

**Syllabus**  
**Math 1053-105: Contemporary Math**  
**Fall 2024**

**Section Information**

**Instructor**

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Cobb (she/her)

Office: Pierce Hall 120

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Drop-in Office hours:

- Monday: 1:00-1:50 PM
- Tuesday: 1:00-1:50 PM
- Thursday: 1:00—1:50 PM
- Friday: 9:30—11:20 AM

Office hours also available by appointment

**Schedule**

Class meetings: MWF, 10:00—10:50 AM, Bolin 209

Unit Exams: September 27 and October 25 during class time, Bolin 209

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 11, 10:30 AM — 12:30 PM, 209

**Catalog information**

**Course Description**

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

**Prerequisites**

Prerequisite(s): Math TSIA2 Assessment score of 950, Math TSIA2 Diagnostic score of 6, MATH 1003 with a grade of C or better, math TSI Assessment score of 350, math THEA score of 270, math Accuplacer score of 90, or satisfactory score on placement exam.

**Course Materials**

**Instructional Materials and Online Homework**

*Excursions in Modern Mathematics*, tenth edition. Peter Tannenbaum.

You will need access to the MyLab Math online content. Instructions for access will be available on the course D2L page. An electronic copy of the book is included in the purchase of the MyLab system. You do not need a physical copy unless you want one.

Additional materials needed will be posted or linked through D2L.

### Calculators

You should have a calculator that will add, subtract, multiply, divide, and take square roots. You will not need a graphing calculator, though you are welcome to use one. You are expected to bring your calculator to class each day. You may not use a phone or any device with internet access as a calculator. You may not share calculators.

## Coursework and Grading

### Grading

This course will be divided into three units, each worth one-third of the final grade. In each unit, your grade will be computed as follows:

Category	Percentage
Homework	20%
Quizzes	20%
Unit Exam	60%

At the instructor's discretion, the unit exam score may be substituted for the unit average in the final grade computation if the exam score is higher.

Your final letter grade will be based on the percentage obtained:

Grade	Percentage
A	At least 90%
B	80—90%
C	70—80%
D	60—70%
F	Less than 60%

Final grades will not be rounded up and no extra credit will be given.

### Homework

Homework will be assigned using the MyLab system. A specific MyLab course has been created for this class and should be accessed through D2L.

Problems may be worked as many times as you like, so a perfect homework score should be attainable. Homework for each chapter will be due at 7:00 AM on the day of the chapter quiz. Homework can be completed after the due date and before the unit exam for half credit. After the unit exam, your homework score will be final.

Instructions for setting up MyMathLab will be handed out on the first day of class and can be downloaded from the course D2L page.

### Quizzes

Three to four quizzes will be given during each of the three units. Quizzes will generally cover one chapter and will be given at the end of class. You may bring one 3x5 inch notecard for each quiz.

A quiz missed for a university excused absence can be taken early as long as paperwork is completed at least two class days before the absence. With permission of the instructor, a unit exam score may be substituted for a missed quiz score. No make-up quizzes will be given.

### **Tests**

The unit exams for this class are September 27 and October 25 during class time; and Wednesday, December 11, 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

If you must miss an exam, please let me know at least one week ahead of the test date and arrange to take the test early. In the case of unexpected and unavoidable absences (such as hospitalization), you must let me know on the day of the test and provide documentation.

There is no cumulative final exam for this class.

## **Course Policies**

### **Attendance**

You are expected to attend every class, in person, if at all possible. This includes arriving on time; staying to the end; being prepared; participating in class; and behaving respectfully. If you must miss class, please consult a classmate to find out what you missed.

Students who miss more than six classes or portions of classes for reasons other than university-excused absences may be dropped from the course with a grade of F.

I do understand that life is complicated, and that class attendance is not totally under your control. Attending class should be a high priority, but it can't (and shouldn't) be your only priority. If there are circumstances that cause you to miss a significant amount of class, please communicate promptly with me about it and I will work with you on a plan to stay caught up on course material.

### **Learning Environment**

I am committed to providing an environment that promotes learning for all students. It is important to me that this class is a welcoming, inclusive, and accessible space for all students. I am available and willing to address your issues and concerns as they arise.

### **Classroom Behavior**

Respectful behavior in the classroom is required. Any student who is disruptive will be asked to leave class. As much as possible, please avoid leaving or entering the room during class. Make sure all electronic devices are silenced. Use of cell phones in class is not allowed.

### **Electronic Devices**

Use of computers is not allowed in the classroom. This includes laptops, cell phones, tablets, and other similar devices. (Calculators are allowed.) Students using such devices may be asked to leave class. If a cell phone or similar device is visible or audible during an exam, you may receive a zero on that exam.

If this policy presents a serious problem, please let me know; exceptions may be made in special circumstances.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Any incident in which a student submits work for grading that is not wholly their own work is considered academic dishonesty. This includes using sources (by paraphrase or direct quotation) without proper attribution; collaborating on work where collaboration is not authorized; use of sources on an assignment or test where those sources are not authorized; and turning in work completed by another person.

In general, you may work with classmates on any out-of-class assignment unless instructed otherwise. Quizzes and tests must represent your own individual work.

Cheating on any work in this course will result in no credit for that work. Egregious or repeated incidents will result in more serious consequences, such as a failing grade in the course or dismissal from your academic program. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported as specified in your student handbook.

### **Student Handbook**

Make sure you are familiar with university policies as described in the [student handbook](#). This course will abide by all university policies.

### **Changes**

Some portions of this syllabus may alter during the semester. When possible, I will announce changes in class as well as sending an email. You are responsible for knowing everything I announce in class as well as everything I email to your official university email address. If you miss class, make sure you talk to someone who was there.

### **Desire-to-Learn (D2L)**

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program and to regularly check posted information. D2L provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. Downloading the Brightspace Pulse app is also recommended. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

### **Office Hours**

Office hours are time that I have set aside to answer questions about the course or course material. I am happy to answer questions about homework problems, quizzes and tests, study practices, grades, and other topics. If you are unable to attend scheduled office hours, you can email me ([sarah.cobb@msutexas.edu](mailto:sarah.cobb@msutexas.edu)) to set up an appointment at another time.

### **Communicating with Me**

The best way to reach me is by email ([sarah.cobb@msutexas.edu](mailto:sarah.cobb@msutexas.edu)). I will generally respond to email within 24 to 48 hours. I will be in my office during office hours each week and often at other times; feel free to stop by. Any communication not in writing or by email should be considered unofficial.

### Services for Students With Disabilities

MSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to allow students with disabilities to participate fully in its academic and campus life. Any student who may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact me as soon as possible to make necessary arrangements. Students must present appropriate verification provided by Disability Support Services. The best time to present this documentation in private is during office hours. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact Disability Support Services located in Clark Student Center, Room 168 or call 940-397-4140.

### Some Useful Advice

I hope that every student in this class will be able to earn a grade that helps them towards their educational goals. Contemporary Math generally has a high success rate, so I expect this to be achievable for all of you. The points below are not course policies, but they are advice that former students have found useful.

- Attend class and pay attention. The reason attending class is required is that it contributes to student success. You will get more out of class if you attend each class session, take notes, and put away your phone.
- Your phone is a distraction and will affect your grade. Research on use of phones and computers in class shows that it decreases learning and test performance even when used for class purposes. As much as possible, make a habit of putting your phone away and setting it to “do not disturb” in class and when doing homework.
- Do your homework to study. The purpose of the homework is to help you prepare for quizzes and exams. You should work on your homework until you are confident you understand the material. Getting the right answer is only part of the process.
- Study returned quizzes to prepare for exams. Not every test problem will be similar to a quiz problem, but the quizzes give you an idea of what kind of questions will be on the test. I try to write useful comments when I grade. If you can’t read my writing, you can always ask.
- Do your homework after every class. Doing the homework will help you prepare for the next day’s class by making sure you are familiar with the material
- If you have questions about the material, come to office hours. I am happy to talk about homework problems, quizzes, or things that weren’t clear in class. You don’t need to make an appointment—that time is set aside so I can be available to work with students.
- Find a study group. Explaining things to other people is a good way to solidify your understanding. A good study group will help everyone get a deeper knowledge of the material.