

# Math 980, Spring 2021 Syllabus

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**Course Number and Title: Math 980, Algebra for College Success**

**Semester and Year: Spring 2021**

**Instructor:** John Nordstrom

**Email:** [nordstro@math.utah.edu](mailto:nordstro@math.utah.edu) (note the missing 'm' in my name!).

**Accessibility & Support:**

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Math 980 includes algebra topics such as: linear equations; graphing; systems of linear equations; linear inequalities and absolute value; exponential and logarithmic functions. According to university guidelines, an average student should expect to spend 8-12 hours per week outside of class in addition to the time in class. Some students will get by with less, others may need more time.

**PREREQUISITE:** If your Math ACT score is below 14, please speak with me immediately!

For the School of Business, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences\*, College of Education\*, Colleges of Science, Engineering, Mines & Earth Sciences and Architecture + Planning\*, students should have a current Math ACT score between 14-17, or on the Accuplacer an EA  $\leq$  53.

For the Colleges of Humanities, Fine Arts, Nursing Health, Social Work, Social & Behavioral Sciences\* and Architecture + Planning, students should have a current Math ACT score between 14-18, or on the Accuplacer an EA  $\leq$  59.

\*Multiple QA options are available or do not follow this specific pathway. Meet with your academic advisor to verify which courses will work best for you.

## COURSE DETAILS

- **Course Type:** ([click here for definitions](#)) Interactive Video Conferencing (IVC - synchronous online)
- **Location & Meeting Times:** You can contact me anytime either through Canvas or the email above and I will do my absolute best to respond within one business day. I will be holding Zoom office hours; the time is still to be determined but will be discussed in class.
- **Attendance & Punctuality:** Students are expected to attend the class via Zoom, during the listed class time. Classes will be recorded when possible, but the class is designed with active participation in mind and students benefit most when present during the live class. Participation during class is graded. You need to be present in

the online class in Zoom to participate in Exams. Not being present during an assessment, but turning it in will be considered academic misconduct.

- **Course Materials:** All coursework will be available through Canvas. The textbook, indicated as Explanation and Examples, is available as the student progresses from module to module. During the first week of school, the student will learn how to log into the coursework and work through the curriculum. Video Lessons and Practice, Homework, and Quizzes were created in OHM – an Open Resource Material. The videos and text were developed mainly by James Sousa of Phoenix Community College. Students can download and print the text (Explanation and Examples) for every section.
- **Technical requirements:**
  - For both quality learning and proctored testing, students are required to have access to the following equipment:
    - A strong internet connection with sufficient bandwidth (in order to participate in IVC classes, access course materials, and take exams):
    - A webcam on your computer or camera on your phone (this is required for taking quizzes and exams in Zoom; it is recommended for IVC lecture classes):
    - A scanning device which is different than the device you are using for your webcam (smartphones can be used as scanning devices)
    - a microphone (used for online meetings);
  - Students are expected to be computer literate and Canvas and Zoom navigation skills are expected. Knowledge and navigation of Canvas and Zoom is critical to access all features and resources of this course.) Students should log into Zoom for class with audio and video enabled.
  - Students are expected to participate in the IVC portion of class, which is done through Zoom, with audio and visual enabled. This is expectation is there, because it improves learning and the classroom environment. If students need to turn of cameras and/or microphones, this is allowed. It is polite if you will be doing so for long periods to inform your instructor. Also note, even though microphones are enabled, they may be muted when not in use.
  - During exams, students are required to have audio and microphone and to have it enabled (students may be asked to mute your microphone for portions of the assessments.) Students need to position the camera and/or themselves so that their head, hands and workspace is visible. Students are required to have a separate scanning device and continue to have their Zoom camera turned on while scanning; during the scanning phase, students may be gone from the screen for a few seconds if this is prearranged with their instructor.
  - A printer is recommended, but not required, so that you can print out templates for exams ahead of time. If you do not have a printer, you will need to make and use hand-written versions. You must copy these exactly, but they are designed to be fast and straight forward to create by hand.
  - For technical assistance, review the [Canvas Getting Started Guide for Students](#) and/or contact TLT.
  - A scientific calculator is required for the course. Students are allowed (as per instructor's restrictions) to use calculators provided they show clear/precise work on every problem on the midterms and the final exam in order to receive full credit for correct answers. No graphing calculators, cell phones or devices with Internet connectivity may be used as a calculator on an exam.
- **Syllabus subject to change:** This syllabus is meant to serve as an outline and guide for our course. Please note that I may modify it with reasonable notice to you. I may also modify the Course Schedule to accommodate the needs of our class. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

The course goal is for students to improve their quantitative reasoning, gaining an understanding of algebra and confidence in Mathematics.

## COURSE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will demonstrate competency in:
  - a. solving linear equations; basic power equations; linear inequalities; and systems of linear equations in two variables;
  - b. graphing linear equations; linear inequalities; and systems of linear equations in two variables;

- c. solving and graphing absolute value equations and inequalities;
  - d. solving and graphing exponential and logarithmic functions;
  - e. solving applications related to the above topics;
2. Students will develop confidence and comfort in dealing with mathematical concepts.
  3. Students will develop concise analytical thinking and problem-solving skills that can be applied in their daily lives.
  4. Students will demonstrate the ability to incorporate all of the above skills by communicating and presenting a detailed solution to a multi-faceted real-life challenge.

#### CLASS SCHEDULE & IMPORTANT DATES

**Mandatory Online Instruction Periods:** All classes will be online the weeks of March 1-14. During these weeks, we will meet synchronously in Zoom at the normal class time.

**Exam Dates:** Please note that both the dates and covered material for the midterms is somewhat tentative and that there is a good chance that these may change slightly. Any changed dates will be announced at least a class day ahead of time. The final date and time are according to the University's final exam schedule.

Midterm 1:..... Thursday, February 25  
 Midterm 2:..... Thursday, April 8  
 Final (Cumulative):..... Wednesday, May 5, 8:00 – 10:00 am

**Official Drop/Withdraw Dates:** The last day to drop classes is Friday, January 29; the last day to withdraw from this class is Friday, March 12. Please check the academic calendar for more information pertaining to dropping and withdrawing from a course. Withdrawing from a course and other matters of registration are the student's responsibility.

**Holidays:** There will be no class on Monday, February 15 (Presidents' Day), Friday, March 5 (Non-Instructional Day) and Monday, April 5 (Non-Instructional Day).

#### COMMUNICATION

Communication expectations:

- All course materials, such as assignments, solutions, grades, etc. will be posted on the Course Canvas site. Class announcements will be done via email through the Canvas server. You will be responsible for any information contained in them as well as the information announced in class.
- It is your responsibility to also regularly check your Umail (make sure you set up forwarding if you do not check it regularly). There are times that your Umail is the only way for me to communicate privately with you, there may be occasions during the semester that I may need to reach out to you individually (e.g. regarding a grade or assignment) and it is in your best interest to respond promptly.
- Feel free to contact me using the Canvas inbox. I will do my best to answer emails within one business day (not including weekends, holidays, and non-instruction days). I would like to encourage you to email me only if it is something personal that requires individual attention, if instead you have questions about logistics of the class, course material and assignments, and anything else your classmates may wonder as well, please post a question on the Discussions Board instead. This way the information is shared quickly to the entire class, and each of you can benefit from seeing other classmates' questions.
- I will always do my best to ensure the communication relevant to the course is clear and transparent, it is your responsibility as well to keep yourself updated by regularly checking: the announcements on Canvas, your Umail, the posts on the Discussions Board, and pay attention to the announcements given in class and Discussion Section.
- Course Canvas Page: Students are expected to log in and check canvas **every class day** for posted announcements and assignments. Students are also strongly advised to set up notifications for canvas so they do not miss any important notifications.

#### NETIQUETTE - EXPECTATIONS FOR ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

You are required to adhere to the following list of communication and technological guidelines:

- Classroom equivalency: Respectful participation in all aspects of the course will make our time together productive and engaging. Zoom lectures, discussion threads, emails and canvas are all considered equivalent to classrooms and student behavior within those environments shall conform to the student code. Specifically:
  - Posting photos or comments that would be off-topic in a classroom are still off-topic in an online posting.
  - Disrespectful language and photos are never appropriate.
  - Using angry or abusive language is not acceptable, and will be dealt with according to the Student Code. The instructor may remove online postings that are inappropriate.
  - Do not use ALL CAPS, except for titles, or overuse certain punctuation marks such as exclamation points and question marks.
  - Course e-mails, e-journals, and other online course communications are part of the classroom and as such, are University property and subject to the Student Code. Privacy regarding these communications between correspondents must not be assumed and should be mutually agreed upon in advance, in writing.
- Other expectations for online communication (on Discussion Board, Emails, Zoom chat etc):
  - Emails: When emailing your Instructor and Teaching Team keep a professional tone (e.g. Use a descriptive subject line, avoid “Hey” and always use your professors’ proper title: Dr. or Prof., Sign your message with your name and return e-mail address. Please consult this page for tips on how to write appropriate professional emails: <https://academicpositions.com/career-advice/how-to-email-a-professor>
  - Treat your instructor, teaching team and classmates with respect in email or any other communication.
  - Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar (this includes discussion boards).
  - Avoid slang terms such as “wassup?” and texting abbreviations such as “u” instead of “you.”
  - Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or be offensive to others.
  - Be careful with personal information (both yours and others).
- Electronic or equipment failure: It is your responsibility to maintain your computer and related equipment in order to participate in the online portion of the course. Equipment failures will not be an acceptable excuse for late or absent assignments.
- You are responsible for submitting the assignment with the required naming convention, correct file extension, and using the software type and version required for the assignment.
- Canvas allows students to change the name that is displayed AND allows them to add their pronouns to their Canvas name. Additionally, students can indicate their pronouns in Zoom.

## ASSIGNMENTS, ASSESSMENT & GRADING

Grades are weighted by the following percentages: Class Preparation and Participation (5%), Homework (10%), Reality Checks (5%), Reviews (5%), Quizzes (15%), Midterms (40%), and the comprehensive Final Exam (20%). A score of 50% or higher must be obtained on the final exam for a student to receive a grade of “C” or better in the course. An average percent will be computed and the final grade will be determined using the following scale:

93–100% = A	83–86% = B	73– 76% = C	63–66% = D
90– 92% = A-	80–82% = B-	70– 72% = C-	60–62% = D-
87- 89% = B+	77–79% = C+	67– 69% = D+	Below 60% = E

As your instructor, I will do my best to make sure that all grades are recorded accurately, but mistakes are occasionally made. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure the accuracy of all recorded homework, quizzes, online assignments, and exam grades. Also you should keep a record of all your graded assignments. If you see any error in your grades on Canvas reach out to me as soon as possible, at the latest within two weeks from when the assignment was returned.

**CLASS PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION:** During the first week of the semester, students will be required to complete a Code of Conduct assignment and a Syllabus Quiz. These assignments will not be excused and are required before students complete much of the work in the class, and will account for 1% of the overall grade.

To prepare for each class, students are expected to watch lecture videos, and answer short questions that are embedded in the videos. The lowest 10 scores will be dropped at the end of the semester. Watching these videos and answering the embedded questions will count for 2% of the overall grade.

Participation will be graded on a combination of attendance and participation during class. Attendance will be taken during each class in Zoom. On days that attendance is graded, students who miss at least 10 minutes of the class time will receive a reduced attendance grade, and students who miss more than 50% of the class time will not receive attendance credit for that day. Students may be asked questions during or immediately after class to learn how well the class is understanding the material. In order to receive credit for participation questions, students must complete them during the time given by the instructor. Late submissions will not be accepted, even if the student was signed into Zoom during the class. 10% of participation scores will be dropped at the end of the semester. Attendance and participation during class time will count for 2% of the overall grade.

**HOMEWORK:** Homework will be given regularly in Canvas. The homework exercises are the required minimum for you to demonstrate the learning objectives of the course and the mastery of the course concepts. You are encouraged to work more homework exercises than those assigned. Homework questions are designed to reset after the 3rd attempt, so you have an unlimited amount of homework problems. Regular practice is essential in learning mathematics. Most students find the more homework they practice, the better they do on the exams. All students can turn in up to 8 sections of homework up to one week late without any penalty. All homework must be completed before the Final Exam.

**REALITY CHECKS:** Reality Checks are intended to help you practice applying the recent material in a real-world example. There is one at the end of each module in Canvas. The Reality Checks have no time limit. You will have two attempts at every Reality Check, and the higher of your two scores will be saved.

**REVIEWS:** There is a graded review assignment for each module in Canvas.

**QUIZZES:** There is a graded quiz at the end of each module in Canvas. The quizzes are timed. Each quiz will give you two attempts per question, and there is a Quiz Retake that you can take to retry each quiz. Your higher score will be saved.

**EXAMS:** Exams will be given during class time at the dates listed above. The material that will be covered on the midterm exams will be announced at least one week before each exam. The Final Exam will be cumulative. Exams will be proctored in Zoom. Students are required to have their head, hands, and workspace be visible, and have microphones turned on. Students can ask their instructor questions using the chat feature in Zoom. Students should print out or hand-copy the provided template to write answers on before the exam begins. Students must complete their work and answers for every exam on paper, then scan and upload their work as a pdf at the end of each exam.

**Late Assignments/Missed Assignments Policies:** Several assignments are designed to provide you flexibility via dropped assignments. You are expected to turn things in on time and take exams at the times given unless there are serious extenuating circumstances. If there are extenuating circumstances, please contact me in a timely way to discuss alternatives. If the situation is one that can be documented, you may be asked to provide documentation. If you know about the situation in advance (such as officially sanctioned university activities), contact me at least one week in advance of any such obligations to arrange accommodation.

**Incompletes:** According to university policy, to be considered for an incomplete, a student must have 20% or less of the course work remaining and be passing the course with a C or better. You must request an incomplete grade and I will consider giving that grade only under exceptional circumstances.

**Content Accommodations:** Consistent with principles of academic freedom, the faculty, individually and collectively, has the responsibility for determining the content of the curriculum. Students are expected to take courses that will challenge them intellectually and personally. Students must understand and be able to articulate the ideas and theories that are important to the discourse within and among academic disciplines. Personal disagreement with these ideas and theories or their implications is not sufficient grounds for requesting an accommodation (see <https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php>).

## ACADEMIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Students are encouraged to review the Student Code for the University of Utah: <https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>. In order to ensure that the highest standards of academic conduct are promoted and supported at the University, students must adhere to generally accepted standards of academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct, misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. A student who engages in academic misconduct as defined in Part I.B. may be subject to academic sanctions including but not limited to a grade reduction, failing grade, probation, suspension or dismissal from the program or the University, or revocation of the student's degree or certificate. Sanctions may also include community service, a written reprimand, and/or a written statement of misconduct that can be put into an appropriate record maintained for purposes of the profession or discipline for which the student is preparing.

## ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND RESOURCES

**Inclusivity Statement:** It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status, and other unique identities. gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, and other unique identities. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In addition, if any of our class meetings conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we can make arrangements for you.

**Discrimination and Harassment:** If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS). Please see Student Bill of Rights, section E <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>. I will listen and believe you if someone is threatening you.

**Names/Pronouns.** Canvas allows students to change the name that is displayed AND allows them to add their pronouns to their Canvas name. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name as well as "Preferred first name" (if previously entered by you in the Student Profile section of your CIS account, which managed can be managed at any time). While CIS refers to this as merely a preference, I will honor you by referring to you with the name and pronoun that feels best for you in class or on assignments. Please advise me of any name or pronoun changes so I can help create a learning environment in which you, your name, and your pronoun are respected. If you need any assistance or support, please reach out to the LGBT Resource Center. [https://lgbt.utah.edu/campus/faculty\\_resources.php](https://lgbt.utah.edu/campus/faculty_resources.php)

**English Language Learners.** If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language and writing development. These resources include: the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu/>); the Writing Program (<http://writing-program.utah.edu/>); the English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli/>). Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.

**Undocumented Student Support.** Immigration is a complex phenomenon with broad impact—those who are directly affected by it, as well as those who are indirectly affected by their relationships with family members, friends, and loved ones. If your immigration status presents obstacles to engaging in specific activities or fulfilling specific course criteria,

confidential arrangements may be requested from the Dream Center. Arrangements with the Dream Center will not jeopardize your student status, your financial aid, or any other part of your residence. The Dream Center offers a wide range of resources to support undocumented students (with and without DACA) as well as students from mixed-status families. To learn more, please contact the Dream Center at 801.213.3697 or visit [dream.utah.edu](http://dream.utah.edu).

**Veterans Center.** If you are a student veteran, the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.

**Wellness Statement.** Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness at [www.wellness.utah.edu](http://www.wellness.utah.edu) or 801-581-7776.

**Student Success Advocates:** The mission of Student Success Advocates is to support students in making the most of their University of Utah experience ([ssa.utah.edu](http://ssa.utah.edu)). They can assist with mentoring, resources, etc. Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact a Student Success Advocate for support (<https://asuu.utah.edu/displaced-students>).

#### **The Americans with Disabilities Act:**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability & Access, 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020. CDA will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability & Access.

**Addressing Sexual Misconduct:** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted on the basis of your sex, including sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, you are encouraged to report it to the University's Title IX Coordinator; Director, Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or to the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

**Campus Safety:** The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit [safeu.utah.edu](http://safeu.utah.edu)

**University Counseling Center** The University Counseling Center (UCC) provides developmental, preventive, and therapeutic services and programs that promote the intellectual, emotional, cultural, and social development of University of Utah students. They advocate a philosophy of acceptance, compassion, and support for those they serve, as well as for each other. They aspire to respect cultural, individual and role differences as they continually work toward creating a safe and affirming climate for individuals of all ages, cultures, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, languages, mental and physical abilities, national origins, races, religions, sexual orientations, sizes and socioeconomic statuses.

**Office of the Dean of Students** The Office of the Dean of Students is dedicated to being a resource to students through support, advocacy, involvement, and accountability. It serves as a support for students facing challenges to their success as students, and assists with the interpretation of University policy and regulations. Please consider reaching out to the Office of Dean of Students for any questions, issues and concerns. 200 South Central Campus Dr., Suite 270. Monday-Friday 8 am-5 pm.

