

Math 124 Finite Mathematics
Fall, 2010

Instructor: Dr. James Caristi

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Class web page: <http://faculty.valpo.edu/m124>

Office hours:

9:00 daily except Tuesdays. Other times are possible, with or without an appointment.

Text:

Finite Mathematics: an applied approach, 10th Ed., by Michael Sullivan. We will be covering chapters 1-4, 6-8, and 10.

Honor Code:

Calculators are authorized aid for any exam, quiz, or homework. For homework only, anything or anybody is authorized aid, provided that you do not take something without permission. For any exam or quiz, there is NO authorized aid except calculators and the instructor administering the exam.

Grading:

There will be three exams (worth 20% each), a comprehensive final exam (worth 20%), and homework/quizzes (worth a total of 20%). Unexcused absences will reduce your homework/quiz total. Basically, 90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, etc., although at the end I will determine the actual boundaries based on where clusters of people end up. I will also be lowering the total possible points for homework/quizzes, so that will help everyone, but especially those who work consistently.

Final exam:

Monday December 13 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Other exam dates: Thursday September 23

Wednesday October 27

Friday December 3.

Tutoring:

Individual or small group tutoring services may be available for students seeking to **meet regularly with a peer tutor for weekly study assistance**. To request a tutor through the Peer Tutoring Program, visit www.valpo.edu/academicsuccess, or contact Tricia White in the Academic Success Center at academic.success@valpo.edu, 219-464-5985.

Technology:

You should have a graphing calculator for this course. We will also have occasion to use spreadsheets for some of our calculations. I will use Microsoft Excel, but any other spreadsheet program will work just as well.

Expectations:

This course will develop your quantitative abilities in terms of business applications. You will find some parts of the course extremely easy, but others difficult (tricky), tedious, or frustrating. This is no different from working in the “real world”. View this course as your *job*. You must show up every day and work actively, or else you risk being fired (failing). You may have seen a few of the topics before, but most of the material should be new to you. None of this course involves calculus in any way. So you should approach this course with the idea that you are starting on a fresh page – none of your past weaknesses will hurt you here. If you do your job (come to class, do all the homework, get help when necessary), you should easily get an A or a B.

Goals:

- Recognize quantitative information within a problem statement (where the problem domain exists within a finite setting) and to build linear and probabilistic mathematical models to represent the quantitative information
- Apply mathematical tools including matrix algebra, the simplex method, and counting principles in probability to provide solutions to the problems
- Determine which, if any, solution makes sense relative to the problem statement

Appropriate Behavior:

Come to class! If you fall behind, it’s still better to come to class than to miss even more. Even if you’re clueless about what’s going on in class, you’ll still benefit from hearing the language.

Bring your textbook to class; you will need it. It’s heavy, but you can consider it part of your exercise program.

Turn off cell phones, iPods or other music players. It is **NOT** appropriate to send or even receive phone or text messages during class. This course will require your concentration. If you lose your concentration for the few moments it takes to read a text message (much less respond to it), you will lose the concepts we are trying to talk about, and you will find it extremely difficult to recover. Please tell your friends and family that your communication during class time will not be “normal”.

Be considerate of the needs of others. It’s not wrong to be bored, but it **IS** wrong when what you do distracts others (including me). There are lots of examples here of distracting behavior: reading other material, talking, coming in late, leaving early, being obnoxious with food, snoring, yawning, dressing in an overly distracting manner, kissing, playing games, working on next semester’s schedule, trimming your fingernails.

Use Blackboard discussion to provide feedback concerning things I could do to make the learning process better.

Ask questions in class! It actually helps other people if I’m not the only one “talking math”. Also ask questions on Blackboard discussion groups. Use that space to wonder about mathematical things, ask stupid or intelligent questions anonymously, ask what good something is without risk, etc.

Never ask a professor “Are you going to be doing anything important in class today?”