

# COMPLETE COURSE POLICY

## COURSE INFORMATION

<b>Course:</b> MS 112	<b>Class Room:</b> 118 AH	<b>Final Exam Time/Date:</b> 12:30-3:00 Mon, 5/30/06
<b>Course Title:</b> Precalculus Algebra	<b>Class Dates:</b> 5/2-5/30/06	<b>Holidays:</b> May 29
<b>Section:</b> 01	<b>Class Time:</b> 12:30-3:00	<b>Last Day to Drop Without Penalty:</b> May 11 (No signature needed)
<b>Call No.:</b> 1241	<b>Class Days:</b> MTWT	
<b>Text:</b> Algebra for College Students/ 7 <sup>th</sup> Edition By Kaufmann & Schwitters	<b>Semester:</b> May 2006	<b>Last Day to Drop Passing:</b> May 18 (My signature required.)
	<b>Instructor:</b> Errin White	

### Attendance

You **must attend** at least **80%** of all scheduled class meetings. This means all classes missed for whatever reason (**even classes missed before you began attending class or when you are sick**) count as **absences**. Since this class meets 16 times, you must attend at least 13 classes, regardless of your reasons for missing. Consequently you **can miss only 3 classes**. If you do not meet the attendance requirement, **departmental policy** requires that you be given an **F**. (**You may still Drop without academic penalty as noted above.**) **If you have extenuating circumstances, please see me as soon as possible!**

**When you exceed 3 absences, your name will be turned in to the Financial Aid office.** We have a growing number of students who are abusing the use of Financial Aid, and money is in too short supply for it to be squandered by students who are simply looking for a *free ride!*

**I only need excuses for absences from a Major Test** (Outlined below under Makeup Tests.), or in the case of extenuating circumstances that put you over 3 absences.

If you are **late to class**, it is **your responsibility** to check with me after class to **make sure** you are **counted** as **present**. If you must **leave class early**, this must be **approved** by me **before class**, **otherwise** you will be counted as **absent**.

Someone is paying for you to be taught this material. **Do not waste this money** by skipping class. Mathematics is a subject that especially **requires regular attendance**, since the material builds upon what has already been covered.

### Studying

**Why do homework?** If you think you must have your instructor **take up homework every class** in order to be motivated to do it, then you are in the **wrong class!** **I do not take up general homework assignments!** (**See Daily Grades under Grading.**) If you want to **pass** this course, you must master the skills necessary to work the problems on the tests. To master these skills, you must be able to work the homework problems. You will get the most benefit from the homework if you do it, or at least a fair sampling of problems **before** the next class period so that you can clear up any difficulties that you are having.

Do not make the mistake that some have: Terms may sound familiar from high school or a previous course, but do not jump to the conclusion that you are a master of the skills involved. If you expect to do well in this course, **regular study is a must**. You must keep up with the homework assignments as they are given. Unless you are a genius or already know the material in this course now, it is not possible to study only immediately before the test and do well. When assignments are given, make sure that you have tried your best to do the problems **before** the next class period. You may find it difficult to read math books, but remember that there are many useful examples that can be referred to. There may be some Notes available (See *Homework*, below.) If you get stuck on one problem, try another. For example, don't conclude that if you can't do #1, then you can't do # 21. Each assignment may contain different concepts, so some problems may be easier to grasp than others. By trying to do at least a good sampling of the problems before the next class, you will be able to ask specific questions which can be answered without wasting time that could be spent on other topics.

In learning the material, you must understand the various procedures and ideas required to work the problems. Merely memorizing how to work the problems will probably result in confusion and poor success in this course. When new material is covered, **do not hesitate to ask questions** in class. In this way you can clarify the concepts and procedures involved **before** you attempt to do the problems on your own. Sometimes when new material is presented, you initially may only be able to work the problems simply by following the procedure demonstrated in class. But to do well, you need to understand **why** the procedure works. **It may be necessary to work the same problems more than once**, especially if the problem was missed on the first try. Repetition is one of the best tools that you have toward learning new material, so several days after an assignment has been completed, pick a few of the problems and rework them (from scratch). If you are still having trouble, then repeat this procedure until they are fully understood.

**PREPARING FOR TESTS:** Remember that you will be given all the types of problems covered. They may not be in the same order as covered in class. You may find it **helpful** to make up a **sampling** of the different types of problems as you are doing the individual assignments. If you do this on index cards with the answer written on the back, then you can “mix them up” and work the problems as if it were a test. This means working the problems without notes, or your tutor or friend there to coach you along, or getting the wrong answer and reworking until you finally get it right. This will give you a fair idea as to how prepared you are for the test.

### *Homework & WebPage*

I do **not** try to map out the entire semester with a **prearranged daily** lesson plan. This can be very difficult to follow, as every class of students is different. The **assignments are given daily** in each class, so it is each student’s responsibility to keep up with the assignments. They are given by assignment numbers that correspond to a number of specified problems that are found on the **Course Syllabus**. You will find that this flexibility will benefit you, since I can sometimes spend more time on the problems that are difficult for your class. Part of certain material may be covered, and then we may come back later to finish this material. This should allow you to master some of the initial concepts, so that the remaining material will be easier to understand. This may appear to be skipping around as far as the order of the book, so it is absolutely essential that you attend class and keep up with the assignments as they are given.

The following will be **available on my WebPage** under **COURSE INFO: Course Policy Agreement, a Complete Course Policy, the Course Syllabus, a Highlighted Syllabus** for each Major Test, an **Assignments Calendar** (a blank calendar of days for this term for you to fill in your assignments and test days), the **Acknowledgment Form, Excuse Form** (explained under Makeup Tests), and **blank graphs** that you may print and use if you like.

My WebPage also includes **WORKSHEETS** that will be assigned throughout the semester, **NOTES** covering some background topics and many of the topics we will cover this semester, a **FINAL EXAM STUDY GUIDE** that will be available at the end of the semester, and **DAILY ASSIGNMENTS & TEST DATES** (This is generally updated after each class, so you have a way to get your assignments & Test Dates in case you miss class. I also post certain even numbered answers there when needed.) The **Daily Assignment Page** is also my communication to you in case of unforeseen occurrences about class, such as a Hurricane. I know how difficult it can be to read Math books, so I have spent a great deal of time developing the **NOTES** that I hope will be helpful to you in your understanding. In addition to explanations, there are some examples given. You will find these particularly helpful in some of the areas that I take a different approach (*Hopefully easier!*) than the book. Notes that will pertain to the next class will be announced so that you can be as prepared as possible.

Please get familiar with my WebPage because there will be **Worksheets** assigned there from the first day. These Worksheets require Adobe Acrobat to download. Even with this, some students have had difficulty from their home computers. Check to make sure that the Worksheets “look OK.” Typically the problem will be missing negative signs and radicals. All material should be readily available on any open Lab Computer on campus. (These can be found in Merrill, Self Hall, and the Library.) There is a charge of 5 cents per page for printing. The credit for this must be loaded in advance to your JSU ID or JSU Guest Card. You can get to my WebPage by going to JSU’s HomePage, (<http://www.jsu.edu>), then click through the following path: Departments/ Mathematical Computing & Information Sciences/ People/ Errin White. Alternately, the direct address is:

<http://mcis.jsu.edu/faculty/ewhite/index.html>

### *Makeup Grades & Tests*

Since we are working on a very tight time schedule for this course, be sure that you understand my makeup policy.

Makeup grades are allowed only for tests missed for legitimate reasons such as illness, school sponsored events, etc. Makeup grades cannot be given because you are unprepared or because you have other tests scheduled that day. (If you are studying properly, you should not need to be **craming** for the tests – you should know how to work the problems by the time a test is given.) **I must approve all makeups within one week of your returning to class...** Preferably the first day you come back to class. **This is YOUR responsibility!** You should print out the **Excuse Form** available under Course Info on my Webpage, fill it out and turn it in to me along with any corroborating information you wish to include (such as a doctor’s excuse.). Except for **EXTREME** circumstances, the **maximum number of makeups allowed will be ONE.**

I will allow you to take a makeup test for either of the 2 major tests if your excuse has been approved and you can make up the test **BEFORE** I return the graded test to the class. This obviously will not be an option if I can grade the test by the next class period. Otherwise, I will substitute the Final Exam grade for the missed test (with approved excuse.) If I do not approve an excuse for you, a **ZERO** will be assigned for the missed test. If both major tests are missed, your best option is to drop the course.

There will be **NO MAKEUPS** for **DAILY GRADES.**

## *Grading*

There will be **2 Major Tests**. (Generally, announced at least one week in advance. Tentative Dates are on your **Calendar for Assignments**.)

**Daily Grades:** I have generally found it difficult to have sufficient class time to do quizzes in class; however, they can be very beneficial for letting you check your progress. I am going to try a variation on this by having quizzes some days in class. Some days I may give an open book assignment or a take home quiz. In the case of take home assignments, they will be due at the *next* class. They may be turned in before class by sliding them under my office door if I am not in. For these assignments that are taken home, I would expect some of you to use the book or your notes or get help from someone. I would suggest that you will get the most accurate assessment of your understanding of the problems if you do them on your own. So that you will not feel under pressure to copy someone's work just to keep from hurting your grade, if the average of these daily grades is **lower** than your other grades, I will **not** count them in your Final Grade! The incentive to do well on them is that this Daily Grade average can count 10% of your Final Grade. These will be graded with **little or no partial credit**, and there will be **NO MAKEUPS** for Daily Grades. (I will try to have enough of these so that at least 3 can be dropped.) So the **daily grades** can **NOT** hurt you, but could help you in a borderline situation. The main purpose will be to let you know whether you understand the material as well as you should, and to get some feedback on your techniques without the pressure of a major test.

The **FINAL EXAM** is **COMPREHENSIVE**. Your Final Semester Grade will be the highest of the following methods.

	Daily Grade Counts	Drop Daily Grade	Final Exam Higher than Test Average	Final Exam Higher than Test Average
Major Test Average	60%	70%	40%	50%
Comprehensive Final Exam	30%	30%	50%	50%
Semester Daily Grade	10%	0%	10%	0%

The final grade is determined as follows: **A:** 90-100%, **B:** 80-89.9%, **C:** 70-79.9%, **D:** 60-69.9%, **F:** 0-59.9%.. In **borderline** grade situations, I will consider your attitude and participation in class. Any student receiving a **failing grade or a D** on a **major test** is **strongly urged to discuss this matter with me as soon as possible**.

**YOU ARE REQUIRED TO KEEP THE TESTS AND DAILY GRADES THAT ARE RETURNED TO YOU UNTIL AFTER A GRADE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED FOR THE COURSE AND THERE IS NO QUESTION AS TO THE CORRECTNESS OF YOUR FINAL GRADE FOR THE COURSE.**

I allow you to keep your graded tests and quizzes since I feel that they are an excellent learning device. I do this as a courtesy to you. Although I have never been found to be in error of a recorded test grade in the past, I realize that I am not immune to such an error. Therefore, if there is a question about your grade, you must have the graded test(s) to show me as to the proof of the correct grade.

### *Academic Honesty & Conduct*

All academic dishonesty is expressly prohibited. Students must adhere to the university policy for academic honesty as specified in the JSU Student Handbook. Be very **careful** as to **where** your **eyes** are during an exam and as to whether anyone could easily copy from your paper. **Please refrain from wearing hats during an exam. No headphones are allowed.**

All students will comply with the code of conduct and compliance with official requests as outlined in the JSU Student Handbook. I like and expect questions during class, but this must be done in an orderly fashion by raising your hand. I do not forbid very quiet talk between students unless it becomes distracting to others. If you are asked to refrain and fail to comply, you will be asked to leave the class. Everyone here is paying for their education in one way or another, so to disrupt the class, wasting valuable teaching time, is just like stealing.

If you **must** have a cell phone or beeper on during regular class time, please set it to the quietest possible setting and sit where you can quickly & quietly go into the hall to answer it. **Cell phones MUST BE turned off and put up during all Tests...** If yours goes off by accident **during a test, turn it off immediately... do not answer it**. If you have some **emergency** situation that requires a phone during a test, you **MUST OK** it through me in advance.

I have also started having **trouble** with students just getting up and going to the **restroom during a test without permission**. While I realize that the need of a restroom during a test may be unavoidable at times, I certainly do not remember it happening when I was in college – not even during Final Exams. Please make every effort to take care of these things before coming to a test, and then if you **MUST GO**, you **MUST ASK PERMISSION**. **Leaving a test without permission can result in your test being terminated at that point!**

## *Equipment*

You are expected to bring your book and paper and pencil to class **every** time. **Tests** and other assignments that are turned in should be done neatly in **pencil** with any needed erasures done cleanly. **Make sure you have a good eraser for tests.** I generally have a few pencils available for a 25 cent donation to the Math Club. You will need a **ruler** (a 6 inch will be sufficient) for some assignments. You may find that **graph paper is useful** (There will be graph paper on my Webpage that you can print out but it is not required.) The graph template will be provided for tests. You will need a calculator capable of doing powers and log functions. I require a **Casio FX 300 MS Plus** if you will need any instruction. You might want to try the problems on the calculator worksheets (#15 & #16) to test whether you are calculator proficient and not merely calculator dependent. We will not be using calculators until later in the semester, so you will have some time to get one. They can be found at stores such as WalMart and Office Max. They cost only about \$10 and are very “user-friendly.” It is very nice because it has a “2 line display” that lets you review and edit everything that you have keyed in for a calculation. It is MUCH easier to use than most. The **only** exception to this requirement will be for a student that has an acceptable calculator and will **NOT** need **ANY** assistance in learning to perform the calculations required. If you are going to use a different calculator, it must be Okayed by me. The **calculator will NOT be allowed for MOST assignments in class** as I feel that too many students are “calculator-dependent.” If you can not do arithmetic well without a calculator, you will not be able to master the principles of algebra. The **ONLY** test that allows the use of a calculator is PART of Test #2

## *Where & When Available*

**Office: 127 Ayers / Phone: 782-5213**

**BY APPOINTMENT:**

I am generally in my office a lot during the day, but my schedule varies and I have found that I can make myself more available to students when they *need* me, instead of some arbitrary, predetermined time to just BE there. Any time that I am in my office, feel free to stop by and ask questions. If you want to be **SURE** to see me, it is best to make an appointment by either talking to me before or after class, calling my office, or emailing me.... Calling is better than emailing since we can work out a mutually acceptable time right then; but if you can't call or don't get me, emailing is ok. **For all emails, please specify in the subject: MS 112....** I have a lot of trouble with junk email, and if I don't recognize the subject or sender, it will be deleted. Since I am slow to learn names, you need to rely on me seeing that you are in my course. I also have voice mail, which I do check. In either case, leave a number where you can be reached (Please repeat the number clearly.), and I can try to call you. If you have a local number, that is better.

**ewhite@jsu.edu**

**WebPage: <http://mcis.jsu.edu/faculty/ewhite/index.html>**