

Math 203 – Section 001
8:00 - 9:15 TR
Burnett 119
Spring 2007

Instructor: Frank Moore

Office: 341 Avery Hall

Office Hours: MWF 8:30-10:00 or by discovery/appointment

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Course Web Page: <http://www.math.unl.edu/~fmoore/math203/S2007>

Text: *A Mathematical View of Our World*

You will need a calculator with a square root key on it.

This is a course in thinking and attitude, not mechanical mathematical skills. While we will learn specific mathematics, our goals are not to learn skills as in, e.g., algebra or calculus courses, but rather:

- to work hard, learn, and have fun learning
- to develop problem solving skills and skills at logical thinking
- to better appreciate and enjoy math
- to see math in the real world and appreciate it in that context, and
- to develop writing skills, especially in the context of the math that we are learning

In short, the purpose of this course is to show you what real-life mathematics is about and allow you to appreciate it. Many people believe math is merely a system of techniques and routines useful for solving messy algebraic equations. If you feel this way, I hope this class changes your mind. I believe you will find much of what we do in this class is interesting, relevant, different from math you have experienced before, and most of all fun!

Exams and Quizzes

There will be 6 short(30 minute) quizzes, each occurring 2-3 weeks apart. There will not be a final exam. A **tentative** schedule will be handed out separately giving **approximate** dates of quizzes. These dates are not final!

Project

This course is designed to meet Integrated Studies requirements. Part of those requirements include having student writing which is commented on by the instructor as a significant component of the course. There are two types of writing assignments for this course: projects and focused journals.

There will be a project during the semester, worth 50 points. You will be allowed to work together on the project if you wish, but I will be asking the other group members to make sure everyone did their part. Specific guidelines for each project will be handed out well in advance of the due date. Late papers (regardless of reason) will be penalized, and excessively late (more than one week) papers will not be accepted. Projects will be graded on the basis of writing ability and style, as well as content.

Because writing about mathematics is different than what you are used to, and because I want you to do well in this course, you may choose to turn in a preliminary draft of your project. You may do this any time up to a week (2 class periods) before the project is due. I will return the preliminary draft to you with comments (but no grade) the class period after you turn it in to me, so that you can make revisions before the actual due date.

Journals

There will be 5 focused journal assignments during the course, worth 15 points each. You are required to submit these by email, and they will not be accepted late. (Email must be received by NOON on the due date.) The purpose is mainly to provide a means of communication between us. You will be given a specific

question to answer for your journal assignment, but in addition, you may also write about anything else you wish to tell me. With few exceptions, possible grades for journal assignments are, for example, 0, 5, 12 or 15 points. You will receive 0 points if you do not turn it in, or I feel you did not make enough of an effort. You will receive 5 points if you met the assignment requirements, but only marginally so. You will receive 12 points if you meet the assignment requirements, but make significant errors in content, grammar, spelling, or the like (even though it is via email, **I will still count off for this!**). If you meet the assignment requirements and make no significant errors, you will receive the full 15 points.

Reading Homeworks

Reading homeworks are short (1 or 2 easy problems) assignments, based on the reading to be completed for that day. They are due at the beginning of class and will not be accepted late. Each reading homework will be graded on a 3 point basis – 3 points means that you turned it in and it’s correct, 2 points means that you turned it in and it’s more correct than not, 1 point means that you turned it in and it’s more incorrect than correct, and 0 points means that you did not turn it in. Notice below that these reading homeworks are bonus points. At the end of the semester, Reading Homework scores will be scaled so that 25 points are possible.

Homework

We all learn by doing, so homework will be assigned almost every day, but will not be collected and will not count towards your grade. The beginning of most class periods will be spent going over homework, with students presenting their solutions on the board. You are expected to participate in this.

Grades

The course grade will be computed as follows:

Quizzes (6 total)	300 points
Project	75 points
Journals	75 points
Total	450 points
Reading Homeworks (bonus)	25 points

The scale will no harsher than:

Total Number of Points	Minimum Final Grade
418 or higher	A
396 - 417	B+
373 - 395	B
351 - 372	C+
328 - 350	C
306 - 327	D+
283 - 305	D
282 or lower	F

Departmental Grading Appeals Policy: Students who believe their academic evaluation has been prejudiced or capricious have recourse for appeals to (in order) the instructor, the departmental chair, the departmental appeals committee, and the college appeals committee.