

Math 140/141
Fall 08-Spring 09

Class Policies/Information

Please note that all these policies are subject to change.

1. Course Website

I will do my best to post assignments and notes from the smartboard on the website right after class; if you miss class or forget the assignment it is your responsibility to check the class website.

2. Record Keeping:

Your class notebook should serve as a record of your work and growth in this class. Work to make this notebook useful to yourself in the future – in your future math and math education courses, during your practicum, and beyond. Your notebook should make sense to you five years from now. You may use whatever type of notebook works best for you, but I do encourage you to have graph paper available for doing homework, so if you choose a bound notebook, consider getting one with graph paper.

Save everything from this course. You will be working on a portfolio, where you will select from your work. You'll need your work from Math 140 available to you when you're in Math 141.

3. Types of Work

a. Daily Homework

You will have homework due just about every class meeting. Sometimes your homework will include several short problems, designed to practice a particular skill or to explore a particular concept. Sometimes your homework will consist of only one or two big problems, which require thinking and creativity. I will often give you time to go over homework in small groups during class time.

This year, I am trying something new, where we will roll a die, use a spinner, or some other method to decide whether or not you will turn in homework (with a $\frac{1}{3}$ probability that you will turn it in). These assignments will be graded simply as either a check, check plus, or check minus.

Detailed guidelines for the expectations of such assignments will be distributed soon, and the main reason I am collecting them is to help you develop the habit of writing up your homework so that it will be useful to you in the future; in the past few years, I've found that by the time students get to doing their portfolios, most of their regular homework assignments are not valuable additions

to their portfolios, because they are written up in a way that does not demonstrate the student's good thinking, even when such good thinking was present.

b. Personal Reflections

Often when we change from one topic to another in class, I will give you a few minutes to summarize and reflect. Sometimes I'll have you write a short reflection before introducing a new topic or activity. I generally won't collect these reflections, but they are important in creating your notebook, and they also will be useful to you in your end of the semester letter and portfolio.

After each class (right afterward, if possible) you should write a short summary of the class that includes the following:

- What you saw as the main idea(s) of the class
- Things that "clicked" for you in the class
- Things you still need to think about from the class

Important: Write your summary so that five years from now, it'll make sense to you.

c. Study Group Reports

You will rotate having the job of reporter for your study group. The reporter job includes emailing a detailed report on the study group before the next class. These reports are another opportunity for you to practice mathematical communication. More information on expectations for these reports will be given later.

d. Papers/Reflections/Projects

Several times a semester, you'll do a paper or project about a math problem or a reflection on your understanding of a topic. I will grade the papers with a rubric that is specific to the assignment. Before the first paper is due, we'll do peer editing in class. You can rewrite papers if you don't like your grade. There will be a final reflection at the end of the first semester.

e. Portfolio

At the end of Math 141 you will put together a portfolio, which will demonstrate your progress throughout the year. Details to follow.

4. Tests/Quizzes

There will be several tests each semester. Most tests will have both an individual and a group component, although some tests may only have one of these.

5. Baseline Proficiencies

Baseline proficiencies address the most fundamental concepts covered in the course; you need to pass them to pass Math 141. You can pass each proficiency in several ways – usually by taking a quiz (or part of a test), but you can also demonstrate your understanding in an interview with me. You can repeat proficiencies until you pass. The purpose of the proficiencies is to require everyone in class to demonstrate a “baseline” level of understanding of some of the most fundamental concepts.

6. Final Grading Scale (subject to change)

a. Math 140 – first semester

Collected Homework– 5%
Papers/Reflections/Projects– 25%
Study Group reports – 5%
End of semester letter – 10%
Tests – 40%
In-Class Work – 15%

b. Math 141 – second semester

Collected Homework–5%
Papers/Reflections/Projects– 20%
Study Group reports – 5%
Portfolio – 20%
Tests – 35%
In-Class Work – 15%