

Syllabus

Course: Precalculus

Teacher: Mr. Scheithauer

Course Description

The title of this course is Precalculus. As the title indicates, this is the course that comes right before Calculus. In Precalculus the topics we will study include, but are not limited to: the basics of functions and their graphs, polynomial and rational functions, exponential and logarithmic functions, right triangle trigonometry, analytic trigonometry, law of sines/cosines, vectors, systems of equations, matrices, sequences, series, probability, conics, and polar coordinates and equations.

Class Procedure

As we move through the material in this class, there will be a number of different ways that your progress will be evaluated. These include homework, quizzes, tests, notebooks/journals, attendance/participation and extra credit.

Homework

There will be homework assignments, which will basically occur on a daily basis. That doesn't necessarily mean that you will have to take your math book home everyday. There will often be some time in class to at least get started on the assignment. Plus, everyone should have at least one study hall period each day. It sounds crazy, I know, but it really works well if you use that time to actually study! Homework accounts for 20% of your overall grade, and it can be an easy way to help your grade because it is effort-based. This means that if you try all of the assigned problems you will get full credit regardless of how many you got right or wrong.

Quizzes

You could have a quiz on any given day. It may be one question, or it could be ten questions. Quizzes are generally announced a day or two ahead of time, but I also reserve the right to spring a pop quiz on you from time to time. Quizzes account for 25% of your overall grade, so make sure you are ready for them!

Tests

Tests will generally cover one chapter at a time. However, if we had two shorter units, we could cover them both with one test. A typical unit could last anywhere from two to four weeks, depending on the rigor of the material. We will try to have a review day before each test, and there is usually some sort of extra credit available for each test too. Tests make up 45% of your overall grade. This is the largest portion of your grade so make sure you study, and be sure to take advantage of any extra credit that may apply to your test score!

Notebooks/Journals

These are important tools in keeping you organized and on top of the material that we are studying. They help you to communicate with yourself, with me, and with others because they force you to put your thoughts into written form. Notebooks/journals also make up 10% of your overall grade, so they should also be an easy way to boost your grade on a daily basis. It's not difficult to take good notes, but it does take a commitment to do it daily. Sometimes you'll even be allowed to use your notes on a quiz or test, so don't blow them off!

Attendance/Participation

These points are awarded at random times. Things like test review days, or maybe a video day may involve a participation grade. However, any day could have an attendance/participation grade associated with it, so be here and be involved with what is going on in the classroom every day!

Extra Credit

Extra credit will be made available from time to time, and it may be something simple like an extra question on homework assignment, or even a quiz or test. It may also be more substantial, like an entire review sheet for a test. Whatever form it takes, it will be made available to all students at the same time. Remember, extra credit is exactly that . . . extra. You don't have to do any of it, but it may be a good way to improve your grade.

Grading Procedure

Homework20% of overall grade
Quizzes25% of overall grade
Tests45% of overall grade
Notes/Participation10% of overall grade

I reserve to the right to adjust these percentages at any time, but they will be very close to what you see above.

Grading Scale

A 100% - 94%	C 76% - 73%
A- 93% - 90%	C- 72% - 70%
B+ 89% - 87%	D+ 69% - 67%
B 86% - 83%	D 66% - 63%
B- 82% - 80%	D- 63% - 60%
C+ 79% - 77%	F 59% and below

Additional Information

If you have any special needs in the classroom, please let me know as soon as possible. You can write me a note or simply see me after class, but please let me know. I do not want you to be miserable. Also, my door is open and I will be glad to help you with your homework if you are struggling. Remember, you can also take advantage of enrichment study hall time to get help on any particular day. Just make sure you get a pass from me to come down to my room. During the spring, when I am coaching, I am not usually available after school, but I try to get to school by 7:50 a.m., so I may have some time to help you before school. If you let me know ahead of time that you are coming, I can try to arrange to have that time in my schedule freed up so I can help you.

We use calculators quite often in this room. Sometimes a basic scientific calculator (\$10-\$15) is sufficient, but other times we will need to use a graphing calculator. I have a classroom set of TI-84 graphing calculators that are available, however, they can't leave my room because they get used nearly every class period. You do NOT have to buy a graphing calculator! If you choose to buy one (\$100-\$125), I would recommend a Texas Instruments (TI) 83, 83+, 84, or 84+. In my experience these are the most user-friendly models available. Additionally, they are the models with which I am most familiar, so I will be able to assist you more with any calculator issues you may have. If you choose to buy a different brand, please be sure to have the manual with you so that I have a chance to help you if you're having problems with it.

You may also bring your own device (BYOD) such as an I-pod, I-pad, or I-phone to use as a calculator, or to listen to music during work time. However, if I find that you are using it inappropriately (checking email, texting, checking facebook), you will have to place it in a basket upon entering my room, and you will only get it back at the end of the class period. I will probably NOT allow you to use your own device on any quizzes or tests in order to ensure security on those assessments.