



BEGINNING ALGEBRA – FALL 2024  
MATH 0003.108 TR 12:30-1:50pm Location: Dillard 338

### Course Essential Information

Instructor: M. L. Jones

Office: Pierce 136

Office hours: MW 4:20–4:50pm (in DB 175); W 1:00-2:00pm; TR 3:30–5:00pm

Phone: do not leave voicemail - contact me via email E-mail: [marina.jones@msutexas.edu](mailto:marina.jones@msutexas.edu)

Course Description: This course is designed to include topics in elementary algebra which will prepare each student for the co-requisite mathematics course that will fulfill the core requirements of the student's degree plan. Students must earn a "C" or better in this course to advance to the next required mathematics course.

Textbook: Beginning & Intermediate Algebra by Lial/Hornsby/McGinnis, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Available as e-text with MyLabMath (see below) so no need to purchase a hard copy of textbook.

Required Materials/Expenses: MyLabMath (MML) course management program from Pearson Publishing is REQUIRED and is described in more detail below. Access to a laptop or desktop computer with a webcam and internet connection is required. The Respondus Lockdown Browser is used throughout the semester for assessments and is available as a free download through MSU's website. A simple calculator is recommended and a spiral notebook (or loose-leaf binder) is required.

Computer Requirements: This class requires you to have access to a computer with a webcam and a strong internet connection in order to complete assignments and to take proctored assessments (quizzes and/or tests). Chromebooks, tablets, and mobile devices will not satisfy the technical specifications required for proctored assessments. Computers with the necessary proctoring software installed are available for student use throughout the campus, including labs located in the student center and library as well as Legacy and Dillard. This means that issues with your personal computer or internet access cannot be used as an excuse for missing a deadline! Assignments are due by the published due date, and technical difficulties with a personal computer will not be considered sufficient reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments. If you have technical difficulties using a personal computer, first check your computer security settings, your pop-up settings, and/or try a different browser. If you continue to have technical difficulties, then you will need to contact either the MSU D2L support page or Pearson's MML customer technical support or use one of the many computer labs on campus to access MML or D2L.

Desire2Learn: D2L is an integral part of this course. This class has a designated course homepage on D2L which you are required to log into every weekday Monday through Friday until further notice. You are responsible for all information posted in the Daily News announcements on our D2L homepage. The link to our specific MML course is located on the D2L homepage.

**\*\* MyLabMath is a REQUIRED portion of this course.\*\***

MyLabMath (MML): This online course management program from Pearson Publishing is used for most assignments and assessments in the course. A specific MML course has been created for your class and is linked from the D2L course. Required digital materials for this course are part of the Courseware Access and

Affordability Program at MSU Texas. Students are charged for these required course materials on their student account with the Business Office. Opt-out instructions are sent to students' official my.msutexas.edu email address after the first day of class. Any student who wishes to opt-out of the program (which I strongly discourage) must do so prior to the date indicated in the email. Please contact the MSU Bookstore if you have any questions about the opt-out process. If you opt-out of this program, then you must purchase MyLabMath, either from the campus bookstore or directly online from the publisher. When using MML for the first time in this course, you will need to run a browser check and download necessary plug-ins including the Pearson Lockdown Browser (LDB).

Help/Tutoring Resources: Office hours listed above are subject to change and any change will be promptly communicated in class and via D2L. An additional and excellent resource for homework assistance is MSU's Tutoring & Academic Support (TASP) center. The TASP office is located on the first floor of Moffett Library. TASP offers tutoring both by appointment and on a walk-in basis for students on campus. Check out TASP on the MSU website under Academics for additional information. The most accessible and convenient source of help is provided by the various options available 24/7 within MyLabMath.

IMPORTANT: Using help options available on MML or searching for helpful videos on YouTube or forming study groups or reaching out to TASP are all commendable and acceptable ways to seek out supplemental assistance with the material covered in the class. Copying the work of another student or getting homework answers directly off the internet or using ChatGPT, PhotoMath, or Snapchat (or something similar) to generate work that is not your own – none of these are acceptable in this class and each one represents academic misconduct in violation of the student conduct code. Mathematics is not a spectator sport; it requires active participation in order to master specific problem-solving skills. The purpose of assignments is to learn these skills - not to copy off the internet in order to get a grade that has no relevance to your level of mastery. A student with very high homework and online quiz grades who cannot replicate those results in person creates doubt as to possible academic misconduct. Consequences for misconduct range from receiving a zero on an assignment to being dropped from the course with an F to even more serious repercussions for repeated infractions.

### Attendance/Participation and Drop Policies

#### Attendance/Participation

Attendance is an essential component of this course and is required. Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. This includes arriving on time, staying until the end, and being prepared and engaged. Daily attendance, at a minimum level, corresponds to attending class in person every Tuesday and Thursday from 12:30pm until 1:50pm. If you are absent from more than four classes, you may receive a grade of "F" for excessive absences.

In addition, you are required to log into the D2L course homepage and to read the Daily News post each weekday MTWRF until further notice. The Daily News posts on D2L serve as a fundamental and primary source of information from the instructor to the class. Students are responsible for being aware of all information communicated through these posts. Attendance expands to include participation in required activities such as discussion forums, specific check-in activities, adhering to communication requests, and completing homework assignments in a timely manner.

Late Arrivals, Early Departures, and Disruptions: Any late arrival to class may be counted as an absence at the instructor's discretion. Students who need to leave class prior to the dismissal of class should speak to the instructor beforehand in order to not incur an absence. It is disruptive to the classroom environment for students to leave class for personal reasons and then return to the classroom. Cellphone use in any manner is considered as disruptive behavior in these policies. Please turn off all cellular devices during class.

### Excused or Unexcused Absences

Absences are not categorized as excused or unexcused. All absences from class will be counted as official absences except authorized absences as defined in the Student Handbook. If you miss class due to hospitalization or a death in your family, you should notify the Dean of Students immediately. Absences due to required participation in university-sponsored activities must be approved by the Athletic Director and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange with the instructor to make up all work missed during an authorized absence.

### Drop Policies

**Instructor Drops:** Instructors may drop a student from class for disruptive conduct during either in-person or online class sessions which could include inappropriate comments made via email or posted in discussion forums, for consistently failing to complete class assignments as well as for excessive absences as outlined above. Reminder that cellphone use in any manner is considered as disruptive behavior in these policies. A student dropped for any of these reasons will receive a course grade of "F".

**Student Drops:** If you wish to drop this course, you must first contact your instructor. Students who have not met the readiness standards of the Texas Success Initiative must continue to attend class and may not drop this course prior to Monday, October 14, 2024. Students receiving financial aid should contact the financial aid office before initiating a student drop.

### Withdrawal Date

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W" is October 21, 2024.

## Course Structure and Schedule

The course content is designed to be completed in a sequential manner and consists of four units of study. There is a pronounced structure of prerequisites as you progress through MML in each unit: homework > quiz > homework > quiz > unit test. This progression through the MML coursework has built-in minimum grade requirements in order to help increase student success.

## Evaluation/Grading Policies

### D2L Assignments/Assessments

There are various graded activities that are only accessed through D2L; examples include all required discussions and any D2L quizzes/tests. Individual D2L log-in activity, including access of available instructor-created supplemental material, is required and will be closely monitored. Any D2L-generated grades will be manually added to your MML gradebook so that all course grades will be located in one place. The full D2L gradebook is not utilized in this course.

### MML Homework

A MML online homework assignment has been created for each textbook section included in the course. You are required to keep your assignments organized in a spiral notebook (or loose-leaf binder) in which you will write out the step-by-step work needed to solve each problem. You may be asked to present evidence of your work during "spot checks", tutoring sessions, or as documentation. MML assignments are set up to allow you multiple opportunities to get credit for each problem and thus attain a very good homework grade. There are numerous and varied supplemental media resources provided as part of MML. Even though these items are not always specifically required for completion of an assignment, be aware that these types of resources are available to you as additional tools to aid in your understanding of the material.

**Forward progress requirement:** You must make at least a 70% on each homework assignment in order to continue to the next assignment or quiz and maintain forward progress in the course.

**Homework Due Dates:** Each MML assignment will have a specified due date – both date and time of day. The assignment will be available to work on before its due date and must be completed before this specified time in order to receive full credit. After the due date, the assignment will still be accessible but will incur a late penalty and a 25% deduction in the grade. The late penalty will only apply to those problems completed after the due date. If the assignment was not started before the due date, it will show as “past due” in the MML gradebook. If started but not completed, a grade will show in the gradebook but be aware that you can continue to access the assignment and complete it. The assignment will remain available in late mode until the night before the unit test over the included material; after the unit test, the assignment can no longer be completed and all “past due” assignments will automatically be updated to zeroes in the MML gradebook.

### Quizzes

Short quizzes are also included as part of the course work grade. On MML a quiz cannot be opened and attempted until after the pertinent homework assignments are completed successfully. Unlike the homework assignments, you only get one opportunity to answer each question correctly. Students are allowed two attempts at each quiz. At the end of the semester, the lowest quiz score will be dropped before computing the final course grade. Most quizzes will be taken on MML but a few quizzes may be given in person during class or administered directly through D2L; such information will be communicated in more detail as needed. Expect most online MML quizzes to be video proctored using the Pearson Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor + webcam.

**Forward progress requirement:** You must make a minimum grade of 60% on a quiz in order to continue to the next assignment listed on MML and maintain forward progress in the course.

### Tests

There are four unit tests, each worth 100 points. Tentative dates for the four unit tests are: September 19, October 10, October 31, and November 26. Tests in the course will be administered in person during class unless it is necessary to change a test to online only. Any and all online tests will require video proctoring utilizing Respondus Monitor and the Pearson Lockdown Browser.

### Final Exam

The comprehensive final exam is required for course completion. There is no makeup available for the final exam. The final exam is scheduled for Wednesday, December 11, 2024.

### Grading

There will be four unit tests, a comprehensive final exam, and a coursework grade which will be generated from all required assignments and quizzes (both D2L and MML). This semester the maximum number of total points possible is 700 points, and the point breakdown is as follows:

- Test #1 – 100 points
- Test #2 – 100 points
- Test #3 – 100 points
- Test #4 – 100 points
- Final exam – 200 points
- Assignments, including MML homework and D2L required participation items – 50 points
- Quizzes, including MML and designated D2L items – 50 points

The final course grade will be determined by the earned percentage of possible points. The point range for each letter grade is as follows: 630-700 points earns an A, 560-629 points earns a B, 490-559 points earns a C, 420-489 points earns a D, and below 420 points earns an F.

**Exception to the above point breakdown:** In general, the course grade cannot be more than one letter grade higher than the grade earned on the comprehensive final exam.

## Gradebook

Be aware that the overall average shown in the MML gradebook is a running average of completed work and can change dramatically as quiz and test scores are added into the gradebook. All D2L-generated grades will be added into the MML gradebook as off-line entries.

## Make-up Policy

Make-up tests are generally not allowed, so a missed test will result in a grade of "0". Per the instructor's discretion, a make-up test may be considered only in exceptional situations and only with timely, preferably pre-test, communication from the student. In extenuating circumstances that include prompt communication by the student, it may be possible to replace the zero on one missed test with the grade earned on the comprehensive final exam up to a maximum grade of 70%. This is at the instructor's discretion and is determined on a case-by-case basis. Make-up quizzes will not be given; a missed quiz due date, for any reason, will result in an automatic grade of "0" on the quiz. There is no make-up option for the final exam.

## Important Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, policies and procedures, assignments, and schedule may be made at any time at the discretion of the instructor.

## Inclement Weather Policy

In the case of inclement weather causing MSU to delay or cancel on-campus classes, all fully online classes will continue without interruption and with no changes in scheduled due dates. Our class is classified as hybrid – partially in person, partially online. Even though we may be unable to meet class in person due to closures, online assignments on MML can still be completed on time. Always check the course homepage for additional clarification during campus closures.

## MSU Official Email

Effective January 1, 2024, all official university correspondence will go to your [@my.msutexas.edu](mailto:@my.msutexas.edu) email address rather than to the preferred email address you may have listed in Banner/WebWorld. There may be a transition time as this policy is implemented throughout the university.

## University Policies regarding Academic Misconduct

### Academic Dishonesty

Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. Students should refer to the current MSU Student Handbook and Activities Calendar and the MSU Undergraduate Bulletin for university policies on academic dishonesty, class attendance, student rights & activities.

### Grade Appeals and Academic Honesty Checklists

These checklists are available on the MCOSME website and provide information on the process for grade appeals or appeals of academic honesty sanctions. The [Grade Appeal Checklist](#) provides the timeline for appealing from the instructor to the next in line (dean of the college). The [Academic Honesty Checklist](#) describes the timeline for appealing from the instructor to the next in line (chair of department) and who must be notified of academic honesty infractions.

## University Policies & Services

### Services for Students With Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

### Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

### Active Shooter Policies

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "*Run. Hide. Fight.*" which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: "[Run. Hide. Fight.](#)"