

MATH 122L FAQ

- *Who are the instructors for this course?* The 122L instructors are Erin Beckman, Matt Beckett, Joshua Cruz, Eric Hopper, Erika Ordog, and Sarah Schott. The course coordinator is Professor Schott. Even though your section has one instructor, you are invited to take advantage of any instructor's help room hours.
- *What does the course coordinator do?* As a block course, instruction of Math 122L is a collaborative effort among the instructors. To facilitate this collaboration, Professor Schott schedules regular instructor meetings, sets a common syllabus, and manages the lab TAs. The role of the course coordinator exists to ensure consistency among sections is maintained.
- *Who writes the midterm exams?* The midterms in your section are written by your instructor. The midterm writing process includes revisions based off of suggestions from the group of instructors. The revision process ensures that midterm exams are of comparable difficulty across sections. By the end of the semester, each 122L student will have access to all midterms on the joint Sakai site.
- *Who writes the final exam?* Math 122L is a block course, meaning that all sections take the same final exam. Unlike the midterm exams, the final is jointly written by all six instructors.
- *What is the grading breakdown of this course?* Your course grade will be broken down as follows:
 - Homework: 10%
 - Lab Assignments: 15%
 - Midterm Exams: 40%
 - Final Exam: 35%
- *How will I receive feedback about my standing in this course?* At the end of this course your numerical grade, as computed using the percentages described above, will be converted to a letter grade. To help you understand this conversion, after each midterm exam your instructor will post a grade table that allows you to approximate how your numerical score translates to a letter grade. You will also be given a mid-semester grade shortly after the first exam that also incorporates your performance on homework and labs up to that point. Of course, your final exam is a substantial component of your final grade and therefore will influence your final letter grade.
- *Is Math 122L the most failed course at Duke?* Absolutely not. On the contrary, very few D's or F's are given in this course. Last fall, roughly 4% of students earned a grade less than a C-.
- *Is Math 122L a "weedout" course?* Not at all. Mathematics is essential for the sciences and engineering and is important for the social sciences, business, and the humanities too. We want you to learn as much as possible and we want to encourage you to take other math courses.
- *What should I do to succeed in the course?* We strongly encourage you to collaborate with your peers, both on working through assigned homework as well as studying the material. Most importantly, seek help when you need it. This can be from your instructor during

or outside of class, at the Help Room (open Sunday through Thursday in Carr 132), or on Piazza. It is your responsibility to learn the material in the course. We provide the lectures, the Help Room, and Piazza to help you do just that. You may not understand everything during lectures, so you can and should use these resources to clarify difficult concepts.

- *What is expected of me?* At a minimum, we expect that you will attend class, work through all assigned work, and seek help when you need it. Like all other important goals in life, learning mathematics requires work, determination, and persistence. Every one of you has plenty of talent. Success comes to those students who work hard, and that should be reassuring to you because that is a variable that you control. And, remember, your instructor, every graduate student in mathematics, and every professor struggled at times to understand, to do problems, and to complete calculations. So don't be discouraged; the struggle is part of the endeavor. We're here to help.
- *I have a question not addressed here. Where should I go?* You can ask your instructor. If you do not feel comfortable asking your instructor your question, please contact the course coordinator, Professor Sarah Schott (schott@math.duke.edu), or the supervisor of first year instruction, Professor Clark Bray (cbray@math.duke.edu).