

Math 155: Calculus for Biological Scientists, Summer 2024 Syllabus

1 Course Details

1.1 Course Meetings

Mon-Fri 10:00 am -- 11:40 am, ENG B103

1.2 Course Instructor

Alice Mehalek (alice.mehalek@colostate.edu)

1.3 Office Hours

Mon and Thurs 12:00 -- 1:30 pm, location TBD

Please feel free to also request an appointment if you need to meet outside of these hours.

1.4 Communication

E-mail is the best way to contact me outside of class. You can expect a response within 24 hours on weekdays which either answers your question, or to set up a further meeting to discuss your question. You, in turn, are also expected to check your university email and our Canvas course page regularly and respond in a timely manner.

1.5 Prerequisites

This course requires prerequisite courses of MATH 124 (Logarithmic and Exponential Functions) and MATH 125 (Numerical Trigonometry), or MATH 127 (Precalculus).

1.6 Textbook

We will use the free open educational resource, *Calculus for Biological Scientists*. You can access both HTML and PDF versions of the text from our Canvas course, or on [Mountain Scholar](https://mountainscholar.org/handle/10217/235552)¹. I recommend that you use the HTML version whenever possible for the best experience, and have the text accessible for all class meetings. In addition, it would be wise to download and save the PDF version so you have access to the text in case of internet outages, etc.

¹mountainscholar.org/handle/10217/235552

1.7 Course Website

We will use [Canvas](#)² for all course materials and grades. This is a great place to stay organized and know what is due when.

1.8 Course Ethos

Roughly speaking, mathematics is composed of two essential components:

- creative ideas, and
- effective communication.

In this course, we will work to learn content while valuing both of these components, which means you should expect to ask (and be asked) lots of questions, explain thought processes and ideas through discussion and writing, and be stretched to think about problems you may have not seen before. Not only are these components the essence of mathematics, but they are also skills that will continue to help you succeed after graduation!

We will also acknowledge that making mistakes is a necessary component in learning something new, and that everyone has valuable insights that can help deepen our understanding of a concept.

1.9 Course Structure

Research shows that people learn mathematics best when they are actively engaged in the material with their peers. In other words, you learn by doing and interacting, not by watching. Therefore, our course is not comprised solely of lecture content, but instead provides multiple opportunities for individual and group work in which you will be actively engaged, solving problems, and understanding connections.

You will be encouraged to complete Warm-Up activities from our textbook before class. A small time investment can make a big difference! Being exposed to this material before class allows us to dedicate more of our time together to digging deeper, asking and answering questions, and working together to better understand the course content. Class time is intended to deepen and extend aspects of the text, not to replace it.

1.10 Course Content

This course develops the concepts of limits, continuity, differentiation, and integration of elementary functions with applications in the biosciences.

1.11 Calculators and Technology

You should have access to technology that can graph functions to explore ideas inside and outside of class. Examples of such technology include a calculator such as a TI-83 or better, a graphing calculator application for a smartphone, or web sites such as [Wolfram Alpha](#)³ and [Desmos](#)⁴. [Desmos](#)⁵ is used for interactives within the course text and will be used heavily for illustrations and class activities, so I recommend making this your primary technological tool for the course.

²canvas.colostate.edu/

³www.wolframalpha.com/

⁴www.desmos.com/

⁵www.desmos.com/

1.12 Important Dates

Please make note of the following important dates and deadlines for this semester:

- June 10: First day of class
- June 17: Last Day to Add; Last Day to Drop
- June 19: Juneteenth Observed, no class (Wednesday)
- June 27: Midterm 1
- July 4: Independence Day Holiday, no class (Thursday)
- July 18: Midterm 2
- July 23: Last Day to Withdraw from Course
- August 2: Final exam (Last day of class)

2 Assignments and Assessments

The only effective way to learn mathematics is to work on lots and lots of problems. We will work on problems in class as well as through assignments and assessments to enhance your skills and understanding. In general, late work is not accepted. Please communicate with me if you have circumstances that will make it difficult to meet a deadline; the outcome is typically better if you communicate an issue before something is due.

2.1 Written Homework

Most weeks you will have two written assignments due, for a total of 12 written assignments. These must be turned in by the beginning of class time on the due date. I encourage you to work on each homework assignment throughout the week, doing a little bit each day. Due to the accelerated pace of this summer course, it will be very hard to catch up if you fall behind. In addition, the homework assignments are the best way to practice the knowledge and skills that you will need to show on the exams.

Homework must be written out *neatly* and must show enough steps that a reader can follow your logic and understand how you reached your answer. If I can't read your handwriting or follow your thought process, I can't give you credit. In general, a correct final answer with no work shown will not receive credit. The more work you show and the clearer your work is, the more likely you are to receive partial credit even if your final answer is incorrect.

You are highly encouraged to work together with classmates on these exercises to understand the content. However, you must write out solutions in your own words to ensure you own the knowledge gained from thinking about each problem. See the section on Academic Integrity below for more details.

I will drop your lowest homework grade at the end of the semester.

2.2 Discussion Boards and Participation

The mathematical content covered in this course is important, but the mathematical process behind the content is equally important in your development as a scientist. The process of mathematics includes topics such as "how do we approach unsolved problems?", "what do we do when we are stuck or make a mistake?", and "how do we build off of something that we know to make something new?".

Some weeks there will be a short video or reading posted with prompts asking you to reflect on these bigger picture topics in mathematics. You will also see examples of how mathematics is being used in biology. Typically discussion boards will be made available on Monday, and responses due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday.

There will also be several in-class activities giving you hands-on practice with the content for which you will receive credit based on your participation.

2.3 In-person Assessments

There will be three in-person exams: two midterm exams and one final exam. The exams will cover content that you have had the opportunity to practice on homework assignments, and will take place during scheduled class times. Assessments will be written so that technology is not required. If you would prefer to have a calculator, please bring something that does not have access to the internet.

The final exam will be cumulative. It will be split into three sections corresponding to the first midterm, the second midterm, and new material. It can take time to learn new concepts. Therefore, if your percentage score in either or both of the first two sections of the final exceeds your score in the corresponding midterm, I will replace your midterm score with your section score from the final.

The exam dates are listed below; please put them in your calendar now.

- Midterm 1: Thursday, June 27
- Midterm 2: Thursday, July 18
- Final Exam: Friday, August 2

There will be no makeup exams. The only exceptions will be absences documented by University resources, such as the SDC or Student Case Management.

3 Grades

3.1 A Note On Academic Integrity

We learn best together, which is why there is a large amount of collaboration built into our course structure. However, there is a difference between learning together and using someone else's work. If you are wondering if you crossed the line, ask yourself "Could I start over and redo this on my own, and would it basically look like this?" If not, then you are submitting someone else's work (plagiarism). Copying solutions from the internet also constitutes plagiarism. Because "post-and-solve" resources (such as Chegg.com and Slader.com) do not typically follow our "learn together" philosophy, you should not use these resources to post or view problems from our course. We take academic integrity seriously, so all cases of plagiarized work (including work receiving aid from any

"post-and-solve" resources) and cheating will receive a 0 and will be reported to the University.

3.2 Letter Grades

Overall grade percentages will be calculated based on the following weighting:

- Cumulative Final Exam (20%)
- Midterms (30%)
- Homework (35%)
- In-Class Participation (10%)
- Discussion Boards (5%)

Letter grades will be assigned according to a scale no stricter than the following:

A+	[98, 100]
A	[92, 98)
A-	[90, 92)
B+	[88, 90)
B	[82, 88)
B-	[80, 82)
C+	[78, 80)
C	[70, 78)
D	[60, 70)
F	[0, 60)

4 Course and University Policies and Standards

4.1 CSU COVID Guidance

For the latest information about the University's COVID resources and information, please visit the [CSU COVID-19 site](#)¹.

4.2 Basic Needs Security

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing can receive support from the [Rams Against Hunger program](#)². Services include a food pantry, a meal-swipe program, pocket pantries, and in-person assistance with navigating federal aid eligibility. The RAH page includes numerous resources as well as county, state and federal programs which are described and linked. Furthermore, please notify your instructor if you are comfortable in doing so.

¹covid.colostate.edu/

²lsc.colostate.edu/slice/slice-engagement/rams-against-hunger/

4.3 Classroom Behavior, Respect for Diversity and Inclusion

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on classroom behavior and the student code at [the catalog](#)³ and at [the SRC](#)⁴.

We acknowledge that many students have had experiences that have left them feeling excluded from the field of mathematics. We also acknowledge that students from minority groups have been disproportionately impacted. We are making this explicit statement because this unfortunate reality is inconsistent with the truth that you can be successful in mathematics, regardless of your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. We are committed to decolonizing mathematics into a field where every student feels supported in accomplishing the hard work necessary to become better problem solvers. We learn more by listening to diverse perspectives, and we hope you will be ready and willing to share yours in this course.

Here are several resources that highlight the past and current contributions to the mathematics community from underrepresented groups:

1. [Meet A Mathematician](#)⁵
2. [Mathematically Gifted and Black](#)⁶
3. [Lathisms](#)⁷
4. [Indigenous Mathematicians](#)⁸
5. [Spectra](#)⁹
6. [Association for Women in Mathematics](#)¹⁰
7. [Mathematicians of the African Diaspora](#)¹¹

4.4 Accommodation for Disabilities

If you need accommodations in this class due to a disability or chronic health condition, I will need an accommodation letter from the Student Disability Center (SDC) before they can be implemented. Please request your accommodation specialist to send me your accommodation letter, and meet with me during office hours if you need to further discuss your accommodations.

³catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/policies/students-responsibilities

⁴resolutioncenter.colostate.edu/student-conduct-code/

⁵sites.google.com/view/meetamathematician/home

⁶mathematicallygiftedandblack.com/

⁷www.lathisms.org/

⁸www.indigenoumathematicians.org/

⁹lgbtmath.org/

¹⁰awm-math.org/

¹¹www.mathad.com/home

If you do not already have an accommodation letter, please contact the SDC as soon as possible to initiate the accommodation process. The SDC is located in room 121 of the TILT building. Contact them at 970-491-6385 or visit [the SDC website](#)¹².

4.5 Student Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

I realize that student parents/guardians and caregivers face distinctive challenges in succeeding academically, and I am committed to supporting those of you who are parents to achieve our course's learning outcomes. If you encounter challenges in meeting course expectations, please contact me as soon as possible. We'll develop a plan together so you can be successful in the course.

4.6 Student Case Management

[Student case management](#)¹³ is available to help students with extenuating life circumstances and connect them with resources. In some cases, after we discuss your situation, I may request verifiable documentation for class absences from the SCM office if you request considerations for absences or missed coursework.

4.7 Mental Health and Wellness

CSU is a community that cares. You are not alone. CSU Health Network Counseling Services has trained professionals who can help. Your student fees provide access to a wide range of support services. Call Counseling Services at (970) 491-6053, and they will work together with you to find out which services are right for you. Visit [counseling services](#)¹⁴ to learn more and [mental health resources](#)¹⁵ for additional student mental health and well-being resources. If you are concerned about a friend or peer, use Tell Someone by calling (970) 491-1350 or visiting [Tell Someone](#)¹⁶ to share your concerns with a professional who can discreetly connect the distressed individual with the proper resources. Rams Take Care of Rams. Reach out and ask for help if you or someone you know is having a difficult time.

4.8 Religious Observances and Class Attendance

CSU has a legal obligation to accommodate students' absences due to religious observances. For such an accommodation, it is the student's responsibility to complete the Religious Accommodation Request Form at the beginning of each semester and submit the request via the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs website. The Dean of Students will communicate with the instructor regarding the student's absence and the student is instructed to discuss how best to ensure an accommodation related to class conflicts. For religious observances that cannot reasonably be anticipated at the beginning of the semester, students must follow the procedure above as soon as possible after the course conflict is identified. If a student knows that a particular course or section of the course will have multiple conflicts with his or her religious obligations, the student is advised to locate another course section or defer taking the course to a different semester. In the event of a conflict in regards to this policy, individuals may

¹²disabilitycenter.colostate.edu/

¹³studentcasemanagement.colostate.edu/

¹⁴health.colostate.edu/about-counseling-services

¹⁵health.colostate.edu/mental-health-resources/

¹⁶supportandsafety.colostate.edu/tell-someone/

appeal using established CSU procedures. Instructors are advised to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure compliance with CSU's obligations. See more details regarding attendance policies at [the catalog](#)¹⁷.

4.9 Discrimination and Harassment

CSU is committed to providing an environment that respects the dignity and worth of every member of its community. CSU strives to create and maintain a work and study environment that is fair, inclusive, and responsible so that each member of the CSU community is treated with dignity and respect and is rewarded for relevant considerations such as ability and performance. CSU has adopted a comprehensive policy to define the types of conduct that are prohibited and to prevent harm arising from discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation. Conduct that is discriminatory or harmful under the policy inhibits the achievement of the stated goals. All students, faculty, staff, and other persons having business with CSU are expected to know and follow this policy.

Details regarding what is involved in bringing a complaint and the procedures for informal and formal resolution are available from the Office of Support and Safety Assessment for student-to-student behavior and the Office of Equal Opportunity for matters involving non-students such as faculty, staff, affiliates, or visitors and matters involving a student and non-student person. See more details at [the catalog](#)¹⁸.

4.10 Academic Integrity and the Honor Code

This course will adhere to the CSU Academic Integrity Policy as found in the Colorado State University General Catalog and the Student Conduct Code. At a minimum, violations will result in a grading penalty in this course and a report to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services. See more details at [the catalog](#)¹⁹ and [TILT](#)²⁰.

¹⁷catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/academic-standards/academic-policies/

¹⁸catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/policies/discrimination-harassment/

¹⁹catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/policies/students-responsibilities/#academic-integrity

²⁰tilt.colostate.edu/Integrity/Pledge