

Dear Prospective Student,

Allow me to introduce you to an interesting new way to take a math class. With the online courses you will find that the schedule is much more flexible, and your ability to understand and study the material is solely based on your personal effort.

This class will require more involvement than a normal class as instead of lectures you are your own instructor. You will be reading your textbook and the notes provided on the site instead of attending lectures and taking notes there. That is not to say that you will be left in the dark. Your teacher, the lovely and brilliant Cindy Moss, will be only an e-mail away should you require assistance or guidance on how to deal with your homework.

The homework is a very easy process, as long as you check daily to be sure that none is due. You will log into the website provided by the teacher and examine the homework page. It will be clearly labeled with dates and the sections of the book that each homework problem set pertains to. Should you have any difficulty with the work itself, the site has a very well set-up method of a step-by-step interactive breakdown of each problem. This method explains each step of the problem, but still makes sure you are doing the work by having you solve each segment in order to receive your overall answer.

While doing your online homework, be sure to check the lecture notes provided by your professor to see if there is a specific way that she wishes you to perform those problems (mostly with, or without a calculator). This provides an excellent understanding of what your exams will be like, making it a little less of a nasty shock when you're sitting at that desk looking down at your test papers.

I found that the best understanding of the class is a mixture of gaining a comprehensive understanding of your problems via the step-by-step breakdown provided with the online homework, along with the guidance of the lecture notes in order to specifically understand which problems you'll be required to answer. As for the homework, diligence and perseverance as well as being sure every day that nothing is due will be the deciding factor in how much work gets done and how well your homework grade comes out. Be aware that it is easier to get the work done earlier rather than later as sometimes (as technology sometimes does) the site will have some bugs that need working out and it can land at a critical time.

I would not advise on working everything last minute, just because as an online course that is an option. It can really backfire when you lull yourself in a false sense of security and quickly become dependant on the site working for you in the last hour of a homework or quiz due date. I would also strongly suggest looking over the lecture notes should you ever feel as though you were lacking direction in any of your studies, as it clearly depicts each problem type you will see and how to solve them. If you don't there is a good chance you will find yourself with a question on the exam that has you either completely stumped, or force you to attempt a creative way to solve it (which I will assure you never ends well).

If I were to take the course again, I would make sure I had the lecture notes memorized and that I was perfectly comfortable every evening in knowing that all my assigned homework was completed. I would never tell myself that nothing was due without double-checking for assignments.

I found that studying by simply basing my aims directly out of the online homework occasionally left some gaps in my comprehension of all exam material. While copying down the lecture notes and working them against the written home work made me see and feel the work I was doing and understand everything I would face on the tests. There is never such thing as too much studying. Every time you feel you have a problem memorized, do one more out of the book just to check and see if that's true. With math one can never be too sure about their procedure.

Be aware that this course is not going to be an easy one if you are not a math-oriented person. Statistics can differ from what could be considered 'normal' math in unexpected ways, so it is important to be completely versed in your procedures if you have not taken a course like this in some time. I am a much more aesthetic person, than I am a logical, and I found my biggest hurdle was examining real-life problems in a mathematical way. When I look at equations and see if they do or don't look right, I find myself basing it off of precisely that, do they *look* right, not are they making a logical outcome. Though sometimes I can bring myself back to task on it, it is very helpful to be confident going in to an exam and being sure that you know the material so that if you do run that risk that it is a much smaller one than it is if the material is shaky and your review method is flawed.

All the same, as long as you work hard at the course, I'm sure you will pass with flying colors and enjoy the freedom that an online course provides. Best of luck to you, and I hope that the course is enlightening. You will find many real-life uses for these problems if you put your mind to it, and that can provide a little more critical thought into situations you might otherwise take for granted.