
INTERMEDIATE ALGEBRA in Fall 2020 (MA0900)

Course Code	MA0900	Professor(s)	Taylor Coffman
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	PL (1st Floor)
Class Schedule	T: 09:00-10:35 in Q-604	Office Hours	Teams office hours, or by appointment
Credits	2	Email	tcoffman@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2020	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

Intermediate Algebra, MA0900, is designed to provide students with the fundamental algebra skills needed to succeed in later math classes: Functions and Modeling, Calculus, and beyond. You will have seen most of these topics at some point in your mathematical careers. Thus, think of the class as a thorough review and a sharpening of skills and understanding.

You will review the concept of a variable, and you'll explore how to simplify and evaluate variable expressions. Solving different types of equations will be a main priority. When possible, we will consider real-world applications of the topics learned, but keep in mind that this is a techniques class first, and an applications class second. Essentially, the aim is to gain comfort with variable expressions, equations, and the interpretations of those solutions.

An additional objective this semester is to develop a positive attitude and appreciation towards mathematics. I do not necessarily expect you to come away with a new-found love of math, but I do certainly hope you will come away knowing that these topics do exist and that they do have a purpose in the lives of many people, even yours. Ask all of the questions that you have and let's work together to see how the ideas discussed can have an impact in your life.

Course Learning Outcomes

Be able to define variables and use them in algebraic and real-world contexts
Understand how to simplify, evaluate, and solve algebraic expressions and equations
Be able to graphically interpret the algebraic results

General Education

This course does not satisfy the General Education requirement.

Course Outline

- Foundations
- Solving Linear Equations and Inequalities
- Graphs
- Systems of Linear Equations
- Polynomials
- Factoring
- Quadratic Equations

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Attendance

For students physically present on campus:

The attendance policy is as follows: You have a “buffer” of 3 absences. This includes excused school absences, sick days, immigration appointments, scheduling conflicts, sleep in, don't want to come, etc. If you surpass the 3 absences, each additional absence will be 1 full percentage point off your final semester grade.

For example, if you finish the semester with a 92% but have 5 absences, then you will end the semester with an 90%. Please be careful with this.

Of course, absences due to anything related to Covid will not count towards this 3 absence “buffer”. However, Covid related absences will require documentation. Send any documentation to me via Teams, and check in with me on Teams for each class attended remotely.

For students remotely present:

The attendance policy is as follows: You have a virtual “buffer” of 3 absences. What does being remotely present include?

- You join the “live” class via Teams. No further action is required on your part.
- If you cannot join the “live” class via Teams, you will have to watch the posted class video and any other supporting material (articles, textbook excerpts, video links, etc.) and check in with me on Teams for each class meeting attended remotely. Communication on Teams is quicker and more informal than email, so checking in with me will basically be the equivalent of sending a few text messages or having a quick video chat.

If you do not do one of the two bullet points above, you will be considered “virtually absent”. If you surpass the 3 absences, each additional absence will be 1 full percentage point off your final semester grade.

For example, if you finish the semester with a 92% but have 5 absences, then you will end the semester with an 90%. Please be careful with this.

A final note about attendance:

It is not my intention to punish, or be harsh, with the aforementioned attendance policy. My goal is to ensure that all students stay on track with what's happening in class and that no student falls through the cracks.

Covid-19 temporary amendments

Students studying at The American University of Paris are still expected to attend ALL scheduled classes. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. For example, when students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, Students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners.

Grading Policy

Homework 40%

Weekly Quizzes 20%

Midterm 20%

Final Exam 20%

Note: grading is on a Credit (CR) or No Credit (NC) basis

Other

Khan Academy Videos & WebAssign

Each week a good portion of your learning will take place within two online environments: Khan Academy and WebAssign. I will post video links on Slack that correspond to the topics I want to progress through each week. In class, I will elaborate on some of the harder or subtler topics. However, a large part of the material you will get from these online video links. Since many of you have seen these topics before, this will allow you to focus on the topics you struggle with and move more quickly over the topics with which you feel strong. It is strongly recommended that you watch the videos – taking notes while doing so – **BEFORE** you move on to the WebAssign homework.

Homework in this class will take place within the WebAssign online platform. Each week I will post the assignments to be worked on and completed during that week. That is, you have one week to complete the assignments. WebAssign will automatically grade your submitted answers. However, you have an unlimited amount of submissions. So while you are being graded on performance, you are encouraged to fix and learn from your mistakes by resubmitting problems you may initially struggle with.

You need to work through the homework sections in order, and you cannot move on to the next homework section until you obtain a 70% on the previous homework section.

During the first day of class, I will demonstrate how to sign up for and access WebAssign and how to find your way around the online environment.

Homework

We learn math by doing math. Homework plays a big role in this class – 40% is significant so keep up with the assignments.

Homework will take place within WebAssign (detailed above).

Weekly Quizzes

Each class there will be a one-problem quiz on the material from the previous week. These quizzes cannot be made up.

Technology

- Webassign: homework, grades
- Teams: private messages, class messages, announcements, links, syllabus, etc.