

Fall 2009
Information Sheet for
Math 21: Linear Algebra
MWF 1, T 9, ESNH 107

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Textbook

We will use the book *Introduction to Linear Algebra with Applications* by DeFranza and Gagliardi. Hardcopy is available at Amherst Books, and a 180 day pdf file can be purchased at the web site http://www.coursesmart.com/givecoursesmartatry?xmlid=007727248X&_instructor=1824073. The pdf file costs about half of what the hardcover costs.

Goals and Content of the Course

Math 21 has several goals:

- Learn about matrices and systems of linear equations
- Learn the underlying theory
- Learn some interesting mathematics that is very different from calculus
- Learn how to do simple proofs

We will cover the following topics: systems of linear equations, matrices, vector spaces, linear maps, determinants, eigenvalues and eigenvectors, and diagonalization. I hope to cover most of the book.

Exams and Grading

There will be three in-class exams, on October 6, November 3 and December 8 (all Tuesdays so I can start the exam at 8:00 am to give you more time). There will also be a three hour final. Of the three in-class exams, your top two are each worth 20% of your grade and the third is worth 12%. This way you can blow one exam without killing your average. Homework is worth 8% of your grade, and the final is worth 40%.

Asking Questions and Coming to Office Hours

Math 21 works best when it is a conversation between you and me. My part of the conversation begins during the lecture, but it also continues after class and in my office hours.

Your part of the conversation is equally important. This can happen during class (when you ask a question about an unclear point), after class (when you ask a question to clarify your understanding, in my office or via email. I like talking to students—please come by!

Office hours: TBA

Using Your Notes

I encourage you to take careful notes and *read them over daily*. This is important because not everything of importance gets written on the board. If you have any questions about what I did during the class, please come by my office hours.

Missing a Class or Test

If you miss a class, you need to get the notes, read them over, and also read the corresponding section of the book. If anything is unclear after doing this, come see me during office hours and we can talk over what's bothering you.

Missing tests: If you are ill, notify me *as soon as possible*. If you have a conflict, you need to inform me well in advance, *preferably at least a week*. Note that the exam dates are listed above.