Syllabus – Course Grading and Other Policies
NorthWest Arkansas Community College  Fall, 2006

INTERMEDIATE ALGEBRA – Computer Assisted - Hybrid - MATH 0103  CRN: 13163 & 13165

Instructor:  Ms. Carol OLSON

School Policies:

disAbility Services: If you are a student with a disability who will be requesting accommodations, you must contact the Office of disAbility Services in Burns Hall 619-4384. The director of disAbility Services will meet with you and recommend appropriate accommodations and services after you have submitted the required documentation. Once you have that, please make and appointment to see me in private as soon as possible to discuss any accommodations needed.

Bad Weather Policy: Cancellation of classes will be posted on NWACC’s web-site (http://www.nwacc.edu) and released to local T.V. and radio. Day classes are announced by 6:00 am, and evening classes by 3:00 pm. You may also call the Student Information Line: 479-619-4377) to find out. If school is open, I WILL BE HERE.

Even if this class is cancelled, we may not have time to lose a full day so you are still responsible for trying the material that would have been covered. It is your responsibility to keep up with the assigned material and to get assistance outside of class if you need additional help.

Exit Criteria  A student needs a final grade of A, B or C to proceed to a next sequenced course.

Grade Replacement  If a course must be repeated, the “higher” grade will replace the lower grade in the same course in calculations of GPA (grade point average).

Withdrawal Deadline = Fri, Nov 17 by 4:00 pm. Consulting with an academic advisor, your instructor, or Financial Aid can inform your decision. An official Drop Form from Admissions must be completed and turned into the Registrar’s Office by 4:00 pm on the last day to withdraw.

FERPA: NWACC is committed to your right to privacy as outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This means, I cannot discuss your grades via non-nwacc email (not secure). Nor can I discuss your grades with family members or other students, or give any of your graded papers to them.

Departmental Policy: Crib notes, note-cards and TI-89 and higher calculators are not allowed on exams.

My Grading Policies – and – GRADE COMPONENT ELABORATION:

Grading: Your grade in this course will be based on the items listed in your first day handout and further described for you below here. Although I will help you calculate your grade during a private conversation or appointment if requested, I will not calculate or give out official midterm grades.

Attendance and Participation: As a small incentive to keep you attending regularly during those last few class meetings, I give you a few points just for coming to class. If you are on time and stay the full time, you receive this daily point automatically. If you are tardy or must leave early, you will be docked 1/3 the assigned points each time.

Portfolio: As incentive to do a more careful and complete job on your homework and quizzes and maintaining your coursework in general, I am asking you to create a course portfolio in a 1 ½ -inch (or larger) 3-Ring Binder, with pockets and dividers. You will use this to organize all course paperwork.

You GRADE your portfolio throughout the semester (I may dispute this, if you are not completing the portfolio self-assessment form accurately or if your portfolio is not complete – see a sample of the grading form I use available on the Int Alg Hyb Course Page). Course points are assigned based on: organization, required materials (Portfolio Info file -Table of Contents), self-assessment form completion and average of those self-assigned grades. Keep your notes and homework up-to-date, titles, and neat. NOTE: Frequently the daily “homework quiz” will allow you use to use notes/homework.

I will ask to review your portfolio a few times (during major tests). Please see the Portfolio Info file for details on contents, organization, and upkeep.

Daily: You will have a graded homework-based activity each day there is not a more major grade (test). This may be a homework check (wherein, I ask to have you re-work one of your homework problems quickly), a portfolio check-in (wherein, I ask to see your portfolio for the full course to that date to see your progress in its maintenance), a short team activity, or a pop quiz. These usually occur within the first 5 minutes of class. You will be allowed to
Daily (continued): drop the worst 3 of these scores automatically, so if you are absent for all or that part of that many class meetings, it won’t affect your overall daily grade.

MathZone:

A) TIME points are computed as follows: 6 points are possible every week (8 required weeks total), you earn 1 point per full hour spent in MathZone (if you have 1.99 hours, that counts as 1 point, not 2). Altogether there are 40 time-on-task points (42 are actually possible). YOU CAN WORK AHEAD AND FINISH THE MATHZONE PORTION OF THIS CLASS EARLY IF YOU ARE MOTIVATED TO DO SO! (You may even start on the Intermediate Algebra part early, if you are also enrolled in the 2nd 8-weeks). Once a student completes the assigned Beginning Algebra homework in MathZone, the full 40 points for MathZone time are also awarded automatically (note - chapter quizzes, tests, and final exam may not be available until scheduled). Time-on-track bonus: If you have 30+ hours by the end of week 5 (6hr/wk*5wks), you are on track for total time, and will receive a bonus of 3 points.

B) PROGRESS points--Students earn up to 30 points based on the amount of Intermediate Algebra homework assignments that are completed during the semester. MathZone progress points are computed as follows: (points available for that progress check) times (percent of Intermediate Algebra homework due that’s been completed) times (percent score earned on Intermediate Algebra homework due completed to date). NOTE – YOU MUST SUBMIT a Practice Exercise set in the MathZone to receive ANY homework progress points for it. Be sure to SUBMIT any activity once you are either finished with it OR if you know you won’t be returning to it. There will be 3 progress checks, one just before each Test and the Final Exam. The first two are worth 5 points each and the final one is worth 20 points for a total of 30 points possible.

Chapter Quizzes: There will be one quiz over review material (Pre- and Beginning Algebra, stresses Ch 5 & 6) and one per chapter we cover (each may also have earlier material on it). These will be done in MathZone (and so are open book & note). You MUST number and WRITE DOWN the work clearly, carefully, and completely and SUBMIT the quiz. You MUST turn in the work from your ONE BEST attempt to receive the credit toward your grade. Questions which include graphing or explanation will not receive the credit before they are reviewed. You get 5 tries per quiz to allow for computer problems, and you will have access to each quiz for about 1 week after the last chapter lecture before that chapter’s quiz is due. So there will be no make-ups of or dropped chapter quizzes. All these will be taken in MathZone to give you all possible access and immediate feedback.

Some advise to avoid computer foibles:

- Close all other programs and disable any “instant messengers” before beginning.
- Don’t open other programs during a homework quiz.
- Take these when you can sit a full quiz and submit before quitting (if you know you take longer to work, allow for that).
- Log into MathZone, select and start the assigned Quiz.
- Work through all the problems. Number and WRITE DOWN your work process clearly, carefully, and completely. Check over the work, and look to see you’ve answered all in the computer. Be sure to click SUBMIT QUIZ when done OR if you must quit for the day.
- IF the computer freezes during your quiz, it will be saved where you left off, but SHUT DOWN, restart and continue the quiz then. You may need to shut ALL THE WAY down to a cold boot.
- Print the result for your records, and so you may visit with me or a tutor about any questions you may have (if possible).
- ON YOUR WORK PAPER - PUT AN X by any problem the computer marks wrong (gives 0 out of 1 point) and a √ by each problem the computer marks correct (gives 1 out of 1 point).
- You will have 5 tries at each quiz, and you should receive/be able to see the grade on each problem tried at the quiz immediately after you click SUBMIT QUIZ. EXCEPTION NOTE: IF there’s a graph or other problem where it asks you to “see your instructor” in the directions, you may not see the accurate grade until that part’s been scored and posted for you in WebCT. Be SURE to turn in your work in to me on time, labeled with which quiz, and with problems numbered and marked as correct/wrong!
- If you don’t receive a perfect score the first time, I recommend strongly that you go get help with a homework problem similar to any quiz problems where you struggled or were not sure of your process before trying the quiz a 2nd time.
**Chapter Quizzes (continued):**
- The BETTER score will automatically count in the computer (so, if not perfect the first try, be sure to try it a 2nd time!).
- IF you ABSOLUTELY are having problems taking a quiz in MathZone, SEE ME for help a.s.a.p.

**Tests:** There are 2 “midterm” tests. These cannot be dropped and there are no make-ups. I will replace ONE missed/poor “midterm” test score by the final exam percent over that portion of the material on the object instead (only if the % score on that part of the final exam is greater). A second missed test receives a score of 0.

**Final Exam:** The Final Exam is required of all students, cumulative, includes application problems, proportionally represents all material covered, stresses core topics, has some multiple choice, and is 25% of the final grade. There is no curving of final exam grades. IF you have a VALID reason for missing the final exam, you need to notify me a.s.a.p. (and if necessary, complete an Incomplete Request Form – I must have that in hand by the time grades are due). NOTE: You must take the final exam to avoid receiving an F.

**Extra Credit Opportunities:** (a maximum of 12 pts may be earned here, no matter how many you attempt)
- (10 pts) Tutorial Attendance: To receive the points, you must document your regular attendance via any free mathematical tutoring service on NWACC’s campus (including my office hours or the on-line tutors). Use my required form for this credit (see me for local). You MUST contact me with the info on the first page of the form by the first tutoring “visit” to receive the maximum of this credit. “See” me for details or if you need help with the form or have questions.
- (12 pts) Daily: The three lowest daily grades (including 0’s and missed opportunities, i.e., the dropped scores) up to a total maximum of 12 pts automatically become extra credit. This rewards attendance and consistent homework and in-class effort.
- (3 pts ea) Artwork: This must be based on a topic studied this semester. Grading criteria for artwork: creativity, care of work, and mathematical application. (It may be displayed on this campus.) You may do more than one, but all art projects are due by the last (regular) day of class (the last day before the final exam period starts).
- (10 pts) Interview someone on how they use math in their job. See me before doing this as I have an information sheet with specific directions. Grading is based on questions you ask (some on that sheet) and correct English usage. I recommend you make use of our Writing Center before turning in this report.
- (varies) Create your own project: If you have another idea about something you would like to do (it must involve mathematics in some way), please contact me and I will consider it. (The max. is still 12 points/600 for the semester, so don’t think too big here.)

**My Other Policies and Other Advise:**

**Plagiarism Policy:** CAUTION: Directly copying the text or someone else’s work or allowing someone to copy yours will result in the loss of that score and will be dealt with according to the policy on Academic Dishonesty (see p 154 in the 2006-2007 College Catalog). DO NOT ask to copy and say NO if someone asks to copy your paper. However, working equitably together on homework assignments and using the text as a resource for checking work is encouraged.

**Methods of Instruction** for hybrid sections include: read the material, take notes during lectures, ask questions, view video lectures if needed (especially helpful if you have to miss a class), do all assigned homework in MathZone carefully and if assigned separately in the text or supplement, participate in class and/or in team activities (short & long), get tutoring help (if needed/advised), do quizzes neatly, on-time, and turn in all work, review to prepare for in-class tests and the final exam.

**Other Student Responsibilities:**
- Please try to avoid tardiness & early departure disruptions. Also plan to be awake and attentive and participate during class.
- **Live by the golden rule:** During all forms of communication for this course, you are responsible for your attitude and treatment of myself and your fellow-students. Everyone in this class has a right to be treated with respect, and to ask questions about the subject material, no matter how “dumb” a question may seem to you. Rudeness will not be tolerated. If you have any problem with someone in the class that I’m not aware of, please discuss it with me privately.
- **Please, in addition to the cell phone notes on you First Day Handout, also avoid these noisy disruptions:**
  - IF an emergency arises where you MUST take or make a cell phone call, PLEASE go outside the MAT building (due to the MAT building’s structure, EVERYTHING you say can be heard in offices and classrooms throughout the MAT building).
  - Sharpen enough pencils before class begins, ESPECIALLY on quiz/test days.
Other Student Responsibilities (continued):

• Don’t use your car stereo loudly near MAT, that building’s structure acts as an amplifier (note - there is not a common break time, please be courteous and encourage others to do so as well).

Course Time/Homework/Other Requirements and Recommendations – HYBRID format:

PRE(PARE FOR)-LECTURE(S): Each section of the textbook begins with one or more stated Concept objectives, followed by explanations and examples. You are responsible for learning any definitions, properties, formulas, and general methods (try using the vocab master file, I do test on terminology, as it’s the language of mathematics). Look for boldface, italics, or boxed info for these. Just before you attend a lecture for a section, you should re-skim it in the book, taking note of these items. Also make note of any step-notes in the book as you do this. Mathematics can't simply be read, but must be done with pencil and paper available for frequent use. Leave room for lecture notes and more examples. If the instructor has student “directed-notes” available, try using those for this.

(DURING) LECTURES: For your notes (which help you remember concepts), write down at least what is on the board/screen, and try to also make note of extra verbal information, especially when it’s a stressed item (e.g., “this will be on a test,” or “I like that problem”). If you’ve prepared as noted above, and take careful notes, the homework won’t be as difficult or as time-consuming. VIDEO LECTURES: If you miss class, or just didn’t catch everything, lectures on all sections of the text are available in video format within MathZone, or you may check these out from our library for up to one week.

POST-LECTURE: Rewrite (or at least review) your lecture notes right after class (or as soon as possible). This makes them easier to read, helps you catch questions/correct errors, and helps your retention of the material.

TIME COMMITMENT: MATHZONE and other: --You are required to spend a MINIMUM of 6 hours each week on-line working on MathZone to receive the time grade points. We will have at most one hour of class time online per week the first week, and less as the semester progresses. This means you MUST spend a substantial amount of time OUTSIDE OF CLASS every week working on MathZone. This time is the minimum to meet the Hybrid requirements and course grading minimum. (The reason for this number of hours as a requirement is because it has been documented as the minimum on-task hours students need to help ensure success.) You can do more if you want, but not less. This is required EVERY week. For example, if you work 15 hours one week and only 2 hours the next, you will NOT meet the minimum requirement for that second week. Each MathZone week ends at the start of your classtime Tuesday.

Although the time you need to put in will depend on your abilities, on average, this accelerated section acts as a 6-credit load equivalent when taken in 8 weeks. So, you need to plan on:

the 4 hours in the face-to-face classroom, PLUS 2 hours on-line for preparation, lectures, and quizzing, (that totals 6 hours “in-class” time), PLUS 12 hours homework, for a total of 18 hours class and homework time each week.

So that’s a total of about 14 hrs you need to plan to put in outside the regular classroom) plus EXTRA STUDY and review time BEFORE TESTS.

Try using the discussion board in My NWACC Connection/My Courses (in WebCT) for questions (your classmates may get to them before I do).

Try to review daily and work ahead. DON’T GET BEHIND.

One reason students don’t do well in math is they aren’t willing or able to put in the time needed to succeed. Schedule your study time as carefully as you do you classes, work, and relaxation schedules.

HOMWORK in general: To succeed in a math class, you need to learn to generalize methods and concepts, and to learn what directions mean, not just memorize problems. Adequate and accurate practice is necessary for success. While skill levels and ability vary, a good rule of thumb is to practice until you understand any assigned problem listed before the “Expanding Your Skills” section in the book, without looking at examples or notes (or answers). You should also get so you can at least follow discussions about the harder (Expanding Your Skills) problems in the text. Also check your process and answers as you go (practice doesn’t make perfect - it makes permanent, perfect practice makes perfect)-- when using MathZone, use the “Video,” “e-Professor,” “Hint,” “Show Me,” and “Guided Solution” buttons (or “Ask My Instructor”) for process on problems tried. Mark/note questions for easy access when in class, working with a tutor, me, or classmates. You are expected to try ALL homework listed for each section. Try to have it all done correctly by the next class meeting after that section is lectured.
QUIZ/TEST PREPARATION: For best success on quizzes & tests (these suggestions are based on research and my own past successful students’ input), you need to work through a Review (try the Chapter Tests and Cumulative Reviews in the book, and be sure to work through the assigned Midterm Test Review for each test). You might also work through a past test over similar material (see files in My Courses – Int Alg Hyb Course Page), without notes and without help, as fast as you can, and then check your work (process and answers) against any available keys (NOTE - these tests may not align exactly, but you will see similar definition and true-false format questions there that are not necessarily available in homework). It’s also helpful to write your own practice quiz/test (use problems to which you have access to the full work in the answers). Use the same process (or trade yours with a classmate) for taking and checking it. Review any problem areas further. Do all this before the night before you plan to take the test. The night before an in-class test, get a good night’s sleep and don’t study within 12 hours of it. Plan to get to class early with all necessary materials and try to sit in your usual seat (as allowed).

Getting Help (Also see the Course Outline - Student Resources):
• Form a study group of students in this class.
• NWACC has tutors available for free in the Math Café (MAT 10), in the Learning Lab (BH 1109), and via the Web. In addition, I am available for tutoring during all office hours. During all tutoring sessions, have questions ready for discussion. These sessions can apply toward extra-credit, if you plan to use it frequently and track it throughout the semester (see my “tutoring-attendance form”).