

MATH 51
BEGINNING ALGEBRA
Fall 2013

Professor: Frank V. Tran

Office: 61 - 1654

E-mail: ftran@mtsac.edu

Phone: (909)594-5611 Ext. 5311

Office hours: MW: 3:10pm – 4:10pm; F: 11:15 – 12:15pm

TTh: 11:15am – 12:15am and 2:00pm – 3:00pm

Prerequisite: Math 50 with grade of “C” two years high school algebra, plus qualifying score of Mt. SAC placement exam.

General Description and Objective

- *Simplify algebraic expressions by using properties of exponent and factoring.*
- *Translate between phrases written in English and equivalent expressions written in mathematical symbols.*
- *Solve linear, quadratic, radical equations and systems of linear equations.*
- *Solve linear and quadratic inequalities.*
- *Graph Linear, quadratic functions and linear inequalities on a rectangular coordinate system.*
- *Evaluating operations and simplifying roots and radicals expressions.*
- *Analyze and solve word problems.*
- *Utilize a scientific calculator whenever appropriate in achieving the stated instructional objectives.*

Materials Required

Text: Beginning Algebra, Eleventh Edition by Margaret L. Lial, John Hornsby and Terry McGinnis.

Calculator: A scientific or graphing calculator. (You need keys marked: ln, log, and \wedge)

Philosophy

Mathematics is a set of skills that you learn by lots of personal practice, not by watching someone else do it. Students sometimes incorrectly feel that they “know” the material if they “understand” it. Understanding does not guarantee retention. Without practice, you may not retain much.

The key to success in mathematics is practice on a regular basis. Homework provides this practice. The amount of practice needed varies with each individual but usually students need to do at least the homework problems assigned. The more problems you do, the more skillful you get. Some problems are more difficult than others and emphasize different concepts. Only by working all of the assigned problems will you cover the full range of difficulty.

Quizzes:

There will be about 8 quizzes, four of which are announced and the other four are surprised quizzes. All quizzes are consisting of problems similar to the homework and examples in lectures. There will be no makeup quizzes. At the end of the semester, the highest 7 quiz grades will be used.

Exams

There will be four exams. You will be allowed at most one makeup exam, but only for extreme circumstances with reasonable excuses and must provide legitimated documents for being unable to take the exam at the scheduled time. **You must contact me at least two days before the day of the exam to request a makeup exam.** At the end of the semester, if you have missed no more than **three** classes, 85% of your final exam may be used to replace an exam score if this would be advantageous to your course grade. The exams will test your understanding of the concepts covered in the course. Most of the questions on these exams will require showing a significant amount of work to justify your answer. A correct answer with no work shown will be given a zero. The exams will also require you to explain and interpret your results.

Homework

The completion of daily homework is critical to your success in this course. There will be about 11 homework assignments, each counting 10 points that will be collected on Tuesday. **Late homework will not be accepted**, even if you are absent. If you do not turn in assignment on time, you will receive a zero. On each assignment, a small selection of problems will be graded for a few points; the remaining points will be given for the completeness of the assignment. In order to receive credit for “completeness,” an honest attempt must be made on each problem. At the end of the semester, the highest 10 scores will be used, for a homework total of 100 points.

Most of the homework problems will be related to topics discussed in class; some will ask you to try something we didn't talk about. You should be able to reconcile most difficulties with the homework before class. Please make good use of my office hours, the tutoring services on campus, and each other. While you may discuss these homework problems (as well as all others) with other students in the class or with me, the solutions turned in should for the most part be your own work. You should not write up solutions as a group.

It is very important both for your understanding of the material and for preparing for exams that you work all the assigned problems as soon as the material is covered in class.

Class Attendance

Attendance at each class meeting is expected and is important for your success in the course. A student may be dropped for excessive (more than five) absences. All cell phones should be set so that they do not beep or ring during class.

Grading

Your semester course grade will be determined by your percentage of the total points possible. You should keep an accurate record of your grades. I will provide information on your grade standing after each exam.

Percentage	
Exams	50 %
Final Exam	25%
Homework	10%
Quizzes	15%

The scales used to convert from total points earned to a letter grade will no more stiff than:

<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Grade</i>
90.0 - 100.0	A
80.0 - 89.9	B
70.0 - 79.9	C
60.0 - 69.9	D
Below 60.0	F

Academic Honesty

I place a high premium on honesty. Therefore, I consider cheating a serious offense, not only to me, and to other students, but ultimately to the cheater. If a student cheats on an exam, either by copying another student's work or by using a cheating device (notes on paper, clothing, desk, etc...) and I catch him or her, I will address it by either giving them an F for the exam, an F for the entire course, or asking the school to dismiss the student.