



College Algebra

Math 1233-X11

Fall 2026

Course Essential Information

Instructor: Marina Lynn Jones

Office: Dillard 211B Office phone: N/A - do not leave a voicemail

E-mail: marina.jones@msutexas.edu

Note: All course times/due dates are Central time zone.

Availability/Communication:

In-person office hours are tentatively scheduled for 3:00-4:30pm on Mondays/Wednesdays and 3:30-4:30pm on Tuesdays/Thursdays. In an online class, the best way to communicate an issue or pose a question is via email. I am usually able to reply to all emails within 24 hours (up to 48 hours in some cases), except on weekends. Please note that emails received after 5:00pm should not expect a reply before 1:00pm the next weekday. I do not reply to emails over the weekend or on holidays.

I will be communicating with the class through News posts on our D2L course homepage and via D2L email. Be sure to re-configure your D2L email settings using your preferred email address during the first few days of class. Instructions for how to do this are included under Content on the D2L course homepage.

Course Description/Prerequisites:

This course is entirely online and is asynchronous. This means that the class is not all in the same place at the same time. You will be on an individualized Learning Path (more on this later) which will require you to determine a weekly work schedule, within the course's assessment framework, that will help you accomplish your goals for the semester. This requires a high degree of self-responsibility coupled with serious time-management skills. Your progress for much of this course will be decided through Mastery-Based Assessment using a platform called ALEKS. Mastery-Based Assessment gives you the student the opportunity to learn from mistakes without punishment and gives you autonomy for your success in this course. Much of this learning will be unproctored and formative. The exception to this will be the three proctored assessments that constitute the majority of the course grade.

Successful completion of this course will fulfill the core math requirement of the student's degree plan. If your major is in STEM, then this course is required in order for you to move forward in your degree plan. No college level course work is required before beginning this course. However, students must meet the requirements of the [Texas Success Initiative](#). MATH 1033 with a grade of C or better, math THEA score of 270, or satisfactory score on placement exam.

Course Objectives:

One of your primary objectives this semester will be to learn correct use of mathematical terminology and notation. You will also be learning problem solving skills from the point of view of a mathematician. Learning objectives included in the course content include the following: Demonstrate and apply knowledge of properties of functions, including domain and range, operations, compositions, and inverses. Recognize and apply polynomial, rational, radical, exponential and logarithmic functions and solve related equations. Apply graphing techniques. Evaluate all roots of higher degree polynomial and rational functions. Recognize, solve and apply systems of linear equations.

Instructional Materials and Requirements

Desire2Learn (D2L):

D2L is an integral part of this course. This class has a designated course homepage on D2L which you are required to log into at least twice a week. I will post a new News announcement every Monday and Thursday throughout the semester. These News announcements and the course files posted under Content on the course's D2L homepage serve as fundamental and primary sources of communication from the instructor to the class. You are responsible for all information posted in these files and announcements on our D2L homepage.

Required Equipment/Expenses:

A laptop or desktop computer, a webcam, and internet access are required. Chromebooks, tablets, and mobile devices will not satisfy the technical specifications for the proctored assessments that will be required. A graphing calculator is highly recommended but not required. The Respondus proctoring suite which includes Respondus Monitor are used throughout the semester for video-proctoring of assessments. Respondus is available as a free download through MSU's website. The fee-per-use service ProctorU may be used for the required comprehensive final knowledge check/exam. If so, this will be communicated via D2L as we near the end of the semester.

Textbook & Instructional Materials:

We will be using the mathematics platform ALEKS throughout the semester. A link to ALEKS is accessible through our D2L course homepage. Please refer to the course file available under Content on our D2L homepage titled "The ALEKS Environment" for an overview of the ALEKS system before trying to access our linked ALEKS course. Within the online ALEKS environment, you will also have access to the textbook for this course: College Algebra, 2nd Ed. (McGraw-Hill) by Miller and Gerken.

ALEKS:

This online course management platform from McGraw-Hill is used for all instruction, practice, and assessments in the course. A specific ALEKS course has been created and linked from our D2L course homepage. The 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. Your course materials will be available on the first day of class through D2L. If you wish to opt out of this program, then you will need to purchase these digital materials on your own at a higher cost and with delayed availability. I strongly recommend that you do not "opt out" of this program, but instructions for doing so will be sent to your my.msutexas.edu email address on the second day of class.

Course Expectations

General Expectations:

You are expected to log into ALEKS at least three days per week to work on course content; log into D2L at least two days per week to view News announcements, updates and class information; ask specific, thoughtful questions (through email, office hours, D2L, or ALEKS); put forth your best effort every day.

Time Commitment:

Since this is an online course, there are no class meetings to attend. However, ALEKS will track the time you spend working on this course. You should expect to spend somewhere between 4 - 8 hours online each week. Success in this course normally requires work done at a steady pace with at least some work every day or two. Ignoring the course for a week or more often results in time wasted spent relearning material and often creates such a backlog that it becomes very difficult to get back on pace. In general, bouts of inactivity have been shown to be not only unproductive but actually detrimental and a major factor in failure to complete the course successfully.

Help/Tutoring Resources:

In general, I endeavor to reply to all emails received in a timely manner and within 24 hours; however, emails received after 5:00pm weekdays or over the weekend should not expect a reply before 1:00pm on the next weekday. An excellent resource for local students 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 ALEKS.

Important distinction regarding outside resources:

Using help options available through ALEKS 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 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. 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.

ALEKS Course Components

Modules:

There are a total of 455 topics to be mastered within the linked ALEKS course. These topics are divided into four modules. The four modules that make up the content covered in the ALEKS course are: 1) Course Readiness and Review of Prerequisites, 2) Equations and Inequalities, 3) Functions and Relations, and 4) Other Functions. Each module accounts for 7.5% of the course grade and is open and available until the last day of the course.

Initial Knowledge Check:

The very first thing that you will do in ALEKS is to take the Initial Knowledge Check; it is equivalent to a semester “pre-test” and does not affect your course average. ALEKS will present you with questions over the entire scope of the course and will constantly be adapting the questions asked based on your responses. All of this is done in order to determine a good starting point for your Learning Path based on your demonstrated knowledge and background. Because of this, it is highly unlikely that any two students will have exactly the same starting point within ALEKS. Also, based on your responses, you will most likely get credit for many topics within each of the four modules. Some students start their Learning Path with fewer than 80 topics already mastered and some start with almost 200 topics mastered. If you start on the lower end, your first goal should be to finish Module 1 as quickly as possible so that you can begin learning/reviewing the bulk of the essential algebraic topics in the other three modules.

Graded Knowledge Checks:

There are three Graded Knowledge Checks which are the equivalent of major tests and which will require video-proctoring. Detailed information regarding these will be found under D2L Content and within timely News announcements as each one approaches. The structure of each one is exactly like the Initial Knowledge Check. You will be presented with questions over the entire scope of the course, not just what you have worked on and learned so far. The first two Graded Knowledge Checks are each worth 15% of your course grade. The Final Graded Knowledge Check accounts for 30% of your course grade. Due to its importance and in order to maintain the integrity of the course, the Final Graded Knowledge Check may require the use of more advanced video-proctoring such as ProctorU. This information will be shared as we approach the end of the semester.

Each Graded Knowledge Check must be completed during a specific time frame:

- First Graded Knowledge Check: September 8 – October 4
- Second Graded Knowledge Check: November 2 – November 8
- Final Graded Knowledge Check: December 7 – December 10

Weekly Topic Goals:

The Weekly Topic Goals grade only accounts for 10% of your course grade but it represents where the real work of learning is taking place. There are 12 weeks in the semester that are designated as topic goal weeks and your grade will be the average of the top 10 weeks (so two lowest grades are dropped). These grades are not based on a test or quiz over material but rather how many topics you master in a week’s time. The target goal for each week is to learn 25 topics that week. If you master 25 or more topics during the week, your weekly grade will be 100%. If you don’t quite hit that target, but you do master 20 topics then your weekly grade will be 20/25 or 80%. If you are barely able to work on the class at all during an extremely challenging week and only accomplish 10 topics for the week, then your weekly grade will be 10/25 or 40%. Even during your most hectic weeks, try to find time to work on your Learning Path even a little bit in order to not make a zero for the week. It is all too easy to procrastinate in a class like this and think that you have plenty of time to get it all done. These weekly grades are designed to keep you moving forward and thus help with time management.

Grading/Evaluation Policies

Your course grade will be computed based on the following categories:

- Module grades (4 @ 7.5% each) – 30%
- Weekly Topic Goals (best 10 out of 12) – 10%
- Graded Knowledge Check 1 – 15%
- Graded Knowledge Check 2 – 15%
- Final Graded Knowledge Check – 30%

The final letter grade will be based on the overall percentage showing on ALEKS after taking the Final Graded Knowledge Check as well as your grade on it. The four module grades will be determined at the time of the Final Graded Knowledge Check and will be affected by your performance on that assessment. Final course grades will not be rounded up and no extra credit will be given.

Final determination of course grade:

***Note:** You will need both, Overall Percentage and Final Knowledge Check Score, in the same row to receive that grade letter.

Grade	Overall Percentage	Final Knowledge Check Score
A	At least 90%	At least 80%
B	80—90%	At least 70%
C	70—80%	At least 60%
D	60—70%	At least 50%
F	Less than 60%	n/a

Note that your course grade will be adjusted if your Final Knowledge Check grade is significantly lower than your grade average before taking this “final exam”. In general, your course grade cannot be more than one letter grade higher than your final exam grade. This policy is necessary to help ensure the integrity of the course.

Last day to drop and receive a W:

Students receiving financial aid should contact the financial aid office before initiating a student drop. The last date to drop any course is Monday, November 23, 2026.

Inclement Weather Policy:

Since this is a fully-online course, campus closures due to inclement weather generally do not affect any published due dates and the course will continue without interruptions. In the event of a prolonged campus closure, check our D2L course homepage for specific and up-to-date information regarding this policy.

MSU email:

Effective January 1, 2024, all official university correspondence will go to your **@my.msutexas.edu** email address rather than to the preferred email address you may have listed in Banner/WebWorld.

Course Changes:

Changes in the course syllabus, policies and procedures, assignments, tests, schedule, and proctoring requirements may be made at the discretion of the instructor. If possible, I will

announce such changes on D2L. You are responsible for knowing everything that I post on D2L or email to the class.

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, located in the Student Wellness Center, phone number (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](#).

Recording Classes:

Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission. Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. Some faculty may not permit recordings of their classes. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of Disability Support Services. Such recordings may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs:

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#) to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact

the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@msutexas.edu.

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."](#)

Tobacco Policy:

Midwestern State University seeks to provide a safe, healthy, pleasant environment for its faculty, staff, and students. To this end, the use of tobacco products, including smoke and smokeless tobacco, and the advertising, sale, free distribution, and discarding of tobacco products shall be prohibited in all indoor and outdoor facilities and in all university vehicles. The policy extends to faculty, staff, students, vendors, guests, and visitors.