

Course Syllabus: **Contemporary Math**
McCoy College of Science, Mathematics & Engineering
Math 1053 Section 103
Fall 2025, Aug. 25 – Dec. 11

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Dawn Slavens
Office: Bolin Science Hall - 122P

Office Hours:

- **Mondays:** 2:00 – 4:00 PM
- **Tuesdays:** 10:30 – 11:30 AM and 2:00 – 3:00 PM
- **Thursdays:** 10:30 – 11:30 AM

I am also available to meet outside these times by appointment, either in person or via Zoom if you do not live on or near campus.

Students may schedule an appointment by:

- **Stopping by my office** (when I am not in class or in a meeting, I may be available to meet on the spot), or
- **Emailing me** to arrange a specific time.

Office phone: (940) 397-4013

E-mail: dawn.slavens@msutexas.edu

Class Meeting Days, Times, Location

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 10:00 – 10:50 am in Bolin Science Hall room 143

Course Description from MSU Catalog

A survey of the use of mathematics in the modern world. Topics include: theory of elections and apportionment, graphs and networks, and statistics

Textbook & Instructional Materials

MyLab Math digital materials for the text *Excursions in Modern Mathematics*, tenth edition, by Tannenbaum are required for this course.

This course participates in the MSU Texas Access & Affordability Program, which provides students with access to required course materials (e.g., MyLab Math) at a reduced, pre-negotiated price through the MSU Bookstore.

Students who wish to **opt out** of this program and purchase course materials on their own may do so. **Opt-out instructions will be sent to your MSU email address (@my.msutexas.edu) on the second day of class** by the MSU Bookstore. It is the student's responsibility to check their email and follow the opt-out instructions in a timely manner.

If you choose to opt out:

- You will need to **purchase access to the course materials independently**, at a cost that Pearson and the MSU Bookstore guarantee will be **higher** than the program price.
- You are required to **contact Pearson Support** directly after purchasing access to have your **access code verified**.
- If you do **not** contact Pearson for verification, your access to course materials will be **revoked immediately or later in the semester**.
- Loss of access may result in receiving **zeros** on all assignments completed in MyLab Math until access is restored.
- If access is not regained in a timely manner, you may need to **withdraw from the course** since completing homework is a mandatory component of this course.

Students are strongly encouraged to remain enrolled in the Access & Affordability Program unless they are fully prepared to manage independent purchase and verification of materials. If you do decide to opt-out, a phone number to Pearson is 1-833-585-1828. Please use it to contact Pearson Support to purchase an access code or to have an access code purchased elsewhere verified to insure your access to course materials.

Calculator Requirement: Each student will need to have a scientific calculator. Bring your calculator with you to each class meeting. The TI 30X IIS is a scientific calculator that sells for about \$15 through Amazon. You are not allowed to use a calculator on a phone while in class.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

You will access MyLab Math through the MSU D2L program. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage.

On D2L, I will post the following:

- Announcements and occasional reminders.
- General exam review material.
- Your grades on exams, quizzes, and unit homework averages.
- Attendance (specifically absences and tardies)
- Links to video lectures that I may assign you to watch.

I recommend the mobile Brightspace Pulse App. It will allow you to have quick access to anything posted within D2L.

Punctuality and Attendance Policy

In particular, what you need to know about being absent from this class:

- 1.** A student who accumulates more than three unexcused or more than six total (excused and unexcused combined) absences may be instructor dropped from the class with a grade of WF or F. After a student has attained two absences (excused and unexcused combined), each additional unexcused absence will result in a 1% deduction to the student's semester course average.

To best way to ensure Dr. Slavens identifies an absence as excused is to provide timely supportive documentation. Examples of acceptable documentation include:

- A doctor's note for a **non-routine** appointment (e.g., illness)
- A university approved signed letter or memo confirming participation in an athletic or academic event

If supportive documentation **cannot** be provided for an emergent situation resulting in an absence, Dr. Slavens may excuse the absence if the student:

- i. Notifies her via email as soon as is feasibly possible and within two business days of the absence, and
- ii. Provides a brief written explanation of the situation that caused the absence, and
- iii. States what they will do to stay on track or catch up on course content.

Note: Consecutive absences with no communication to Dr. Slavens about the absences prior to the next class meeting will generally result in the absences being considered as unexcused.

- 2.** Students are expected to arrive to class on-time and stay for the entire class period. Leaving in the middle of class to go to the restroom, take a phone call, etc., should be avoided except in a rare emergency. A student may be counted as absent for arriving to class late or leaving class early. A student that need to arrive late or leave early on a given day should discuss the need to do so with Dr. Slavens.
- 3.** Any student who is physically present but not mentally present and engaged in class will be counted as absent.
- 4.** Any student who violates the Electronic Devices Policy will be counted as absent.
- 5.** A student who is counted absent from class will receive a zero on any work submitted during that day's class.

Grading

Course Grade – Your grade will be based on Homework (done in MyLab Math), Quizzes, and Unit Exams. The table below shows the weight of each category for computing your course average as an overall percentage score.

Table 1: Weight allocated to each assessment type.

| Assignments | Weight |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Unit 1 Adjusted Homework Average | 8% |
| Unit 1 Quizzes | 8% |
| Unit 2 Adjusted Homework Average | 6% |
| Unit 2 Quizzes | 6% |
| Unit 3 Adjusted Homework Average | 6% |
| Unit 3 Quizzes | 6% |
| Unit Exams (three, equally weighted) | 60% |

Note: Unit Adjusted Homework Average is the **smaller** of your **MyLab Math Homework Average** for the unit AND **125% of your unit average based on the unit test and quizzes within the unit.**

The standard 90-80-70-60 grading scale will be used to assign course grades of A, B, C, D and F. There is **no extra credit** given in this course.

Taking Notes During Class

You are expected to take notes during every class lecture. These notes should be clear and legible so that you can refer to them while completing your homework or studying for the course. I reserve the right to ask students to upload a copy of their class notes to D2L at any time. Students that do not comply will be counted as absent since not taking notes indicates not being engaged in class.

Teaching and Learning During Inclement Weather Days

If campus closes due to inclement weather during a time when class is scheduled, expect me to post, by 11 AM within D2L, a video over the topics planned to be covered on the day of the closure. There will be no change in the class schedule, except for possibly a slight extension for completing homework.

Homework

MyLab Math is the homework platform used for this course. Homework sets will be assigned over each section of the book that is covered in class. There are due dates given within MyLab Math for each homework set. Each due date time is the start of class on the day the homework is due. Students may work on an assignment past the due date until the Unit test day, but there will be a 25% penalty on any problem completed during this late period.

Note: When you do not get full credit when working a problem within the homework, you will generally have the option of working on a similar problem. If you work the similar problem correctly, you will then receive credit for the

problem. When you have this option, there are unlimited attempts at a similar problem. After completing a problem, look for “similar question.”

Students are expected to keep a **homework notebook** and **show work** on problems that require a multistep process for solving. Within your homework notebook you should:

1. Label each assignment with the name of the assignment from within MyLab Math.
2. For each problem within the assignment that requires a multistep process for solving, number the problem in your homework notebook with the corresponding problem number from the MyLab Math assignment and then show your work for solving the problem. Calculations in your work can be done on a calculator.
3. *Bring your homework notebook with you to each class meeting and to any office hours you attend for the purpose of getting help with the homework.*
4. Dr. Slavens may require any student to submit their homework notebook if there appears to be a discrepancy between a student’s unit homework average and a student’s unit quiz or unit test average.

Math is learned through practice. Therefore, it is important that you create a weekly schedule for yourself that allows you adequate time to spend working assigned homework problems.

Any student with more than 7 incomplete assignments (grades under 50% will be classified as incomplete) may be instructor dropped from the course with a grade of F.

Quizzes

Quizzes will be announced in advance and administered during class. Each chapter covered in the course will generally include one to two quizzes. Quiz content will reflect problems and concept similar to those found in homework assignments and class lectures.

- **Missed Quizzes:** A missed quiz will receive a grade of zero. Make-up quizzes will not be given under any circumstances, regardless of the reason for the absence.
- **Excused Absences:** If your absence is officially excused by me (see page 3 of the syllabus) and you miss a quiz within a unit, the grade for the missed quiz will be replaced by your score on the corresponding Unit Exam.
- **Tardiness:** Students who arrive late and after a quiz has been distributed may not be permitted to take the quiz and will receive a grade of zero.

If a student will miss a quiz due to an approved university activity, the student should request to take the quiz early. Timely notification (generally two business days prior to the quiz) is needed to ensure the opportunity to take the quiz.

Exams

There will be three unit-exams during the semester. Tentative exam dates (subject to change with prior notice) are October 1st (Unit 1), November 3rd (Unit 2), and December 10th (Unit 3) from 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM. The exam on Dec. 10th is during the final exam period for this course.

Exam Make-Up Policy

If a student will miss an exam due to an approved university activity, at least one week in advance of the scheduled date of the exam the student must request to take the exam early.

Make-up exams are **not generally offered**. However, under exceptional circumstances, a make-up exam **may be granted at the discretion of the instructor** in cases of a **medical or personal emergency** that the instructor deems **unavoidable**.

To be considered for a make-up exam, the following conditions must be met:

- **Timely Notification:** The student must notify the instructor of the emergency **as soon as is humanly possible**, and **no later than 5:00 PM on the day of the missed exam**.
- **Documentation:** The notification must include **appropriate documentation** (preferred), or at minimum, a **detailed written explanation** of the emergency.
- **Limitations:**
 - **Only one make-up exam** is allowed per student during the semester.
 - **Make-up exams will not be granted** for absences due to vacations or other personal travel when classes are in session.

Failure to meet any of the above conditions may result in **forfeiture of the opportunity to take a make-up exam**.

Computer Requirements

This class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete your homework assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer to complete assignments for this class.

Assignments are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments. Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble with MyLab Math. If you have technical difficulties with MyLab Math, contact Pearson Student Tech Support at 1-833-585-1828.

When you need help with this course, where can you go?

1. To your professor
 - See your professor's office hours on page one of this syllabus.
 - You should have with you both your notes and all related work that you have done on the topics you are seeking help with when attending office hours for the purpose of getting help with course content.
2. To the *Tutoring and Academic Support Program (TASP)*, located in Moffett Library. This program offers free additional tutoring in math as well as other courses. You can find out more about their services by visiting their office or searching *TASP* on the MSU website. Spring tutoring and Homework Help Lounge will begin offering services on Tuesday, Jan. 28th. Their services will end on Thursday, May 8th. The TASP Learning Center (TLC) does not offer tutoring during the week of final exams.

Academic Misconduct Policy

All work that you submit for this course must be your own. Submitting work that has been generated, in whole or in part, by AI tools, websites, solution manuals, or any external sources is a violation of academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, using unauthorized assistance to complete assignments, submitting someone else's work, or misrepresenting the source of your work.

Remember (see Homework section of the syllabus) that you are to have a **homework notebook** and **show work** on problems that require a multistep process for solving.

Any evidence that you submitted work that is not your own is considered an act of academic dishonesty. An act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the university and will result in one of the following academic sanctions:

- Receiving a 0 on the submitted work, or
- Receiving a 0 on an entire component of your grade (see table under Grading)
- An F in Math 1053 that will remain permanently on your transcript and within your MSU GPA.

Electronic Device Policy

Earbuds are to be removed and cell phones silenced and stored, in a bag or placed on your tabletop with screen side down, at the beginning of class. Other electronic devices must also be appropriately stored prior to the start of class. A student with a cell phone or other device that is not appropriately stored, or a student with earbuds in their ears, will be in noncompliance with this policy and their grade will be reduced by 1% for each occurrence of noncompliance. Students that continue to be noncompliant with this policy may be referred to the Dean of Students Office and/or the student may be withdrawn from the class by the instructor.

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, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. 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](#).

Instructor Drop

The Student Handbook contains information on the Instructor Drop policy at Midwestern State University. Dr. Slavens reserves the right to drop a student from the class with a grade of WF or F for any reason described in the policy. The reasons within the policy include excessive absences, consistently failing to meet class assignments, indifferent attitude, and disruptive conduct. More information can be found at: [Student Handbook](#)

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. More information can be found at: <https://msutexas.edu/campus-carry/>

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.