

**Math 320: Abstract Algebra**  
**Fall 2018**

**Instructor:** Christopher O'Neill  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesday 11:00am - 1:00pm,  
Wednesday 1:00pm - 3:00pm,  
Thursday 11:00am - 12:00pm,  
and other times by appointment

**Course Content:** Elementary number theory and rings to include ideals, polynomial rings, quotient rings, ring homomorphisms and isomorphisms. Introduction to basic aspects of group theory will be covered as time permits.

**Text:** *Abstract Algebra: An Introduction* (3rd edition), by Thomas W. Hungerford, ISBN: 978-1111569624.

**Prerequisites:** Math 245 and 254 with a grade of C or better.

**Course Organization:** The class will be organized as follows.

- One class day each week (usually Tuesday), I will give a lecture on course material.
- The other class day each week (usually Thursday) will be a problem session completed in small groups.

A problem list will be distributed at the beginning of each problem session, containing the in-class work problems (which **will introduce new material**) as well as the weekly homework problems. All completed homework problems will be turned in for credit, usually the following Tuesday.

The day before each problem session, a short list of “preliminary problems” will be assigned, and should be completed before the problem session. These assignments will be short, usually requiring at most 10 minutes to complete, and will be computational in nature (i.e. no proofs).

Although I intend to use this format throughout the course, I reserve the right to restructure the course as the term progresses, based on student feedback and performance. Potential changes include (but are not limited to) the introduction of quizzes, and a restructuring of the lecture/problem session schedule. I will periodically collect anonymous feedback in class, but feel free to come talk to me if you have suggestions or concerns.

**Grading Policy:** Your grade will be determined by one midterm exam, a cumulative final exam, weekly homework submissions, and a participation grade, weighted as follows.

Participation	10%	Midterm Exam: October 11	A = 90-100
Homework Average	40%	Final Exam: December 18	B = 80-89
Midterm Exam	25%		C = 70-79
Final Exam	25%		D = 60-69
Total	100%		F = 0-59

The Final Exam will be comprehensive, and will take place on Tuesday, December 18th from 1:00pm-3:00pm. Keep this date in mind when making travel plans for the end of the term.

**Exams:** All exams will take place in the same classroom as our lecture, on the dates given above. **No makeup exams will be given.** If you miss an exam for a university approved reason (illness, etc), your grade will be replaced with your grade on the other exam. However, you must notify me via email **on the day of the missed exam**, and provide sufficient documentation (doctor’s note, etc). Otherwise, you will receive a 0. Any questions regarding grading/scoring must be done within one week of returning the exam, and cannot be done the day the exam is returned.

**Participation:** Attendance in problem sessions is vital to success in this class, since **new material** will be covered. Your participation grade will be based on the following:

- attending and participating in lectures;
- attending and engaging in problem sessions; and
- completing the preliminary problems before each problem session.

Missing class will result in a lowered participation grade, and only university excused absences with **advance notice** to the instructor will be accepted. I reserve the right to deduct one **additional full letter grade** if you miss too many classes, or if sufficient participation is not demonstrated during problem sessions.

**Homework:** There will be one homework assignment given each week, as well as a short list of preliminary problems to be completed before each problem session. Completed homework assignments will be submitted to the instructor for a grade, but preliminary problems will not be collected. Collaboration on homework is encouraged, but solutions should be written individually, and **collaborators should be identified** on the front of your assignment.

Homework assignments, along with their due dates, will be posted on the course webpage as they are assigned. Out of fairness to the other students, late homework assignments will not be accepted for credit. However, the lowest homework grade of the term will be dropped.

**Extra Credit Project:** You have the option to complete an extra credit project in which you do the following.

- Interview a Ph.D mathematician **outside of SDSU**. This person can be a math professor/teacher, or someone working in industry, but they must be employed in a math-related field. I am happy to help you find someone to interview, come up with a list of questions, etc.
- Complete an essay (500-1000 words) on what was discussed in the interview. In your essay, you must reflect on the content of the interview; simply listing interview questions and answers is **not** sufficient.

Satisfactory completion of this project **increases your grade by one grade level** (e.g. from a B- to a B); partial completion will not earn any extra points (i.e. you **must** see the project through to the end). Completed essays may be eligible for the AWM essay contest: <https://sites.google.com/site/awmmath/programs/essay-contest>.

If you plan to complete the extra credit project, you must notify me by **October 1st**.

**Class Announcements, E-mail Policy and Communications:** Class announcements will be posted to my class web page and sent to your university e-mail account. Be sure to regularly check your e-mail. If you send me an e-mail, please include your name and course information (i.e. class and section) as well as any additional information that I might need to respond to your e-mail.

**Attendance, Absence, and Makeup Work Policies:**

- Attendance is **essential** for success in the course, especially problem sessions!
- No makeup exams will be given. If you miss an exam for a university approved reason (e.g. illness), your grade will be replaced with the average of the remaining exams. However, if you fail to both (i) notify me via email on the day of the missed exam and (ii) provide sufficient documentation (e.g. doctor's note), you will receive a 0.
- Late homework will not be accepted. However, your lowest homework grade will be dropped.
- The last day to drop this class is **September 10th**.

**A.D.A. Policy Statement:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. This legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact Student Disability Services.

If you require additional time on quizzes and/or exams, you must **contact me at the start of the course**. You will not be given extra time if you present this information just before an exam.

For additional information, visit [https://go.sdsu.edu/student\\_affairs/sds/](https://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/sds/).

**Copyright Policy:** The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By "handouts," I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problems sets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission.

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** *An Aztec Does Not Lie, Cheat, or Steal, or Tolerate Those Who Do.* The San Diego State University Student Conduct Code will be enforced in this course. For the purpose of this course, cheating will be defined as (but not limited to) access or use of unauthorized material during exams and quizzes, collaboration between students during exams, quizzes or assignments for which group work is not allowed, perusal of another student's work during exams and quizzes, copying other student's work or allowing other students to copy your work on any assignment, quiz or exam, and having unauthorized programs or other information stored on calculators when these calculators are accessible during an exam or quiz. Note: Falsifying documentation is considered scholastic dishonesty and may result in a grade of F for the course.

For additional information, visit [http://go.sdsu.edu/student\\_affairs/srr/conduct.aspx](http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/srr/conduct.aspx).