**Precalculus (Fall 2014)**

Room: 105
Schedule: TWR 10:30 am – 11:50 am Phone Number: x258
Instructor: Brett Runnion Email: runnion.psychology@gmail.com
Website: sccprecalculus.weebly.com
Office Hours: MWF: 8-9, MF: 9-11, Every day: 2:30-4:30
Required Text: Precalculus 6th Edition by Warren Esty

**Why are you here?**

The focus of this class is to provide students with a working knowledge of mathematics to bridge the gap between College Algebra and Calculus. Most of the math that you learned in high school can be done by machines (for free). So why is it important?

This course will teach you how to speak the language of math, the meaning behind what you’re doing, and how it will apply to things later. You will learn how to better communicate with your calculator, iPads, and other machines, so that they can do math problems for you. However, learning how to communicate in the language of math is only the first step. Learning how to setup math problems and create methods for solving real world or text problems, is the second step.

The ultimate goal of this class is to prepare you for Calculus and beyond (Engineering or related fields). So, ask yourself, “Why am I here?” Is it because you “need” this course to graduate? Did your advisor tell you to sign up for it? If the answer to either of these is “yes”, consider how seriously you will take this class. You should be here because you want to be better at math, not because you will have to be. This class will not be easy, so it is important to be driven to succeed here.

**Participation/Attendance**

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class period, and students who are consistently absent will NOT be penalized directly. However, your participation in certain financial aid programs may depend on your constant attendance. What’s more, if you do not attend regularly, you will probably FAIL the course. This is because Precalculus can be very complicated, and it is unlikely that you will learn enough on your own. This course will not be easy, and you will be expected to show enough dedication to succeed. If you’re not in class, you’re missing out on valuable time for explanations that may aid you. You will be expected to be on time; I will be unable to cover all of the material in each section, and even losing 5 minutes for late students will cause us to miss a lot of information. If attendance does not stay constant, I may begin grade your attendance.

**Course Format**

This class will be based on the Precalculus course at MSU – Bozeman. Pieces of this syllabus are taken from theirs, and there is more information available at [www.math.montana.edu/precalculus](http://www.math.montana.edu/precalculus). There are many useful resources at that website, please read it.

This class will mainly be conducted as an instructor-led learning seminar. Participation will be highly valued for each student’s success. The class will rotate around short lectures, near-daily quizzes, tests, and some in-class work. The instructor (that’s me) will present new information daily and you will receive quizzes on most class days.

Be serious about the class, but do not be intimidated. I will be available for tutoring every day and am more than willing to meet with you during my office hours. If something was not discussed in class, you can come to me for help with that material. If you would like to set up a regular time to meet with me, then we can do so. Otherwise, feel free to drop in to my office to ask questions at any time in the listed office hours. If I am unavailable to meet at that time, I will set up an alternative time with you.

**Assignments/Out-of-class work**

This course requires a lot of work. If you are unwilling to put in the time and effort then you will fail, period. This is not a class in which you can attend for the first and last two weeks and expect to be able to turn in all of your homework; I will not accept this. In this class, you will do a lot of homework, participate in class (I will call on you), take near-daily quizzes, and take exams on time. It should be expected that you will be spending 2 hours of study time outside of class for every hour that you are in class. If you don’t do this, it is ~~possible~~ likely that you will not pass the course.

Homework is required and students will be given full credit if it is turned in when it is due. If an assignment is late, you will immediately lose 10% of the possible points for that assignment. All homework is due by the test day that follows the assignment. For example, all homework from Chapter 1 must be turned in before you take the Chapter 1 test). Homework turned in after the test will not be accepted unless you have made prior arrangements with the instructor. This may sound harsh, but without the practice of homework, you will likely not do well on the test.

There will be homework that involves material that was not discussed in class. Generally, this will be information that was covered in the text that you are capable of reading and learning on your own. If you have difficulty with these problems, come see me at once (do not wait until the day the assignment is due to ask me in class).

Working with others on the homework is encouraged. However, copying someone else’s work and presenting it as your own is not acceptable.

**Cheating**

Cheating will NOT be tolerated. If the instructor finds indications that students have cheated, they will receive no points for that assignment. If a student cheats on a quiz or test, they will receive zero points, and may or may NOT be allowed to retake it: this will be up to the instructor on a case by case basis.

**Exams and Grading**

There will be 3 regular exams and one cumulative final. There will be semi-daily quizzes, and there will be an assignment for every section that is covered.

**Study Groups and Tutoring**

The students are encouraged to form their own study groups that meet regularly to help each other do homework and to study for the test. Students are encouraged to read their assigned sections during this time so that they may discuss it with each other.

If you would like tutoring in math, either see me, or go to the learning center on the 2nd floor of Kennewash Hall.

If you know that math is a weaker subject area, do NOT wait until you fail a test to seek help. Start getting tutored immediately, or it will be difficult to recover from a failed test.

**Grading:**

Students will receive a grade of A-F for the course. This will be based on a combination of assignments, quizzes, tests, and participation. Typically, assignments will make up the majority of your grade (So don’t turn them in late!).
Incomplete grades or I’s
An incomplete grade, “I” may be requested by a student in writing. If the following conditions are met, the instructor may consider issuing the “I” grade:

* The student has satisfactorily completed more than three-fourths (75%) of the class requirements.
* The student is unable to complete the class during the normal scheduled class sessions due to unforeseen circumstances.
* The student has an attendance rate of at least 70% for the class during the semester.
* The student is willing to and capable of completing the required, prescribed work outside the normal scheduled class sessions within the time specified by the instructor and within two academic terms following the issuance of the incomplete.
* Failing to complete the requirements as specified by the instructor will result in an F.