

# MATH 99: Pre-College Algebra

## Spring 2005 Syllabus

Natural Science Building, Room 103 Tuesday and Thursday 2:00-3:50

Instructor: Karen Brown  
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4 Credit Hours  
Spring 2005  
Office Hours: 10-Noon Tues./Thurs.  
Or by appointment. Office NS 213

**Goal:** Review concepts of arithmetic and algebra to prepare fully-admitted Western Oregon University students for success in college mathematics courses. Designed to sharpen rusty skills, fill in gaps in mathematics background. Math 99 will suffice as a prerequisite for Math 105, Math 111, or Math 211 at WOU.

This class is not designed to provide initial mastery of arithmetic and beginning algebra. Please enroll in a community college class to gain mastery of these skills. Both Chemeketa and Linn-Benton have excellent offerings, satellite campuses, and various course times for your convenience.

Credits earned apply for enrollment (eligibility), but do not apply toward a degree; this course satisfies no university or college requirement, other than pre-requisite for courses indicated.

### **Textbook:**

*Introductory Algebra, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*, by K. Elayn Martin-Gay, 2003, Prentice Hall, Pearson Education, New Jersey, ISBN 0-13-067682-9

### **Required materials and tools:**

Bound homework journal—spiral notebook or composition book  
Graph paper (composition books available in gridline!)  
Pencil and good eraser (recommend white plastic polymer type)  
Straight edge

### **Grading:**

Homework: done in a bound homework journal. You have the answers to these problems in your book. Turn in at the beginning of class each day. I will check that it is complete and on-time, but usually will not check that the problems are solved correctly...because you have the answers in your book! I expect that you will check these. If you are having trouble solving the problems, make a notation in the homework journal, and maybe highlight this in color, to bring my attention to where you need more help. Worth 5 points each.

In-class assignments: there will be one of these every day. They cannot be made up outside of class. They will be based on the material presented that day. Worth 5 points each.

Quizzes: given at the beginning of each class, based on homework from previous lecture. When you do poorly on the quizzes, you may work the problems again to gain half the points you lost when the quiz was administered. Additional homework may be assigned also, in lieu of make up work for quizzes. There will be no quiz on a day following an exam. Worth 10 points each.

Mid-term Exams: There are five exams scheduled, every other week. Each exam covers the material of the past two weeks, and are not comprehensive. There will be a student-directed review session prior to each exam. As with the quizzes, you may work missed problems again to gain half the points you lost when the exam was administered. Each mid-term exam is worth 50 points.

Final Exam: The final exam will be comprehensive. You do not need to take the final exam if you have achieved 90% of the points available throughout the term. (You have an A at that point, and will receive that grade.) However, you will need to take the final if you have less than 90% at the end of the term. The final exam is worth 250 points.

Grade scale:

Percent	Letter Grade
100-93	A
90-92.9	A-
88-89.9	B+
83-87.9	B
80-82.9	B-
78-79.9	C+
73-77.9	C
70-72.9	C-
68-69.9	D+
63-67.9	D
60-62.9	D-
0-59.9	F

**Policies:**

Late homework can be turned in up to the day the mid-term exam is given on the material. You can receive 60% of the points for a late homework assignment.

If you know ahead of time that you will not be in class for an exam, contact me ahead of time to make some arrangements. If you miss an exam without prior notice, please have some written evidence of your emergency situation, or use the proper University channels to communicate. I am understanding, but need verification of each case.

It is extremely important that you develop good 'math habits'. These include doing your homework in a timely manner, making your numbers legible, and **showing your work**. I commonly give partial credit for having the correct solving method, even if the final answer is wrong. If you do not show your work, and the answer is not correct, you will get no credit for the problem. Train yourself to write fractions in an upright manner, not with a diagonal slash, to avoid pulling unwanted factors into the denominator.

For example:  $\frac{1}{2}$  is not what I want.  $\frac{1}{2}$  is the best way to indicate fractions.

Work in a vertical manner, and keep your equal signs aligned throughout the problem.

Be kind to your math instructor: please **circle your answers** so she can find them easily, in assignments, and on quizzes and exams.

There is no need to start an assignment on a new page of your homework journal, if you clearly mark where the old assignment ends and the new one begins. I suggest drawing a pair of horizontal lines at the end of one assignment to mark the beginning of the new one.

Resist the urge to erase a large amount of work-in-error. Stray marks lead to mistakes. Simply draw a neat X through the wrong work, and start again.

There is very little need for a calculator in this course. It is recommended that you do not use one for routine work. It is essential that you **do not** use one for roots, as they give decimal approximations, not exact answers.

**Take the Math Placement Test:** during the last two weeks of the term. Call the math department secretary at 503-838-8465 to schedule an appointment to take the test between May 24 and June 1. The Algebra Domain score will be extra credit toward your point total, and may bump you into the 'no final exam necessary' category. You do not need to place into Math 105, 111 or 211 in order to pass Math 99, and use it as a pre-requisite for these higher math classes.

**Tentative Schedule on the following page**

