Math 110, Fall 2014. Introductions and Informations

Information:

Me:

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You: Discussion Section 103 (*9.30-11am*, 81 Evans), Discussion Section 106 (*11am-12.30pm*, B56 Hildebrand)

Things that will make your life easier

- **Go to class and come to discussion section!** *Don't get me wrong, 8am class is one of the last things I would have wanted to do as an undergraduate but now I'm a (supposedly) responsible teacher/GSI and can see the situation 'from the other side'. Students that tend to frequently miss class and discussion are those students that tend to do poorly in class - attendance will allow you to see what the professor and I am expecting from you on assignments. Also, you might actually have some fun! (Perhaps not at 8am though...)*
- **Do your homework, and do it early!** *I appreciate that the barrage of homework you get is overwhelming and that sometimes linear algebra will be the last thing on your mind. However, your homework grade is a sizeable portion of your overall grade (20%) and a good way to turn that B+ into and A-. Also, if you come to section you will see what I expect of you, which is important as I am the one grading your homework!*
- **Think about what you have learned!** *You will be faced with a bunch of new ideas this semester and it is important that you incorporate them into your knowledge base, if you would like to do well in this class. This requires (unfortunately) spending a considerable amount of time studying what you have learned - understanding theorems, definitions; knowing examples and non-examples; determining how different concepts relate to each other - and not expecting to always find the answer in the textbook/online/whatever. You should be spending at least 10 hours per week (outside of class!) on the material if you hope to gain a good understanding of the concepts we will study.*
- **Come to office hours!** *This gives you a better opportunity to appreciate what I am expecting from you on homework. It will also give you an opportunity to ask any (seemingly) silly questions; I can guarantee that any question that you think is stupid will have been pondered by many other people before you (probably sitting beside you). Moreover, the stupid questions are the best kind! You are also free to attend any of the other GSI office hours (they are posted on my website)*
- Ask me questions! *As we have a minimal amount of contact time together during the week it will make things easier for you if* **you email me with (stupid!) questions/problems at least a day before discussion section**. *This will allow me to cover this material during discussion. If you get into the habit of asking questions it will also focus your mind on thinking about the material you've learned that week/been thinking about for homework.*

- **Use your resources!** *Use piazza.com or wikidot.com to ask any questions you may have on homework or material you find in the class notes/textbook. Either one of the GSIs will respond to your question or a fellow student; even better, use piazza/wikidot to answer questions yourself and test your knowledge. Please remember to be civil with each other and ensure you are not (perhaps inadvertently) hurting anyone's feelings.*

- Speak to your classmates! *It's often easier for a classmate to explain a new concept to you rather than have some GSI not appreciate how difficult the material is on first sight. Organise* **study groups, study sessions, homework sessions***; it will allow you to work through the class together and realise that you might not be the only person struggling with some of the material (should that be the case), or you can have the opportunity to explain a concept you feel that you understand. In my experience, explaining concepts to other people is the best way to learn that concept.*

Some final advice

Remember, MATHS IS HARD! so don't worry if you are having problems understanding the material or trying to prove statements. It takes time to get the hang of what you're supposed to do and the best way to learn is to follow some of the guidelines outlined above. Learning how to write a proof requires practice and time (and some understanding of the material!) so be patient and I'm certain that by the end of the semester you will have learned something nontrivial and be feeling a little bit smarter. If you EVER have any questions then please don't hesitate to ask me, either by email, piazza or office hours.