



WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT IN A COLLEGE MATHEMATICS COURSE?

College mathematics courses are not the same as high school math classes. The sooner you realize this, the sooner you will be able to make the changes needed that will enable you to become successful in your college math classes. Some of the major differences experienced by most new college students are discussed below.

More Work

Many students made it through their high school math classes with good grades, doing a minimum amount of work. This was because they were either good at math, or they had an instructor who had lower expectations or who just taught at a lower level. In either case, a lot of students are surprised when they get to college and find that they can't just breeze through their mathematics courses like they did in high school.

As you prepare to take the required mathematics courses, know before hand that some classes may require a lot more time and work than your high school math classes required of you. If you want to be successful in your mathematics courses, or any of your college classes for that matter, it will require time and a little bit of hard work.

Faster Pace

The amount of time you spend in a college class is typically about half of what you would in a similar high school class. This limits the number of class periods a professor has to teach their material. Because of this, most college mathematics courses are taught about two to three times faster than your typical high school math class. This pace is increased further if you are taking a truncated summer semester.

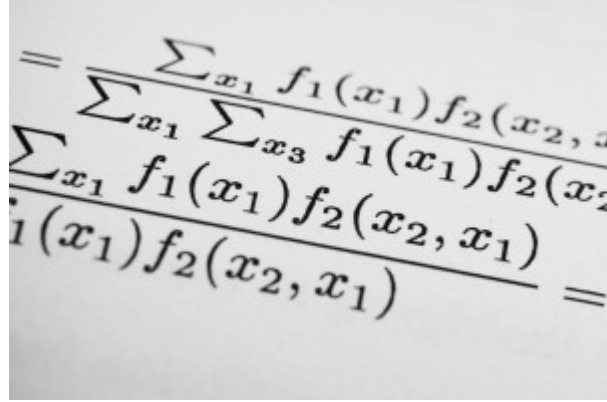
If you are not ready for the faster pace, it won't take very long to fall behind. Professors have specific material they need to cover within a semester and can't afford to slow down or wait for any that fall behind. This places the responsibility for keeping up on you. Be ready for the faster pace and spend the time to stay caught up.

More Self-Discipline

Due to the amount of material that needs to be covered in a typical college mathematics course, the professor will most likely not be able to cover every detail of a given concept, nor will they have time to answer every question in class. This means that the responsibility to "fill in the gaps" is left up to you. This requires taking notes, reading the textbook, working through problems, and getting outside help if needed. All of these things will need to be self-initiated because no one will tell you when or how to do them.

In some college mathematics courses homework will be assigned, but not collected or graded. This is NOT a free pass. Even though you may not be graded on the homework assignments, they are still essential to understanding the material and doing well in the class. This takes a lot of self-motivation and initiative, but those who take the time to complete the assigned homework, whether it is being graded or not, will almost always do better than those who don't.

So much of your success in college mathematics classes will depend on your self-discipline. Make the time to complete your assignments and stay caught up with the class. It is a lot less time consuming to work hard through a class the first time, then having to repeat it because you didn't get the grade you wanted or needed.



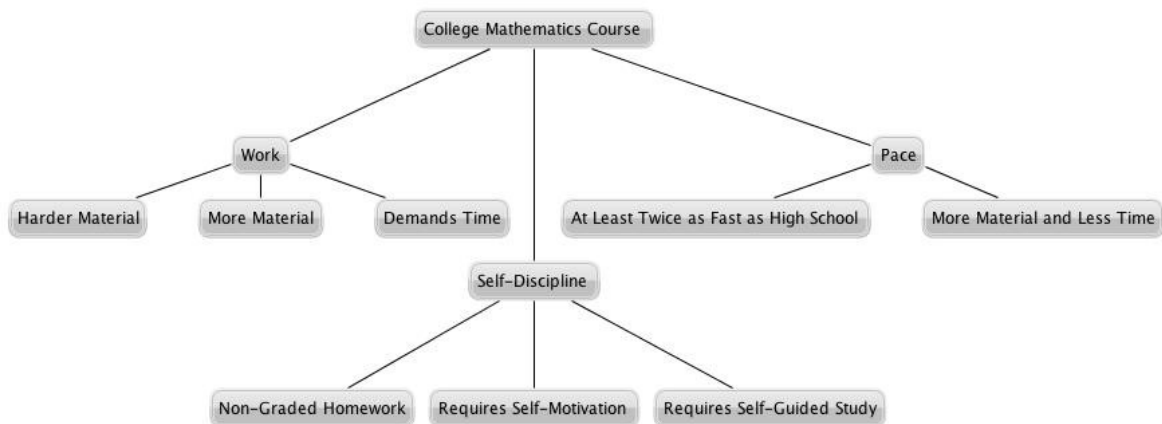


ISSUES THAT AFFECT PERFORMANCE IN MATHEMATICS

Everything that you are involved in as a college student affects you in some way or another. Identifying those issues that are affecting you in a negative aspect can be a lifelong pursuit and then properly dealing with those issues can be another journey altogether. Listed below are just a few of the most common issues that may affect a person's performance in mathematics.

- Working too many hours
- Poor management of time
- Procrastination
- Anxiety
- Lack of motivation
- Lack of self-esteem
- Unwillingness to ask for help
- Professor with a teaching style incompatible with your learning style

There are many resources available to help cope with or overcome any of these issues or others that are not listed. One resource is make full use of the Academic Resource Center. The ARC has been established to help every student have a successful university experience.



Reference: Dahlke, R. (2011). How to succeed in college mathematics: A comprehensive study and reference book for students and instructors. Plymouth, MI: BergWay Pub.