

Course Syllabus: Linear Algebra
McCoy College of Science, Mathematics & Engineering
Math 2753 Section 201
Spring 2026, Jan. 19 – May 14

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Dawn Slavens

Office: Bolin Science Hall – 122P

Office Hours (located in Bolin Science Hall – 122P):

- **Mondays:** 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM & 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
- **Tuesdays & Thursdays:** 9:00 – 10:00 AM
- **Fridays:** 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

Volunteer tutor for TASP (located on the first floor of the library)

- **Wednesdays:** 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

I am also available to meet outside these times by appointment. I am generally on campus between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5 p.m. Please don't hesitate to schedule an appointment with me if you would like additional support with course content – I am here to help.

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 day and time to meet.

Office phone: (940) 397-4013

E-mail: dawn.slavens@msutexas.edu

Class Meeting Days, Times, Location

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.

Classroom: Bolin Science Hall - 111

Catalog Information

An applied approach to systems of linear equations and matrices, linear transformations and matrices, determinates, eigenvalues, and eigenvectors. Use of technology such as MATLAB and calculators with matrix capabilities is integrated into the course.

Prerequisite: Math 1634

Textbook & Calculator Policy

Required Textbook: *Elementary Linear Algebra*, Eighth Edition, by Ron Larson, ISBN: 9781305658004

Calculator Policy:

- **Calculator Privileges:**
Students who earn calculator privileges may use a **non-CAS scientific calculator** on some quizzes and portions of certain exams.
- **Earning Privileges:**
To earn these privileges, students must complete a designated assignment **perfectly**. This assignment demonstrates mastery of applying **elementary row operations** to reduce any matrix to **reduced row echelon form** using the method taught in class.
- **Expectations for Matrix Work:**
Even with calculator privileges, **all matrix work must be shown clearly and completely by hand**, unless explicitly stated otherwise. Calculator output alone is **not sufficient**.
- **Technology Use:**
In the second half of the semester, students **may use technology** (such as MATLAB) for some matrix calculations on assignments, quizzes, or exams **without showing supporting work**.
 - Students **without calculator privileges** may have additional restrictions on MATLAB usage.
 - Specific permissions will be **announced in advance**.
- **Calculator Ownership:**
You are **not required to own a calculator** capable of performing matrix calculations. When permitted, **MATLAB will be available** on classroom desktop computers.
- **Recommendations and Accessibility:**
It is **recommended** that students own a calculator allowed under this policy.
If affordability is a concern, please **contact the instructor** to discuss possible solutions.
- **Maintaining Privileges:**
Calculator privileges **may be revoked** if, through continued assessment, it is determined that mastery of matrix operations is **not maintained**.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage.

On D2L, I will post the following:

- Announcements and occasional reminders.
- Links to video lectures that I assign you to watch.
- Your grades on exams and quizzes.
- Attendance (specifically absences and tardies)

Punctuality and Attendance Policy

Regular and punctual attendance is expected. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class period. Arriving late or leaving early may result in being counted as absent for that class session.

Absences

1. Limits and Consequences

- A student who accumulates **more than two unexcused** or **more than five total absences** (excused and unexcused combined) may be instructor-dropped from the course with a grade of **WF or F**.
- After a student has accumulated **two total absences** (excused or unexcused), **each additional unexcused absence** will result in a **2% deduction** from the student's semester course average.

2. Excused Absences and Documentation

- The most effective way to ensure an absence is recorded as excused is to provide **timely, appropriate documentation**.
- Acceptable documentation includes, but is not limited to:
 - A doctor's note for a non-routine medical appointment or illness
 - A university-approved, signed letter or memo verifying participation in an athletic or academic event.
- If documentation cannot be provided due to an emergent situation, the instructor may, at her discretion, excuse the absence provided that the student:
 1. Notifies her via email as soon as is reasonably possible, but within two business days of the absence, of the reason for the absence, and
 2. Completes all assigned homework covering the material from the missed class.
- **Note:** If a student has two consecutive absences and does not notify Dr. Slavens before the class meeting following the second absence, those absences will generally be recorded as **unexcused**.

Punctuality and Class Presence

3. Arrival, Departure, and Engagement

- Students are expected to arrive on time and remain for the entire class period.
- Leaving class during the session (e.g., for restroom breaks, phone calls, or other non-emergency reasons) should be avoided and is permitted only in rare emergencies.
- At the instructor's discretion, a student may be marked absent for arriving late, leaving early, or leaving and returning during the class period.

- Students who anticipate the need to arrive late or leave early should discuss this with Dr. Slavens in advance.

4. Active Participation

- Students are expected to be mentally present and actively engaged throughout the class session. This includes removing earbuds, headphones, and other headsets, refraining from working on assignments for other courses during the class, and refraining from using the computers in the classroom except when they are to be used as part of classroom instruction.
- Failure to comply with these expectations—without instructor prompting—may result in the student being marked absent for that class period.

5. In-Class Work

- A student who is counted absent will receive a **zero** on any work completed or submitted during that class session.

Grading

The weights of various assessment categories used to calculate your overall course average are shown in Table 1. Your overall course average corresponds to a final course grade, as indicated in Table 2. Extra credit is not offered in this course.

Table 1: Weight allocated to each assessment

Assessment	Weight
Quizzes	20%
Exam 1	18%
Exam 2	18%
Exam 3	18%
Final Exam	26%

Table 2: Percentages for final grade

% of Total Points	Grade
90-100	A
80-89.99	B
70-79.99	C
60-69.99	D
0-59.99	F

Note Taking

You are expected to take notes during class lectures. Good notes can be a helpful resource for you as you are working assigned homework problems and as you are preparing for quizzes and exams. When a portion of class lecture is given through videos (referred to as video supplements) you are expected to take notes as you watch the video.

Homework

Homework problems from the textbook will be assigned from each section covered in the course. You are to keep a three-ring binder homework notebook in which you will complete all assigned homework problems.

Your homework notebook should be organized as follows:

1. The first page of each homework section must be labeled with the textbook section number and a list of the assigned exercises (by problem number) included in that assignment.
2. For each assigned exercise, write the problem number and copy the problem from the textbook (unless it is a word problem). Beneath the copied problem, show your complete solution process.
3. Bring your homework notebook to each class meeting. At times, you may be allowed to use your homework notebook while taking a quiz.
4. The instructor reserves the right to collect homework at any time during the semester and to use it as the basis for a quiz grade. For this reason, all completed homework must be kept organized as outlined above. Any homework problems assigned during a given week are expected to be completed by Tuesday of the following week, unless otherwise announced in class. When homework is collected and used as the basis of a quiz grade, the instructor will be assessing completeness and correctness of solutions to problems within the assignment.

Math is learned through practice. Therefore, it is important that you create a weekly schedule that allows adequate time to work on assigned homework problems. Since this is a 3-credit-hour course, you should expect to spend approximately 6-9 hours per week outside of class learning the course material. Most of this time should be devoted to completing assigned homework problems.

Below is information obtained from the Preface of the required textbook: LarsonLinearAlgebra.com is a companion website that offers multiple learning tools and resources to supplement your learning. Access to these features is free. Watch videos explaining concepts from the book, explore examples, download data sets and much more.

Use of CalcChat

Through the above textbook website, you may access *CalcChat* by Ron Larson, which provides explanations to key steps for solving many odd-numbered exercises in the textbook. You have permission to use CalcChat instructor permission to access CalcChat when you are stuck on an assigned odd-numbered problem or to check your final answers. However, submitting homework solutions copied from CalcChat is not permitted.

CalcChat explains key steps in a solution process and presents results based on those steps, but it does not show the detailed implementation of the solution process. When you use CalcChat to help you learn how to solve a problem, you must show all work that demonstrates the complete implementation of the solution process in your homework.

Within any single textbook section, you may use the steps provided by CalcChat for no more than 20% of the assigned problems. If you find that you need outside resources for more than 20% of the problems in a section, you are expected to seek additional support by meeting with the instructor during office hours or by appointment to support your learning.

Quizzes

Quizzes, both announced and unannounced, will be given frequently during class. You should always arrive at class prepared to take a quiz covering homework problems assigned and class lectures completed during the previous week. Quiz questions resemble those in homework and class discussions.

A student who is not in the classroom within three minutes of the time a quiz is distributed will receive a zero on that quiz. Make-up quizzes will not be given. If an absence on the day of a quiz is excused, the student may receive a grade of "no score" rather than a zero. Excused absences require timely documentation of illness, personal emergency, or university approved activity. Scheduling appointments (such as routine medical appointments or appointments with your advisor) during class time does not constitute an excused absence. A maximum of two "no scores" will be permitted. Students who take all quizzes are guaranteed that their two lowest quiz scores will be dropped when course averages are computed at the end of the semester.

Exam Dates

Exam dates (subject to change with prior notice) are as follows:

Exam 1: Thursday, February 19

Exam 2: Thursday, March 26

Exam 3: Tuesday, April 23

Final Exam: Tuesday, May 12, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Make-Up Exams

Make-up exams are not generally given; however, such exams may be given for an absence that is a result of a documented medical or personal emergency. If an exam is going to be missed due to an approved university activity, the student should request to take the exam early. For missed exams, timely notification (for emergencies, on or before the scheduled day of the exam, and for approved university activities, three weekdays prior to the scheduled day of the exam) is necessary to receive consideration to make up the exam or take the exam early. Once graded exams have been returned to the class, which generally occurs the class meeting following the day of the exam, it will no longer be possible to make up a missed exam. No student will be allowed to make up

more than one exam during the semester. No exams may be made up due to a student scheduling a vacation on a day when classes are in session.

Course Learning Outcomes

The learning objectives for this course are included within the list below:

1. Be able to solve systems of linear equations using multiple methods, including Gaussian elimination and matrix inversion.
2. Be able to carry out matrix operations, including inverses and determinants.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the concepts of vector space and subspace.
4. Demonstrate understanding of linear independence, span, and basis.
5. Be able to determine eigenvalues and eigenvectors and solve problems involving eigenvalues.
6. Apply principles of matrix algebra to linear transformations.
7. Demonstrate application of inner products and associated norms.

Academic Support Resources

When you need help with this course, you are encouraged to use the following resources:

1. Your professor
 - Office hours are listed on page one of this syllabus.
 - When attending office hours for additional support with course content, you are expected to bring your class notes and all relevant work completed on the topics for which assistance is sought.
2. The *Tutoring and Academic Support Program (TASP)*,
 - TASP is located on the first floor of Moffett Library and offers free tutoring in mathematics as well as other disciplines.
 - Additional information about services and schedules is available by visiting the TASP location or by searching "TASP" on the MSU website.
 - Tutoring services are available from January 26 through May 6.

Teaching and Learning During Inclement Weather Days

If class is cancelled due to a campus closure resulting from inclement weather, expect me to post within D2L, by 1 PM, 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 assigned homework.

Academic Misconduct Policy

Academic Dishonesty includes cheating, collusion (unauthorized collaboration between students to complete an assignment or assessment that is intended to be completed individually), 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).

In this class, 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—unless explicitly authorized—is a violation of academic integrity. Violations of academic integrity are considered incidents of academic dishonesty.

Each incident of academic dishonesty will be reported to the university according to the university's *Academic Dishonesty Policy & Procedures* located in the student [handbook](#).

In this course, the possible sanctions for an incident of academic dishonesty are:

- Student may not be allowed calculator privileges
- Receiving a zero on the quiz or exam.
- Receiving a zero for your entire quiz average for the semester (20%).
- Receiving an F in MATH 2753
- Receiving an F in MATH 2753 that will remain permanent on your transcript and within your MSU GPA.

Electronic Device Policy

Use of the desktop computers are not allowed during class except when explicit permissions are given.

Earbuds and other headsets 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 or a headset in or over their ears, will be in noncompliance with this policy and will be counted absent on the day 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 accommodation 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](#).

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

The policies below are included because they appear in the ADA syllabus shell provided by the university to instructors. They are separate from the course-specific policies established by the instructor and may not represent the full set of university policies. These policies, and others, can be found in the student [handbook](#).

University Policies

Use of Tobacco Products

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. Information related to the Use of Tobacco Products policy is available in the Midwestern State University Operating Policy 74.08, Use of Tobacco Products.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

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 has 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

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 [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). 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.”