3.7: All remaining;
- 3.6, 4.1: All;
- 4.2, 4.3: All except word problems;
- 4.2, 4.3: Only word problems;
- 4.4, 4.5: All;
- 5.2, 5.4: All remaining;
- 5.3, 5.5: All.

I'll announce it ahead of time if I change this order.

For the (possibly updated) schedule of specific dates for each reading, check the problem sets online. Exams are every other Thursday starting on July 28, except that the last exam is on September 13 Tuesday. In addition, the comprehensive final exam is September 20 Tuesday.

The last day to drop the course with a full refund is July 18 Monday; the last day to drop at all is September 2 Friday. There is no school on September 5 Monday. By August 16 Tuesday, your midterm grade estimates should be available on WebAdvisor; your final grades should be available there on September 23 Friday. Follow your grades on Moodle if you want to know them faster.