

**NORTHCENTRAL UNIVERSITY
ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET**

Learner: **Steven Diaz**

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETELY FILLED IN

Please Follow These Procedures: If requested by your mentor, use an assignment cover sheet as the first page of the **word processor** file. Use “headers” to indicate your course code, assignment number, and your name on each page of the assignment/homework including this assignment cover sheet. .

Keep a Photocopy or Electronic Copy Of Your Assignments: You may need to re-submit assignments if your mentor has indicated that you may or must do so.

Academic Integrity: All work submitted in each course must be the Learner’s own. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects required by the faculty mentor. The knowing submission of another persons work represented as that of the Learner’s without properly citing the source of the work will be considered plagiarism and will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course, and may result in academic dismissal.

LTM5010

Dr. Anthony Pellegrini

E-Learning: Theory and Process

**Assignment 4: Policies and Procedures
in the eLearning Course**

Dr. Pellegrini,

No excuse for my late submission. I have just not given priority to my schoolwork because of other responsibilities that have taken away my focus. I will do my best in the last few days of this course to submit the pending assignments.

Faculty Use Only

<Faculty comments here>

<Faculty Name>

<Grade Earned>

<Writing Score>

<Date Graded>

Policies and Procedures in the eLearning

Steven Diaz

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The policies and procedures described in this document were written for a redesigned remedial math course (i.e. MAT099 Introductory Algebra) with a blended delivery format. Students enrolled in this course are mostly freshmen students, who typically lack the experience and discipline to self-direct their own learning. Unfortunately, remedial math students are accustomed to be passive learners in the mathematics classroom. One of the goals of the redesigned remedial math course is to assist students become active learners, which could interrupt students' cycle of poor academic performance in mathematics courses and prepare them to handle the rigor of college level math courses.

Allen (2003) stated "You cannot learn someone" (p. 63), meaning that learning is an internal and personal act in which only learners can focus their energy to fuel essential cognitive and affective activities to make learning happen. To assist students in the transition of becoming more active learners in the mathematics classroom, the policies and procedures of Introductory Algebra were written in a form that guide students on taking more control over their learning experiences. Because of the new learning environment and different delivery format that students have been accustomed in mathematics courses, the policies and procedures of Introductory Algebra should ease the anxieties and concerns remedial math students may experience. Waterhouse (2005) pointed out that it is crucial students know exactly what is expected from them and what to expect from the instructor, in particular in e-learning environments. Henson (2004) viewed a policy as a philosophy, standard, or criterion that aid individuals employ appropriate judgment and discretion when carrying out their daily tasks or responsibilities in an organization. If the classroom is seen as an organization, then the policies and procedures of Introductory Algebra should provide students a suitable reference or framework to make the best decisions that facilitates attaining their learning goals in the course.

The policies and procedures described in this document were written following the same writing style guidelines that Henson (2004) suggested for developing and writing library policies: (a) make the content immediately understandable and usable; (b) use precise language and active voice; (c) avoid confusing the reader with varying terms or references; (d) ensure all issues are covered; and (e) ensure text makes sense for the amateur reader. Change is always a difficult endeavor, but if simple and small steps are taken, then change becomes manageable and attainable. Writing the policies and procedures of Introductory Algebra course as simple as possible is the first step to help remedial math students becoming more active learners.

Policies and Procedures

Exit Course Option

Students enroll in MAT099 Introductory Algebra based on their placement examination scores. However, students have the option to exit the course if they score at least 90% in the Initial Assessment test only administered and proctored during the first week of the course by the instructor. Students will enroll into MAT100 Intermediate Algebra after scoring at least 90% in the Initial Assessment test.

Students take the Initial Assessment test at the computer lab of the Academic Enhancement Center during the instructor office hours. The Initial Assessment is administered using the web-based learning and assessment system ALEKS. Therefore, students must purchase an ALEKS access code at the school's bookstore or ALEKS website to take the test.

Grading

Introductory Algebra is a non-credit college math course; therefore, students will earn a grade of Pass (P) or Not Pass (NP). Students earn a P grade when they meet the following requirements: (a) Complete all course topics in ALEKS; (b) Earn at least 70% in each quiz; and

(c) Earn an average of 70% in the course. Students' course average is calculated using the following weights:

Grading Categories	
ALEKS (Complete Pie Chart)	25%
Final Exam	25%
Quizzes	30%
Blackboard Activities	20%
Total	100%

Students learn and master the course topics at their own pace at anytime and anyplace by completing the work assigned in the web-based learning and assessment system ALEKS.

Students learn the course topics using the multimedia resources available in ALEKS or instructor-made resources in Blackboard. When struggling with the course topics, students should seek individual assistance during class time, instructor office hours, or the business hours of the math tutoring center.

Initial Assessment, Quizzes, and Final Exam

Students experience an individualized instruction based on the previous knowledge they have of the course content. To tailor instruction, students must take the Initial Assessment test in ALEKS to identify the course content they already know and need to learn. The results of the initial assessment are represented visually as a pie chart (see Figure 1), in which the course content is divided into seven main course objectives. Dark colors represent how much the students know about the course objectives and light colors represent how much they need to learn. Throughout the academic term, students will fill the whole pie chart in dark colors to meet one of the requirements for passing the course. If students decide not using the Initial Assessment to exit the course, they can take this assessment at any time any place. The result of the Initial Assessment is not considered in the calculations of the course grade.

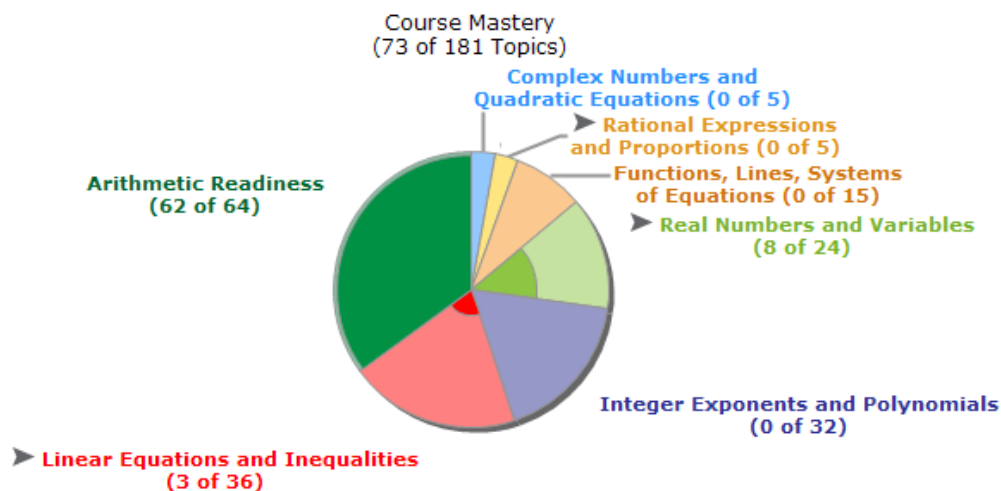


Figure 1. Main course concepts represented as a pie chart in ALEKS.

Students must earn at least 70% in each quiz to prove mastery level of the seven main course objectives (see Figure 1). Students should retake quizzes as many times as necessary to attain mastery level. Students can take a quiz once they have completed the topics of a slice of the ALEKS pie that represents a course main objective. Quizzes are proctored assessments in ALEKS; therefore, students must take quizzes during class time, instructor office hours, or teacher assistance (TA) office hours.

The final exam is a comprehensive assessment, meaning the exam will assess students' learning of all the course topics. The final exam is a proctored assessment in ALEKS that students take during Final Exams Week, which takes place during the last week of the academic term. Students take the final exam only if they completed all topics represented in their ALEKS' pie and earned at least 70% in all quizzes by Friday of the week before Final Exams Week. However, students have the option of taking the final exam during class time, instructor office hours, or TA office hours earlier if they complete coursework in ALEKS anytime before the due date.

Two Courses in One Semester

Students have the option to complete two basic skills math courses in one academic term, so their academic hold flag is removed from their records. An academic hold-flag impedes students to register to higher level math courses because of their lack of basic skills in mathematics. If students complete MAT099 Introductory Algebra at a faster pace than the suggested timeline of the course, they should use the remaining time of the course duration to complete the next basic skills math course in the sequence: MAT100 Intermediate Algebra.

If students complete MAT100 within MAT099, their academic record for the term will reflect the following: (a) P grade for MAT099; (b) a comment notifying MAT100 was also completed; and (c) removal of their academic hold-flag. Students do not earn three additional credits when completing MAT100 within MAT099 to maintain their financial aid status in good standing or use it to meet general electives requirements. When students attempt completing MAT100 within MAT099, they do not have to register at the Registrar Office for this course, nor incur in additional charges other than possibly renewing their ALEKS account if necessary. The instructor will move these students from MAT099 to MAT100 in ALEKS, so they complete MAT100 during the time left in the term for MAT099. Students who start MAT100 within MAT099 but do not complete the course, they must register to MAT100 for the next academic term. The work these students completed in ALEKS for MAT100 will be transferred to the new academic term.

Incomplete Grade

Students can request an Incomplete (I) grade for the course if they complete all course topics contained in their ALEKS' pie by the week prior Final Exams Week and take 75% of the scheduled quizzes. The instructor has discretion to grant or not an incomplete grade. Students

must request in person an incomplete grade during the instructor office hours. The incomplete grade grants students another eight weeks to complete pending assignments to earn a P grade; otherwise, the incomplete grade becomes a NP grade. Students cannot register to the next basic skills math course in the sequence (i.e. MAT100) if they are awarded an incomplete grade.

Active Learning

An active learner takes control and ownership of the learning process to meet the course's goals and expectations. Active learners decide why, what, and how of their learning. They do not wait for learning to happen; instead, they make it happen. The instructional model of this course requires students to be active learners to meet successfully the course goals and objectives. The following traits are typical of active learners (Lafayette High School, n.d.):

1. Set goals and identify the steps necessary to achieve such goals.
2. Identify and use available resources, such as people and tools, to aid in goal pursuit.
3. Assertive in solving almost any problem they ever have to face.
4. Do not allow personal feelings or emotions to cloud viewing situations in an objective manner.
5. Do not hesitate to ask questions.
6. Manage time effectively to complete tasks.
7. Apply effectively study skills strategies that facilitate learning.
8. Frequently self-assess progress and revise plans to achieve personal goals.

Face-to-Face and Online Attendance

Educational research has proven there is a positive connection between attendance and academic success, so students are strongly urged to attend classes regularly. Face-to-Face

attendance is mandatory on the scheduled day and time at the assigned location by the Registrar Office. Students who miss seven face-to-face class sessions will automatically earn a NP grade. Students who arrive after 15 minutes the start of class are marked as absent. Students should contact immediately the instructor to discuss how to make up absences.

Introductory Algebra is a 3-hour credit course, which means that students must spend at least three hours, or 180 minutes, per week engage in course activities. Face-to-face class meetings are 75 minutes long; therefore, students must spend working online in ALEKS for 105 minutes per week. ALEKS provides detailed reports on how students spend time online working on the different topics of the pie. Students are marked absent if they do not work for at least 105 minutes per week with their pie. An online absence is equivalent to a face-to-face absence.

Course and School Information

The course announcements page in Blackboard and school e-mail are essential communication tools the instructor and school use to inform students about important news and events. Therefore, students should check frequently their school e-mail account and login to the course shell in Blackboard several times during the week to be updated of important course information and school's news or events. Students are responsible to be constantly informed of any current events that take place in the course or school because lack of information is not an acceptable excuse for their decisions that affect academic performance.

Professional and Academic Conduct

Students have the responsibility to maintain both the academic and professional integrity of the school and to meet the highest standards of academic and professional conduct. Students are expected to do their own work on examinations, class preparation and assignments, and to conduct themselves professionally when interacting with fellow students, faculty, and staff.

Academic or professional misconduct is subject to disciplinary action including course failure and/or probation of dismissal. For additional clarification, students should refer to the Student Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook.

Students can use their notes during assessments, such as the initial assessment test, quizzes, and final exam. Calculators are permitted during class only in certain circumstances the instructor considers appropriate. However, students cannot use symbolic manipulation tools or homework helping websites such as Wolfram Alpha, WebMath, Mathaway, Yahoo Answers, etc. These types of Internet resources are considered *unauthorized assistance* because it does the work for the students. Students will not earn credit for the assessment in which they are caught using such tools or helping sites. Students who repeatedly use unauthorized assistance Internet resources will be subject to disciplinary actions as stated in the Student Handbook.

Use of Computers

Face-to-face class meetings of Introductory Algebra will take place at a computer lab. Computers and network systems offer powerful tools for communications among members of the St. Thomas University community and of communities outside the school. When used appropriately, these tools can enhance dialogue, education, and communications. Unlawful or inappropriate use of these tools; however, can infringe on the rights of others. Activities that are expressly forbidden on St. Thomas University's computers include viewing, downloading or use of inappropriate materials, vandalism, virus propagation, and installation of unauthorized materials. In addition, students should act as a professional and use the equipment only when directed or appropriate for classroom activities. A lack of compliance with any of these directives could result in disciplinary action and dismissed of class or course, as stipulated in the

St. Thomas University Student Handbook. Students should refer to this document to find additional information of appropriate use of school property.

Participation

Class participation and students interaction are important components of the learning experience. To achieve the maximum benefits from the course, students meet participation requirements by logging at least on **two different days** to the course shell in Blackboard and participate actively in the online discussions. The online discussions are unique collaboration opportunities to learn the course content and as a reflection exercise to self-assess continuously academic performance. Students must post at least a substantive or thoughtful response in the discussion board on two different days of the course week.

Netiquette

The term *netiquette* refers to the rules of conduct for electronic interactions, such as online discussions, chat rooms, or e-mail. Students should follow these rules to improve the readability of their messages, which will help other students and instructor manage or handle the significant amount of information that might occur during online discussions. The following recommendations will facilitate effective communication during online discussions (University of Phoenix, 2006):

1. Students should stay on topic by avoiding rambling and unrelated conversations that do not conduce to a quality learning experience.
2. Students should use appropriate subject lines in their replies to reflect a change of topic in a threaded message.
3. Students should include portions of the previous message(s) or paraphrase it to place their replies in context.

4. Students should avoid posting messages without substance such as "I agree" and "Me, too!" messages because it can frustrate the readers.
5. Students should avoid writing in all caps because it is considered shouting.
6. Students should avoid posting messages with grammatical, spelling, and typographical errors by using spell and grammar checkers.
7. Students should avoid posting long paragraphs that are difficult to follow on-screen. They should also avoid fonts that are difficult to read because of style, color, or size.
8. Students should avoid responding in the discussions when frustrated or angry because it is likely their messages will contain insulting or abusive language.

Students' Privacy Rights

Students' written and verbal communication, academic work and performance, and any other personal information that occurs during the course will not be disclosed to third parties without their written consent. Students can find additional information about the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the federal law that protect their privacy rights, at St. Thomas University web page:

<http://www.stu.edu/BASIC/FERPAConfidentialityofRecords/tabid/2744/Default.aspx>.

Copyright

Students must respect the intellectual property rights of authors' original work. All course content and materials are protected by copyright laws, including the original work created by students during the course. Therefore, students should not use or distribute any copyrighted material other than for course purposes without the authors' express prior written permission.

Students should visit the following website to learn more basic information about copyright laws: http://www.cyberbee.com/cb_copyright.swf.

English Second Language Learners

For students who do not speak or write English as their first language, the following suggestions may be helpful to succeed in this course:

1. Bring a dictionary that translates from the students' native language to English and vice versa. If students do not have a dictionary, the following website provides word and text translation: <http://www.foreignword.com/>.
2. Find a classmate or group of students who speak English fluently to study for the class and to gain proficiency with the English language.
3. If there is a classmate that speaks the same native language, students can ask for clarification or assistance using their native language as long it does not disrupt the classroom learning experience.
4. The instructor of this course is bilingual (English-Spanish) and welcome students to speak Spanish during office hours or before-after class. In addition, there are many languages that have words that are pronounced and written similarly. Therefore, the instructor encourages students to sometimes use words in their native language to communicate ideas, concerns, or questions.
5. If students learned different ways or methods for simplifying or solving math problems in their countries, the instructor encourages these students to share their methods with him and the class.

In addition, ALEKS offers the option of presenting course content in Spanish for the Spanish speaker students.

Students with Disabilities

Please note that students requiring accommodations as a result of a disability must contact Maritza Rivera (e-mail: mrivera@stu.edu and phone number: 305-628-6563) at the Academic Enhancement Center. The instructor will provide the necessary accommodations once official notification is received.

References

- Allen, M.W. (2003). *Michael Allen's guide to e-learning: Building interactive, fun, and effective learning programs for any company*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, Inc.
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