

Memo

To: Adjunct math faculty
From: Melanie Eddins-Spencer, Department Coordinator
Subject: Welcome Back!
Date: January 12, 2022

Welcome back from Winter Break. Please take a few minutes to read over this memo to catch up on the latest news in the math department.

Please read the following carefully, and keep this memo so that you can refer back to it when necessary.

1. A wide variety of information, both course-specific and department-wide, can be found on our department website at www.prairiestate.edu/math by clicking on “[For Instructors.](#)” Make sure you are reading that information at least every semester so that you are updated on the latest policies, procedures, syllabi, and other information.
2. A shared folder on the “X” drive has been created for Math Faculty. There are semester reviews, course objectives, guided notes and activities for select classes for your use. It is tricky to access this drive from home, but it can be done. If you need something specific, you can email me and I’ll send it to you. Many of those resources, I have copied over to my google drive: [Math Faculty Resources](#). If you have trouble accessing anything, please let me know. Also, please consider contributing by uploading your own resources.
3. Teaching online, especially during a pandemic, can be challenging! Please adhere to the minimal expectations outlined in the document created by the Math Department: [Online Teaching Expectations](#). Also, browse the file [Math Online Resources](#) for some quick tips and resources you may find helpful when teaching online.
4. Everyone must use D2L for all online courses. It is important that you create your course and activate it before the first day of the semester. If possible, please have your D2L course activated by the **Friday before the first day of your class**, but no later than the Monday of the week that your course begins. Also, if possible, create a welcome video for your students and email your students this week reminding them when your D2L course will be available to view and when they should begin work in the course. In that message, you can remind students that they will need to complete at least one assignment in the first 10 days in order to not be dropped from the course. All of this can ease nerves and help us retain students next semester!
5. **If you are teaching a departmental course (Math 085/090/095/151):**

- a. For consistency and assessment purposes, we use a common final exam provided by the department in Fall and Spring. Additionally, you **MUST** administer the exam through D2L. The final exam must be worth 15 – 25% of the final grade, and all questions must be counted towards their grade. Note that you are free to have your students do additional problems, such as adding a free response portion to the test.
 - b. **In Math 090/095,** Hawkes homework should account for 10-15% of the final grade.
 - c. For these departmental courses, since we re-use exams, **old final exams should never be distributed as review material.** The department has review packets available on our website, or you can make up your own. There are also video solutions to the 090 and 095 reviews for your students (special thanks to Rob Belin!)
 - d. The finals for **Math 085 and 095 must be administered on Monday, May 16** and the final for **Math 090, 091, and 151 must be administered on Tuesday, May 17.**
6. **All final exams must be cumulative.** If you are teaching a non-departmental course, you will choose a final exam day/time/period that will work for you and your students and make sure to post that information on the syllabus.
7. Regarding your syllabus:
- a. Please make sure your syllabi have a professional appearance and adhere to the guidelines Kate, our Department chair sends out each semester. When teaching a course for the first time, the department will review your syllabus to ensure all requirements are met.
 - b. Your syllabus should include your contact information, including your Prairie State email address (per the contract, this is the only email address you should be using to communicate with students). We strongly advise you not to give students a personal phone number such as your home or cell number.
 - c. Please be sure your students have a copy of your policy concerning make-up work. This should be part of your syllabus.
 - d. We are **required** to list the College-wide General Education Learning Outcome that corresponds to our classes on each syllabus. Please check to make sure your syllabus includes the following statement:

College-wide General Education Learning Outcomes

Prairie State College's general education outcomes encapsulate the core knowledge and skills that we believe equip students to develop personally, as critical thinkers, and as global citizens. The specific general education learning outcome for this course is:

Problem Solving: Students will locate and identify information, determine what problem exists, develop solutions, evaluate results, and extend results to new situations.

- e. Include a policy about email communication on your syllabus. It is perfectly acceptable to state that you will reply to emails within 24-48 hours on weekdays and that you may not reply to weekend emails until the following Monday. Whatever your policy is, please state it on your syllabus and adhere to it.
 - f. Look over your syllabus and make sure all items make sense for learning during a pandemic.
8. Notice that cheating has increased over the past year. Many students are using internet resources and equation solvers and are not really learning the material. We firmly believe that helping our students LEARN is the best way to prevent cheating. Please make students aware that these online “resources” can give them a false sense of “knowing”. Do your best to create assessments that require students to demonstrate their knowledge, not just their ability to copy steps from a solver. Also, be aware that students upload tests and quizzes to sites such as coursehero – this should not be allowed.
9. We will be administering student evaluations electronically. Please make every effort to ensure that a large number of your students complete the evaluation.
10. We have **FREE tutoring** available in the student success center. Encourage your students to take advantage of this service. Students can schedule appointments by emailing Lisa Hansen at ahansen@prairiestate.edu with their name, ID#, course, instructor, and preferred day/time and she will set up an appointment. Also, as we hire students as peer tutors, encourage your excellent students to apply for a position as a peer tutor at prairiestate.edu/stem or you can send them to the coordinator, Natalie McGathey (nmcgathey@prairiestate.edu). Please consider adding a line to your syllabus to help us advertise the services of our peer and mentor tutors.

Please glance through your Adjunct Faculty Handbook at least once per semester. See the Coordinator, Melanie Eddins-Spencer, or Rosalva Mendoza if you need a copy of the handbook.

The full-time faculty appreciate your hard work and dedication. We want you to feel welcome in the department, and whenever possible, we'd like you to be involved in departmental activities. Our meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Wed of each month at 2:30, and you are welcome to attend (but not required to do so).

Last, please contact me if you have any questions regarding your course, the department, or the college. You can reach me at meddinspencer@prairiestate.edu.

I hope you have a wonderful semester!

Melanie

Memo

To: Math faculty
From: Melanie Eddins-Spencer
Subject: Student placement/re-placement
Date: January 12, 2022

As always, student placement is an issue that deserves our attention at the beginning of the semester. Many students are quick to tell their instructor that they do not belong in the math class in which they placed. While most students are correctly placed, there are a few who would benefit greatly from being moved up a course. We should all do our best to ensure that our students are placed into the highest level courses in which they can be successful.

First, be aware that we have multiple pathways to college level math courses. You can review the diagram [Math Paths Diagram](#) – lets make sure that our students are placed at the highest appropriate level. Also, we have Math 085 and Math 090 pretests available that you can give your students to make sure they are correctly placed (if you so choose). If you need a copy of the test, please let Kate know. If a pretest shows that a student is capable of doing higher-level work (perhaps you could use a cut-off score of 75%), please send them to Natalie or Kate and we will consider placing them into a more appropriate course. **Please do not tell all students that they may be able to move up to the next course; we don't want them to get their hopes up.**

For other courses, when students tell you they have been incorrectly placed we give them two options (described below). If students approach you with placement issues, please feel free to share this information.

Option #1 (Recommended option) - Completely bypass the Math Department and retake the placement assessment (ALEKS). Your ALEKS fee covers a study module and 5 attempts at placement. If you are unhappy with your placement, simply use the study module to work on your skills, then re-take the placement test. In fact, students can schedule a recurring appointment with a tutor to get one-on-one help with their modules.

Option #2 - Bring transcripts, placement test scores, and other documentation (e.g. ACT or SAT scores) as evidence of incorrect placement to the Coordinator, Melanie Eddins-Spencer (meddinsspencer@prairiestate.edu) or Department Chair, Kate Sims Drew (ksims@prairiestate.edu). If appropriate, a written placement test will be scheduled. However, you must have evidence to support your case, and students exercising this option will not be allowed to move up more than one course.

If you were incorrectly placed, you may have been unprepared for placement testing or you may have misunderstood the consequences of incorrect placement. Please don't make the same mistake twice. Be prepared.

List of Adjunct Math Faculty Spring 2022

- 1.) Sarah Alford salford@prairiestate.edu
- 2.) Hala Elashmawi helashmawi@prairiestate.edu
- 3.) JuTon Hemphill jhemphill2059@prairiestate.edu

List of Full-Time Math Faculty Spring 2022

- 1) Sue Ecsi secsi@prairiestate.edu
- 2) Melanie Eddins-Spencer meddinsspencer@prairiestate.edu
- 3) Brian Garant bgarant@prairiestate.edu
- 4) Kevin Marks kmarks@prairiestate.edu
- 5) Natalie McGathey nmcgathey@prairiestate.edu
- 6) Kate Sims-Drew ksims@prairiestate.edu
- 7) Terra Stamps tstamps@prairiestate.edu
- 8) David Torres dtorres@prairiestate.edu