

CLASS INFORMATION AND POLICY

COURSE: Differential Equations, Math221/821

TEXT: *Differential Equations – Computing and Modeling*, by Edwards and Penney 3rd Ed., Prentice Hall.

Attendance: A semester total of 4 absences from class will result in a half letter grade deduction. A semester total of 7 absences will result in a full letter grade deduction. A perfect attendance receives 5 points bonus.

Quiz: Quiz every Friday on homework type problems. All quizzes together count 100 points towards your course grade.

Exams: There will be three hour exams plus the final exam. The hour exams will consist of both routine problems similar to your homework assignment and problems which may require some thought. The final exam will be mostly comprehensive. Each hour exam counts 100 points towards your course grade. The final exam counts 200 points.

Take-Home Project: There will be probably one take-home project this semester subject to change. It may require some matlab works. You (or you group if it is a group project) must work independently. Shared materials in any form with others will not be accepted. Late projects will not be accepted without approval in advance. The project counts 25 points towards your course grade.

Grade: Throughout the semester you must accumulate points from the quizzes, projects, hour exams, the final exam, and lab assignments against a grand total of about 650 points. The standard numerical-to-letter grade conversion will be used to determine your course grade.

A Few Suggestions: Success in any mathematics course requires a tendency for perfection. Every step of the way, strict attention to the smallest detail is absolutely necessary. If you can learn to acquire the trait of perfectionism for certain courses, you will succeed much more easily in mathematics. Conversely, if you are good at learning mathematics you are probably also good at learning other subjects as well.

It is important for you to work out the homework problems as much independently as possible. Try to reason through problems even though there are formulas or algorithms ready to use. This reasoning process is an essential part of the mathematical thought process. You should also do your homework in a timely fashion. Like most math courses, the material is very cumulative and therefore is easy to get behind. Time can be your friend as much as your foe.

Always read ahead. I will plan class activities assuming you have done the reading. As you read the text, concentrate on the general development first. Since routine calculations are often left to the reader, you should work them out during subsequent in-depth explorations. In other words, you consider a pencil and scratch paper as essential equipment for reading mathematics.

Should you have any questions, speak up in class, seek individual help from your recitation teaching assistant or myself.