

MATH 360: Probability (Fall 2011)

Meetings: M W F 10-10:50AM, SMudd 205; Thurs 9-9:50AM, SMudd 205/ 014*

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Office Hours: Mon & Wed 1:30-2:30 PM; Thurs 10-11 AM; or by appointment

The best way to reach me outside of class is via email. I will always be available right after class and during my office hours should you wish to speak with me in person.

TEXTBOOK

Wackerly, Mendenhall and Scheaffer. *Mathematical Statistics with Applications*, 7th edition. 2008 Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning. Available at Amherst Books.

PREREQUISITES

MATH 121 or consent of the instructor. You have to be comfortable with first-year college calculus – including sums of infinite series, differentiation, and single and double integration.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of this course is to introduce you to the fundamental nature of probability. We will cover **Chapters 2-7** in Wackerly, Mendenhall and Scheaffer. If time permits, additional topics in probability and an introduction to statistical inference may also be studied.

WEBSITE

We will use **CMS** in this course. Important course materials and announcements will be posted, so you should plan to access the website regularly.

SUMMARY OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Regular homework assignments, three midterm exams, one a comprehensive final exam are required. Weekly agendas, including textbook readings and homework problem sets, will be provided in advance. You are expected to at least skim the relevant sections before class.

Item	Percentage
Homework	15%
Midterm Exams	50% (Lowest is 10%; other two are 20% each)
Final Exam	30%
Effort	5%

I reserve the right to curve (or not) the final course grades. This curve will never decrease your score. I also reserve the right to adjust the final grade of any student based on his/her *class performance* besides the grading items above. This adjustment can be either up or down.

LIKELY IN-CLASS EXAM DATES

Exam #1: October 6th;

Exam #2: November 3rd;

Exam #3: December 8th.

Homework

Weekly-based homework will consist of exercises from the text and additional worksheets. Please **staple** your work and write your name on each sheet you turn in. Homework is due to me at the **beginning** of class on the due date. Homework turned in after class will be downgraded by 20%. Late homework not turned in before 5PM of the due date will receive at most 50% credit. **The lowest score will be dropped.**

Start working on each homework assignment as soon as possible. Don't wait until the last minute, as some of the problems may turn out to be more challenging than you expected. You are free to ask for an **extension on an assignment.** As long as you request the extension **in advance** (at least 24 hours before it's due) and only do so once, I'll usually be happy to grant an extra day or two with no penalty. Make sure that you read **Intellectual Responsibility** below.

Exams

Three midterm exams and one final exam will be administered. Three midterms will be given in class on the scheduled dates. The final exam will be *comprehensive* and you are responsible for taking it at the time scheduled by the College. **Do not make travel plans that may conflict with the final date before knowing when the final is scheduled for.** Calculators and writing utensils are permitted for all exams. You are also allowed to bring a single *one-sided* page of notes for the midterms, and a single *two-sided* page of notes for the final.

There are NO excuses for missing an exam apart from serious illness, religious conflict or the like. If you have such a conflict, please let me know as soon as possible. Otherwise, a missing exam is graded a zero. You will not be able to negotiate any missed exam at the end of the semester.

Effort

"Effort" is a combination of class attendance, class participation and textbook reading. I have no plan to take formal attendance (unless it proves necessary), but the truth is that I know who comes and who doesn't. Being consistently late or absent would never be good for your learning and final grade. In addition, I encourage you to participate in class: answer my questions or ask me questions. If you are naturally shy and have never spoken up in any class, don't worry! Show me you are listening and you care about this course. Believe me; I know who are serious!

Reading the material BEFORE & AFTER class is very important. I strongly encourage you to at least skim the sections before class and, again, do the corresponding homework problems as soon as we cover them. Occasionally I may (or may not) give some **extra-credits** questions in class. Welcome to take advantage of them!

Intellectual Responsibility

You are encouraged to discuss the homework assignments with others. However, what you turn in must be your own work! **If you work together with other students, I require that you write a note of it on the front of your homework.** If anyone turns in an assignment without such a note and it appears to have been copied from someone else, both students will receive a grade of zero for that homework.

As for exams: no talking, no passing signals, no outside help, etc. All cell phones, PDAs, iPods, laptops, etc. should be turned off and put out of sight. Plagiarism on an exam may require further disciplinary actions.

Let me help!

Please let me know ASAP if you would like to discuss any special needs/concerns such as severe academic difficulties, religious observances on certain days, or family emergencies, etc. I'm here to help!