

Math 256: Linear Algebra Spring 2007

Instructor: Susan Goldstine (rhymes with "line")

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Office Hours: Monday, 1:00–2:00;
Wednesday, 11:00–12:00;
Thursday 12:30–1:30;
and by appointment.

Drop-ins are welcome, as long as I happen to be free.

Course Web Page: <http://www.smcm.edu/users/sgoldstine/Math256s07.html>
PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS **NOT** ON BLACKBOARD.

TA: Jeff Faith

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Review Sessions: Wednesday 8:00–10:00

Course Goals

- To give you a basic grounding in the objects and techniques of linear algebra.

While we will not have nearly enough time to cover the many applications of the field to areas such as physics, economics, computer science, and biology, after this course you will have an inkling of what these applications are and enough linear algebra background for future study of those that are important to you.

- To develop the skills employed in higher mathematics.

In Linear Algebra, as in other 200-level mathematics classes, the emphasis shifts from performing calculations to solving more general problems and constructing proofs. A crucial component of this course will be practicing the use of mathematical language, logical thinking, and problem-solving techniques. As you progress through the course, remain as active as possible in engaging the material we cover: ask questions to yourself, to classmates, to Jeff, and to me; play with the examples in the text and try to construct your own examples; expect to be challenged, confused, and bothered by new ideas and use the class meetings, TA sessions, and homework to gradually master them.

Homework

Homework assignments will be due in my office door on Fridays at 4:00.

The homework grader is a fellow undergraduate who has a lot of other work, just like you. Therefore, the following policy is in effect:

*Any homework that is handed in between the due date and the following class will have its grade reduced by 20%. Any homework that is handed in between that class and the following class will have its grade reduced by 40%. **No homework will be accepted more two classes after it is due.***

Your lowest homework score will be dropped from your grade.

Exams

We will have three midterms and a final exam.

Barring an incapacitating illness, religious conflict, approved athletic event, or other such obstacle, there are **no excuses** for missing an exam. If you do have such a conflict, please let me know as soon as humanly possible.

Exam Dates

Midterm I	Monday, February 19
Midterm II	Wednesday, March 21*
Midterm III	Wednesday, April 18
Final Exam	Tuesday, May 8

* This is the Wednesday after Spring Break, which is the best of a bunch of bad options. If our schedules are amenable, this exam could be moved to the following Saturday. We will discuss this in March.

Grading

Homework	15%
Midterm I	20%
Midterm II	20%
Midterm III	20%
Final	25%