

Expectations in a College Math Class

By Rochelle Mitchell (Edited by Rob Jonas) for the International Student College Experience Course

Most math instructors expect you to.....

- Be on time and present every day;
- Participate in classroom discussions (provide answers posed to the class by the instructor, respond to comments by classmates, ask questions or offer suggestions, etc);
- Respect your fellow students and instructor (for example, not talking while they are talking, even if just to clarify what they are saying)
- Collaborate with other students (work with students on in class assignments and/or work with students on homework or projects, when allowed). Study groups outside of class are often encouraged;
- Use a graphing calculator and/or computer software as discussed in class (prior knowledge is often expected in 100 level courses);
- Take full advantages of other resources that are available such as the Math Learning Center or textbook supplements (i.e. tutorial videos, tutorial websites, student solution manuals);
- Read the textbook, preferably before each class lecture;
- Explain concepts verbally and/or in writing;
- Complete homework daily (or close to daily). Sometimes it is necessary to work more than the required problems in order to fully understand a concept;
- Turn in assignments on time and with your work done neatly;
- See the instructor in his/her office hours for help;
- Understand and follow all the classroom and college rules about plagiarism / cheating;
- Be responsible if you miss class. This means...
 - Get notes or copy handouts from another student;
 - Learn the material missed on your own or with another student;

Excerpts from Rob's syllabus and others:

My Quick Advice to You

Math is not like many other subjects; reviewing and looking at notes and completed homework is not a good way to study. Math is more of a skill (like playing a guitar, a sport, or a video game). In order to be successful, you must practice A LOT! Once you complete your homework, you should "test" yourself by picking a few problems from previous sections and the current section and trying to do them WITHOUT notes.

My Expectations

I expect you to:

- be in class everyday and complete all the assignments;
- participate fully in the class and in your own learning;
- collaborate with your peers (form study groups, check answers, etc.);

Another example:

All assignments are due at the beginning of class. **There will be no make-up quizzes or exams, and I will accept no late homework or projects.**

Homework: Required homework is listed on the back of the class calendar. You are encouraged to check your work with your classmates outside of class time, **especially** the even numbered problems. Also you may ask questions on homework problems in class (as time allows) and during my office hours or in the MLC. I suggest that you organize your homework in a three-ring binder. Check the calendar for homework packet due dates. These packets should show the steps that justify the solution to the problems. Please label the problems, circle the answers, and **put them in order**. Homework packets that are not in order may not receive full credit. I will select a subset of these problems to grade. **The lowest homework score will be dropped.**

Quizzes: There will be 3 short homework quizzes as shown on the class calendar. These quizzes will primarily emphasize skill and drill exercises and the homework questions. **The lowest quiz score can be dropped and replaced with the % score from the final if this results in a higher overall score.**

Tests: There will be 3 tests given in class as noted on the class calendar. Included on tests will be questions asking you to problem solve, write, and explain processes. **Your lowest test score can be replaced with half your score from the final if this will result in a higher score.**

Note: I drop the lowest scores in the above categories to account for emergencies (illness, forgot the assignment at home, had to go to the hospital, etc). Again, I do not accept late work, so if you have another low score, you are stuck with it and it will be used in your final grade calculations.

Presentations: Occasionally (about 4 – 6 times) groups will go to the boards and do presentations. Typically you will be solving homework problems or *other problems that I select*. If you are absent on presentation day you will lose presentation points.

More suggestions.....

realistic time goals for work and following through

getting comfortable asking questions in class

not rushing up to the instructor to ask all their questions after class

Do hw right away even if not due for a while

Utilizing office hours and MLC (and office hours should be their preference)

If allowed to pick groups, try to get in a mixed group instead of all from their country or all-international groups

Know the
vocabulary..... 😊