**Foundations of Algebra Syllabus**
**Math 0305.604**
**Term: Spring 2026**
**Location: Lubbock Downtown B009**

**Instructor:** Elizabeth Payton

**Email:** epayton@southplainscollege.edu

**Office Hours:** I do not have set office hours but will be available to you at least 30 minutes before and after each class. You are also welcome to email me and set up another time to meet if need be.

### Email Correspondence:
All email correspondence should come from your SPC email address. Please give me up to 24 hours to respond via email. If you email about a specific math question, please attach a picture of the question and the work that you have tried!

All correspondence should be done through email. I do not use Blackboard messages!

### Disclaimer:
The instructor reserves the right to alter any class policies/dates as deemed necessary by the instructor. If there are any changes, they will be announced **over Blackboard and via your SPC email.**

### Course Description:
This course is a study of fundamental mathematics principles and concepts to help prepare students for math corequisites. Topics include performing basic arithmetic operations on integers, fractions, and decimals; performing calculations involving exponents and order of operations; solving application problems involving proportions, percent, and fractions; simplifying algebraic expressions and solving linear equations; application problems involving linear models; graphs of linear equations in two variables; applying rules of exponents; and operations on polynomials. The course includes a non-course competency-based lab option that will require students to work with academic coaches, peer tutors, or online supplemental tools outside of the prescribed class meeting time to help develop skills, strategies, and reasoning needed to succeed in mathematics, including communication and appropriate use of technology. This course will not satisfy graduation requirements.

### Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon completion of this course and receiving a passing grade, the student will be able to:

1. Add, subtract, multiply and divide real numbers.
2. Use the order of operations to simplify an expression.
3. Simplify algebraic expressions.
4. Solve linear equations.
5. Translate and solve word problems.
6. Solve linear inequalities.
7. Graph equations in two variables by the intercept method and the slope intercept method.
8. Evaluate expressions using exponent rules.
9. Add, subtract, multiply and divide polynomials.

### Course Supplies:
- Required: Notebook paper and writing utensils with which to complete your assignments.
- Required: Printed Notes. A blank copy of the notes will be posted on Blackboard. You should print them off and fill them out as we go through the notes in class. Please note that the SPC campus computer labs are available if you want to print your notes off there. You could also print them off at most public libraries, but please note that it usually requires you to pay a small fee per page. I recommend keeping all of your notes in order in a notebook so they are easily accessible.
- Required: Large 3-ring binder with dividers to organize all notes and homework.

**Attendance:**
Course attendance will be taken. Per South Plains College math department policy, you may be administratively dropped from the course if your number of missed submissions goes over 20% of all submissions.

**Required Tutoring Lab Attendance:**

- You must attend the tutoring lab provided by South Plains College to get assistance and practice for 60 minutes (1 hour) weekly. The most current tutoring lab schedule can be found here: https://www.southplainscollege.edu/exploreprograms/artsandsciences/teacheredtutoring.php .
- Attendance is required for fourteen (14) weeks, with four (4) weeks being extra credit. Weeks 1 and 16 do not require tutoring lab attendance.
- When you arrive at the Tutoring Lab, check in on the Penji app to get credit for your attendance.
- A week is from Monday through Friday.
- Your grade will be computed by finding the ratio of the minutes you attended the tutoring lab over the required 60 minutes.

**Assignments:**

- Syllabus Quiz (1 point): This is a bonus assignment in Blackboard to start the semester off strong. It may be repeated as many times as needed for full credit to show understanding of the syllabus.
- Weekly Homework (15 points): There is an assignment for each set of notes due one week after being assigned. Please keep up with the course calendar to avoid missing an assignment. Assignments will be graded based on individual objectives.
- Portfolio (3 points): Your binder will be collected on exam days to be graded. The lecture notes and homework problems will be kept in a binder as a portfolio. This portfolio will serve as a textbook and study guide, so keeping it organized and up to date is important. There will be three (3) portfolio checks over the semester. There is no extra credit.
- Learning Reflections (2 points): These are free-response surveys to reflect, review mistakes, and learn from them. There will be two (2) surveys over the semester to be completed on Blackboard, due 1 day after each unit exam.

**Exams:**

- Unit Exams (40 points): Free response and completed without notes or previous assignments. Unit Exams will follow assignments 7 and 16 and include all previously covered material.
- Final Exam (30 points): Free response and completed without notes or previous assignments. The Final Exam is comprehensive and held during finals week.

**Showing Work:**
To receive full credit on practice problems and exams, you must show all work that leads to your answers. The work must be legible, make sense and be easy to follow. All work and answers should be handwritten.

**Blackboard:**
We will use Blackboard this term, which is our Learning Management System (LMS). It will house all of the course materials, resources, and grades. The gradebook will automatically give a zero for any assignment not graded by the due date. Do not worry! If you submitted your assignment, I will change the grade once I have graded the assignment.

**Grading Formula:**
Completing all submissions and having a strong work ethic are important but do not guarantee a passing grade. However, these two things do increase the likelihood of passing. The final responsibility for learning lies with the student.

The final letter grade for this course will be based on the following:

- Required Tutor Lab Attendance…….…….…….....10%
- Assignments…….…….....20%
- Unit Exam #1.....20%
- Unit Exam #2……...……20%
- Final Exam…….……...30%

**Final Grade Determination:** A 89.50-105 B 79.50-89.49 C 69.50-79.49 D 59.50-69.49 F 59.49 or below

**Missed Assignments and Exam:**

- As a rule, work will not be accepted late for any reason other than a documented and verified extended problem with the Blackboard server. In rare cases, primarily associated with events like lengthy medical events such as hospitalization, an exception may be granted. This would be a rare exception and determined on a case-by-case basis by the instructor.
- Make-up tests may be given at the discretion of the instructor in extreme cases such as hospitalization if sufficient paperwork is provided to show cause for an unavoidable absence. The instructor must be contacted within a reasonable timeframe of the absence to request a make-up.
- If the Final Exam is not attempted, a grade of F will be reported for the student's grade regardless of the grade before the Final Exam was administered.
- Extra credit is built in through the tutoring lab visits and the syllabus quiz. Additional extra credit will not be provided.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you are caught cheating, you will receive a zero on the assignment and could be subject to other actions outlined in the South Plains College Student Code of Conduct. Please note that these actions could include failing the course and being expelled from the college.

**Resources:**

- Blackboard! The course syllabus, calendar, gradebook, notes handouts, and assignments will be available on Blackboard.
- I am available to help you! Feel free to email me at epayton@southplainscollege.edu. When you email me, please give me up to 24 hours to respond. If you email about a specific math question, please attach a picture of the question and the work that you have tried, so that I may best address your question.
- Peer tutoring is available via SPC and is required for this course Visit the link below to learn more about SPC tutoring: http://www.southplainscollege.edu/exploreprograms/artsandsciences/teacheredtutoring.php
- Free tutorial videos are available at the following sites: https://www.mathtv.com/ and https://www.khanacademy.org/.

**Withdrawal Policy:**

As required by Texas Education Code Section 51.907, all new students who enroll in a Texas public institution of higher education for the first time beginning with the 2007 fall semester and thereafter, are limited to six course drops throughout their entire undergraduate career. All course drops, including those initiated by students or faculty and any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution, automatically count toward the limit. After six grades of W are received, students must receive grades of A, B, C, D, or F in all courses. There are other exemptions from the six-drop limit and students should consult with a Counselor/Educational Planner before they drop courses to determine these exemptions. Students receiving financial aid must get in touch with the Financial Aid Office before withdrawing from a course. It is the student's responsibility to drop. Excessive absences will result in an administrative withdrawal with a Grade of X or F. If you plan to withdraw, please consult with the instructor immediately. **Note: The last day to drop with a grade of W is Thursday, April 30, 2026.**

**SPC Policies South Plains College policies concerning diversity, disabilities, non-discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations, and Campus Concealed Carry Statements can be found here: https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/ .**

**South Plains College policies, return to campus plan, and protocols regarding COVID-19 can be found here: https://www.southplainscollege.edu/emergency/covid19-faq.php .**

**Succeeding in a Math Class:**

- Be mentally present! Pay attention and ask questions in class.
- Plan ahead. Do notes and practice problems early enough before the due date that you will have time to ask questions or seek help if you need it.
- Get help as soon as you feel yourself falling behind! Don't wait!
- All notes printouts and practice problems for the course are posted on Blackboard. If you want to get ahead, that is encouraged. Time management is crucial.
- I have found that the best way for a student to study for a math exam is to practice problems over and over.
- Everyone learns and studies differently. I encourage you to seek out and find what works best for you.

# MATH 0305 Tentative Course Calendar

Note: There are assignments for each set of notes, and they are due one week **after** they appear in the schedule.

| Week Dates | Topics | Assignments |
|---|---|---|
| **1**<br>Jan 12-16 | • Introduction<br>• Tips for success in math courses<br>• Notes 1: Adding & Subtracting Whole Numbers (including basic facts) | ○ Assignment 1 |
| **2**<br>Jan 19-23 | • Martin Luther King Jr. Day: **No Class Monday**<br>• Time Management<br>• Notes 2: Multiplying & Dividing Whole Numbers (including basic facts) | ○ Assignment 2<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **3**<br>Jan 26-30 | • Overcoming Anxiety<br>• Notes 3: Introduction to Integers, Absolute Value, Additive Inverses, Adding & Subtracting Integers<br>• Notes 4: Multiplying & Dividing Integers | ○ Assignment 3<br>○ Assignment 4<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **4**<br>Feb 2-6 | • Preparing for a Math Test<br>• Notes 5: Evaluating Exponents, Prime Factoring & Square Roots<br>• Notes 6: Finding Greatest Common Factor (GCF) & Least Common Multiple (LCM) | ○ Assignment 5<br>○ Assignment 6<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **5**<br>Feb 9-13 | • Math Test Taking Strategies<br>• Notes 7: Simplifying Fractions, Finding Reciprocals, Multiplying & Dividing Fractions<br>• **Exam 1 (Covers Notes 1 through 7)** | ○ Assignment 7<br>○ Tutoring Lab<br>○ Portfolio 1: 2/11/26 (In Class)<br>○ Unit 1 Exam: 2/11/26 (In Class)<br>○ Learning Reflection 1: 2/12/26 |
| **6**<br>Feb 16-20 | • Notes 8: Adding & Subtracting Fractions; Mixed Numbers<br>• Notes 9: Decimal Places, Adding & Subtracting Decimals | ○ Assignment 8<br>○ Assignment 9<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **7**<br>Feb 23-27 | • After Math Test Behavior<br>• Notes 10: Multiplying & Dividing Decimals<br>• Notes 11: Percents, Converting Between Fractions, Decimals & Percents | ○ Assignment 10<br>○ Assignment 11<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **8**<br>Mar 2-6 | • How to Read and Use Course Materials<br>• Notes 12: Order of Operations<br>• Notes 13: Evaluating Algebraic Expressions | ○ Assignment 12<br>○ Assignment 13<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **9**<br>Mar 9-13 | • Using Available Resources<br>• Notes 14: Solving One-Step and Two-Step Equations (include single fraction)<br>• Notes 15: Solving Multi-Step Equations | ○ Assignment 14<br>○ Assignment 15<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| Mar 16-20 | **Spring Break: No Classes** | |
| **10**<br>Mar 23-27 | • Note Taking for Math<br>• Notes 16: Percent Equations, Applications of Linear Equations<br>• **Exam 2 (Covers Notes 1 through 16)** | ○ Assignment 16<br>○ Tutoring Lab<br>○ Portfolio 2: 3/25/26 (In Class)<br>○ Unit 2 Exam: 3/25/26 (In Class)<br>Learning Reflection 2: 3/26/26 |

| Week Dates | Topics | Assignments |
|---|---|---|
| **11**<br>Mar 30-Apr 3 | • Notes 17: Solving Linear Inequalities<br>• Notes 18: Rules of Exponents Part 1 | ○ Assignment 17<br>○ Assignment 18<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **12**<br>Apr 6-10 | • Improving Memory<br>• Notes 19: Rules of Exponents Part 2<br>• Notes 20: More with Rules of Exponents | ○ Assignment 19<br>○ Assignment 20<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **13**<br>Apr 13-17 | • Preparing for a Math Final Exam<br>• Notes 21: Intro to Polynomials; Add, Subtract, Multiply Polynomials (including 2 variables), Divide by a Monomial<br>• Notes 22: Coordinate Plane Basics | ○ Assignment 21<br>○ Assignment 22<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **14**<br>Apr 20-24 | • Notes 23: Intro to Lines & Slope<br>• Notes 24: Graphing Linear Equations | ○ Assignment 23<br>○ Assignment 24<br>○ Tutoring Lab |
| **15**<br>Apr 27-May 1 | • Review for Comprehensive Final Exam | ○ Tutoring Lab<br>○ Portfolio 3: 4/29/26 |
| **16**<br>May 4-8 | • **Final Exam!**<br>• **Monday, May 4th** from 5:00 to 7:00 pm in the usual classroom | ○ Final Exam |