



## Beginning Algebra Math 0003-X21      Spring 2025

### Course Essential Information

Instructor: Marina Lynn Jones

Office: Dillard DB 211B

In-person Office hours: TR 3:45–5:30pm; W 1:30–2:00pm; MW 4:20–4:50pm;

Office phone: N/A (contact me via email – do not leave a voicemail)

E-mail: [marina.jones@msutexas.edu](mailto:marina.jones@msutexas.edu)

I am usually able to reply to all emails within 24 hours, except on weekends. Please note that emails received after 5:00pm should not expect a reply before 1:00pm the next weekday. All times are Central Time Zone.

**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 & Instructional Materials:** MyLabMath (MML), an online program from Pearson Publishing, is required and is described in more detail below. An e-copy of the textbook is included in the purchase of this program, so it is not necessary to purchase a hardcopy of the textbook. Textbook: Beginning & Intermediate Algebra by Lial/Hornsby/McGinnis, 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

**Additional Required Materials/Expenses:** A computer with a webcam and internet access is required (see below). A simple four-function calculator. A spiral notebook or binder is needed to keep all work organized and accessible. The Respondus Lockdown Browser is used throughout the semester for assessments and is available as a free download through MSU's website. Pearson's LockDown Browser is also used for assessments and is included as part of MML. The fee-per-use service ProctorU may be utilized for the required comprehensive final exam and, if so, this will incur an additional expense.

### Online Course Requirements

#### Computer Requirements

This class requires you to have access to a computer with a webcam and a strong reliable 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. Issues with your personal computer or internet access cannot be used as an excuse for missing any deadlines! 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 – not the instructor – or, if possible, use one of the many computer labs on campus to access MML or D2L.

## Desire2Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is integral to this course. Log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage then select this course from your list of classes. Daily weekday login to the D2L course homepage is required in order to facilitate communication and lay the groundwork for a successful semester. The Daily News announcements posted on the course's D2L homepage serve as a fundamental and primary source of information from the instructor to the class. You are responsible for all information posted under News announcements on the course homepage.

## MyLabMath (MML)

**\*\* MyLabMath (MML) is a REQUIRED portion of this course.\*\***

This online course management program from Pearson Publishing is used for most assignments and assessments in the course. Check the course homepage on D2L for the link into our dedicated MML class and detailed instructions on how to access MML. As a required digital material for this course MML is part of the Courseware Access and Affordability Program at MSU Texas. This means that you will not need to purchase MML separately as its cost is included on your MSU statement (unless you opt-out which I strongly discourage). Opt-out instructions are sent to each student's official my.msutexas.edu email address after the first day of class. Any student who wishes to opt-out of the Program and purchase the required course materials on their own must do so prior to the date indicated in that 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 will need to purchase MML, 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.

Help/Tutoring Resources: In-person office hours listed above are subject to change and any change will be promptly communicated via D2L. An additional and 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. By far, the most accessible and convenient source of help is provided by the various options available 24/7 within MyLabMath.

Important distinction: Using help options available on MML or searching for helpful videos on YouTube or Kahn Academy are 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 or PhotoMath 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 requires active participation in order to master specific problem-solving skills. The purpose of assignments is to learn and practice 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 when asked for documentation 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 and Participation Policies

### Attendance/Participation

Attendance is an essential component of this course and is required. If this were a traditional face-to-face class, the attendance policy for Math 0003 would state: If you are absent from more than four classes, you may receive a grade of "F" for excessive absences and lack of participation. In this online course, daily

attendance, at a minimum level, corresponds to logging into the D2L course homepage and reading the daily News post every weekday Monday – Friday. This daily login serves the same purpose as taking attendance in a traditional class. 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. Online 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.

#### Excused or Unexcused Absences

This policy will be interpreted in accordance with the attendance requirements stated above. 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 which could include inappropriate comments made via email or discussion forums, consistently failing to complete class assignments, as well as excessive absences as outlined above. 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, March 24, 2025. The last day to drop in order to receive a “W” is 4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 31, 2025. 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 March 31, 2025.

### Course Structure and Scope

This online course includes the full scope and material of an in-person Beginning Algebra course. This is not an open-ended unstructured online course; rather, the scheduled course work is designed to be completed in a sequential manner. As such, there are many required due dates throughout the duration of the semester and thus the work cannot be completed in one intense short interval at the very last minute. The course content consists of four units. Each unit will consist of assignments, quizzes, and a unit test. The schedule of individual due dates will be communicated via D2L and MML. There is a pronounced structure of prerequisites as you progress through MML in each unit: homework > quiz > homework > quiz > unit test. Each forward progression requires meeting a minimum grade standard: 70% on homework assignments and 60% on quizzes.

### Course Components

#### D2L Assignments/Assessments

There are various graded activities that are only accessed through D2L; examples include all required discussions and content checklists. Individual D2L log-in activity, including access of available instructor-

created supplemental material, is required and will be closely monitored. Additionally, some quizzes and tests may be administered through D2L utilizing the Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor. Any D2L-generated grades will be manually added to your MML gradebook so that all course grades will be located in one place. The D2L gradebook will not be utilized in this course this semester.

### 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 used to solve each problem. You may be asked to present evidence of your work as documentation. 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. MML assignments are set up to allow you multiple opportunities to get credit for each problem and thus attain a very good homework grade. At the end of the semester, the lowest three homework scores will be dropped; the remaining scores will be averaged to determine your homework grade for the course.

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 for several days 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”. The assignment will remain available in late “past due” 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 coursework 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 MML 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 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 MML 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. All tests will be set up as proctored exams. Be aware that online options for proctoring an exam require a strong steady internet signal as well as the use of a webcam. We will utilize Pearson’s internal Lockdown Browser, D2L’s available Respondus Monitor, and the independent service ProctorU (if needed) for the purposes of ensuring assessment integrity. Specific information will be provided as the time of each test approaches and will be posted on the D2L homepage.

### Standard Time Window for Assessments

Each quiz/test will be available during a specific window of time which will be communicated in advance via the Daily News posts on the D2L course homepage. Until further notice, the standard time window for this class this semester will be from 10:00am to 6:00pm on quiz/test days. This time window is subject to change and will be communicated via the News posts on D2L. Any student with an authorized time conflict with the standard time window may request an alternate time window. Any such request for a time accommodation needs to be received before 5:00pm on the day before the quiz/test. Authorized time conflicts include class schedules, required sports practices, and employment work hours.

### Final Exam

The final exam is required for course completion. It is comprehensive and worth 200 points. It must be video-proctored and it may utilize the fee-based ProctorU service. As previously stated, online options for proctoring an exam result in an additional expense for the student and require the use of a webcam. There is no makeup available for the final exam. The final exam is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 8, 2025.

## Evaluation/Grading Policies

### Grade Breakdown

There will be three/four tests, a comprehensive final exam, and a coursework grade which will be generated from all required assignments and quizzes on 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 – 200 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.

Important exception: Your course grade may be adjusted if your comprehensive final exam grade is significantly lower than your grade average before taking the 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.

### 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. The full D2L gradebook is not utilized in this class; instead, 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 due date, for any reason, for a quiz will result in an automatic grade of "0" on the quiz. There is no make-up option for the final exam.

#### 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. 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** 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.

#### Important Note

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

### 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 Clark Student Center, Room 168, (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](#).

### 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."](#)