

Math 124 Exam Rules and Study Advice

Exam Rules and Details:

1. Expect six pages of questions and you will write your answers in the spaces provided on the exam. You have 80 minutes, so time is a factor. Plan appropriately. **Never spend more than 12 minutes on a page!** You are allowed:
 - a. A Ti – 30X IIs Calculator (this model only)
 - b. One 8.5 by 11 inch sheet of **handwritten notes** (you can write on the front and back)
 - c. A pencil or pen (no red or green colored pens)
2. **There may be multiple versions of the test**, if you give any answer (even just one) that is only appropriate for the other versions, then we will submit the exam to the academic misconduct board. In which case, you will meet in front of a panel of professors to explain your actions. If the committee finds you guilty of academic misconduct, then you will get a zero on the entire exam and you will face other disciplinary actions (probation or expulsion depending on the severity of the cheating). **DO NOT CHEAT!!! To avoid suspicion of cheating, keep your eyes on your own paper, don't sit near your friends and show all your work!**
3. Depending on the problem, partial credit may be given if you show correct work but have an incorrect answer. So it is in your best interest to show work (and it avoids suspicion of cheating):
Here are different ways you can show your work:
 - a. Some the set up.
 - b. Show some of the arithmetic.
 - c. Explain in words.
 - d. Show your algebra.You don't need to write a full explanation, just show *something*; some small amount of work on the problem that actually shows you did something and didn't just guess or cheat.
Again, an answer with no work at all will be assumed to be cheating and you will receive zero points (even if the answer is correct). Show some work.
4. If you have questions about what our exam will look like, then look at any of the exams in my exam archive (our exam will look just like all of these):
<https://sites.math.washington.edu/~aloveles/Math124Fall2017/LovelessExamArchive.html>
(My cover sheet will look just like the cover sheet I used for my exam last year which you can see in this archive)
5. **There are NO make-up exams for any reason! Set multiple alarms and don't oversleep.** You should plan on taking the exam no matter what happens. You need to be there! Having a cold is not a reason to miss the test, unless you are in a hospital bed you should plan on being at the exam. If you do have to miss for unavoidable and well-documented reasons here is the policy:
 - If you are *extremely sick* the day of the exam and physically unable to be at the exam (actively vomiting in the emergency room, etc...), then you should go to the hospital or hall health to get *a doctor's note that clearly indicates you are physically unfit to take the exam* (you get one free visit to hall health as a student).
 - If you have an *unavoidable, extreme emergency* come up, then you need to let me know as soon as you can and provide *documentation that clearly indicates that your attendance to the exam was not possible*.In either case, after I see your clear documentation your grade will be prorated (meaning the exam will be thrown out and your other exams will be weighted significantly more heavily). Again, **there are no make-up exams**. If you miss the exam and don't contact me or you don't provide documentation, then you get a zero on the exam. Take the exams seriously.

Exam Notes: Students often ask “How do I study?” I have been giving advice on this each week in class and in newsletters and I have been strongly hinting at what will be on the exam in lectures. So you shouldn’t have to ask me how to study, you can look at old newsletters and notes. But let me re-iterate:

Note: Having a high homework score does NOT guarantee that you will get a high exam score. You only get one submission on the exam and you don't get help from a tutor. You need to practice in an exam-like situation if you hope to do well on the exam.

How do I study?

1. **Step 1: Homework!** You should know all the homework well. The majority of the exam will be almost word-for-word the same as problems you saw in homework. ALL homework is fair game. If I give a problem that is identical to homework, even a “challenging homework problem”, then you should be able to comfortably do it. I will have several problems directly from homework. So study and review homework first, before you do anything else!
2. **Step 2: Old Exams:** If you are desperately worried about your grade in this class and your performance on this exam, then you should work through ALL the old exams from the exam archive. You should study the exams in the exam archive in two different ways:
 - a. **Detail Studying:** Work through several old midterms in detail (put yourself in an exam like situation including timing yourself). This will get you ready for what it will feel like when you take the test. Reading solutions does not count as studying, you have to be actively working the problems yourself.
 - b. **Quick Recognition:** A different (and very useful) other type of studying is problem recognition. Here is how you do it:
 - i. Get out some notebook paper, then open up the exam archive and click on an exam.
 - ii. Read 1(a) and on your paper write in words what you would do. Spend no more than 10-15 seconds doing this. If you don’t know how to do it, make a star and come back to it later.
 - iii. Then do the same thing for 1(b) (again spend no more than 10-15 seconds). Write down how you would start the problem.
 - iv. Keep doing this through the entire exam (it should take you less than 5 minutes).
 - v. Then do it again for another exam. In this way, you can look through 4 or 5 exams in 20 minutes. You also gain confidence and you quickly learn which recurring topics you are struggling with.

Managing Expectations:

Lastly, don't despair if the exam doesn't go well. If you have a bad test (or if you get a bad grade in this course), it is not the end of the world and you will be fine. Sometimes students react too strongly to their first test, and often I get emails from scared students after the test. Study hard and do your best on the test, that is all you can do.

The goal is to learn something, but not everyone will get high grades. If you understand the concepts and practice as I have suggested, then you can do well on these tests. It is challenging to get above 90% and it is challenging to get a grade above 3.3. So manage your expectations, 2.4 or 2.7 or 3.1 are decent grades and these are the grades many of you will earn (remember the median in this class is 2.9). The first test is a learning experience and often students dramatically adjust their approach to the course after the first test (and often they do better on the second test). So prepare well, do your best, and then adjust for the second exam and final.

In other words, have reasonable expectations for your first college math test.