

Math 3200 Course Outline

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1 Introduction to Math 3200

Welcome to Math 3200, Geometry. Geometry is an ancient subject, which has been around about as long as agriculture. The literal translation of the name is “Earth measurement”. The material we will study ranges from the ancient (Euclid and Ancient Greece) to the relatively recent (linear algebra and modern geometry date from the late 19th century). I hope we’ll be able to have fun exploring it together.

There are many of us in this class, coming from many different backgrounds and situations. If the “default settings” for the class don’t work for you, please don’t hesitate to ask for accommodation.

We begin with some introductions: to the university, to the staff, and to the course.

1.1 Welcome to the University of Lethbridge

Oki, and welcome to the University of Lethbridge. Our University’s Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University of Lethbridge acknowledges and deeply appreciates the Siksikaitapii peoples’ connection to their traditional territory. We, as people living and benefiting from Blackfoot Confederacy traditional territory, honour the traditions of people who have cared for this land since time immemorial. We recognize the diverse population of Indigenous Peoples who attend the University of Lethbridge and the contributions these Indigenous Peoples have made in shaping and strengthening the University community in the past, present, and in the future.

As usual, everything you need to know for the course will flow through our [Moodle](#)¹ learning management system. Make sure you check in regularly to keep on top of what’s happening in the course.

Don’t hesitate to reach out if you have questions. I’ll do my best to answer all of your course-related questions as quickly as possible. If you have questions that are not related to the course, you can ask those too, and I’ll try to answer, or to direct you to someone who can. Some resources can be found on the University’s [Health and Safety website](#)².

1.2 Course staff and contact information

My name is [Sean Fitzpatrick](#)³. I can be reached via email at sean.fitzpatrick@uleth.ca⁴.

Student hours: you are not going to get everything you need during class time. I will be available throughout the week for consultation, either one-on-one, or in small groups. Drop-in hours will be Monday and Wednesday from 1–3 p.m., and I will have appointments available throughout the day on Thursday.

¹moodle.uleth.ca

²uleth.ca/services-for-students/health-safety

³www.cs.uleth.ca/~fitzpat

⁴<mailto:sean.fitzpatrick@uleth.ca>

1.3 Course description

Classical (Euclidean) geometry is a great playground for learning rigorous proof. The books of Euclid's *Elements* formed a canonical textbook, used for over two millennia as part of a standard mathematics education.

From Euclid, we see how to begin from a set of *postulates* (those truths that we hold to be self-evident), and proceed from there to see what else can be deduced. In Euclidean geometry, we will see how to use a (digital) compass and straightedge to construct things like equilateral triangles.

We will also explore geometry beyond Euclid. It turns out that at least one of Euclid's axioms was not as self-evident as it seemed! Mathematicians spent centuries trying to prove that Euclid's "parallel postulate" could be derived from his other axioms. It was only at the end of the 19th century that some thought to ask a simple question: what happens if the parallel postulate is false? By removing it, we are able to pass from the "Flatland" of Euclidean geometry to other worlds, where space can be curved, parallel lines can intersect, and all sorts of fun can happen.

We will cover the first six chapters of the course textbook. As time permits, we will also look at selected topics from chapters 7 and 8.

2 Essential course information

This section covers essential course information, including the meeting times, textbook, and grading scheme.

2.1 Course website

The primary course website is [Moodle](#)¹. On Moodle, you can expect to find everything you need to navigate the course, including weekly topics, homework assignments, and other resources.

In case there's a day when Moodle isn't working properly and you need access to course materials, you can find some of them (like this syllabus) on my [personal website](#)².

2.2 Scheduled classes

Our class meets on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in SA7202. Section A meets at 11 a.m., and Section B meets at 9 a.m.

Friday classes will be basic lecture-style classes, where I give an overview of the material we'll be working on in the following week.

The Friday lectures will *not* be comprehensive. You will be responsible for filling in the gaps by reading the textbook.

Monday and Wednesday classes will be hands-on. Some classes will involve **lab assignments**; these are computer-based assignments where we'll learn some computational tools. A few classes will be used for tests. The rest will involve working in groups at a whiteboard to solve problems.

Lab assignments will be completed using [GeoGebra](#)³. GeoGebra can be used online via their website. You do not need to install GeoGebra on your computer (although you can), but it is a good idea to create an account on GeoGebra so you can save your work.

For most students, the biggest challenge in Math 3200 is learning to write proofs. The only way to learn to write proofs is by trying to write proofs, so we will try to spend a lot of class time on working together to write proofs, and comparing our results.

¹moodle.uleth.ca

²www.cs.uleth.ca/~fitzpat/teaching.html

³geogebra.org

2.3 Course textbook

Our course textbook is *The Four Pillars of Geometry*, by John Stillwell. You can access the book for free via [Springer Link](#)⁴. The PDF now appears to be freely available; if not, you can access the book on campus, or by logging in via the University of Lethbridge.

2.4 Grading

The various graded components of the course are explained below.

“Lab” Assignments (30%)	Lab assignments will involve using GeoGebra to produce geometric constructions. There will be 6 labs in total. There will be class time set aside for work on the labs. You will be expected to work in groups on the lab assignments.
Written Assignments (40%)	Written assignments will involve proofs of theorems, and other problem-solving tasks. There will be 4 assignments in total. Assignments will be completed outside of class. They can be done in groups, although this is not required.
Tests (30%)	There will be three tests, written during class, on the following dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test 1, on Chapters 1 and 2: January 31.• Test 2, on Chapters 3 and 4: February 28.• Test 3, on Chapters 5 and 6: March 27.

The tests will be reflective of the problems worked on during class time.

Each of the grade components above will be assigned a numerical score. These will be added to get a score out of 100. Your score out of 100 is converted into a letter grade according to the following table.

Table 2.1 Conversion of percentage scores to letter grades in Math 3200

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-
96-100	91-95	87-90	83-86	78-82	74-77
C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
70-73	65-69	61-64	57-60	50-56	0-49

2.5 Other grading policies

A note on due dates	Most due dates are flexible, and provided primarily for your benefit, to help with planning. (A course without deadlines can be a disaster for those who procrastinate.) One exception is the workshop activity before each test. Because we can't begin the peer review portion of the workshop until the submission deadline passes, we have to have a deadline for the activity to proceed. A due date extension request form will be available via Moodle. If you need more time to complete an assessment, simply fill out the form. Unless you are contacted to say otherwise, you can assume that your request has been granted.
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⁴link.springer.com/book/10.1007/0-387-29052-4

Revisions For tests, labs, and assignments, you will be invited to submit revisions for any incorrect work. Revisions must be submitted within *one week* of receiving your feedback.

There will be resubmission forms available on Moodle. You may either:

1. Submit a revision for *one* problem, in which case your revised grade will replace the original score, or
2. Submit revisions for all problems, in which case each correct revision will earn you back 50% of the points originally lost.

You may not use revisions to submit work for a question you initially skipped. For a revision to be accepted, you must first attempt the problem. You are also not allowed to submit revisions to make up for a grade of zero assigned due to academic misconduct.

Dropping lowest grades I will drop your lowest grade in each grade category. Missing grades will be counted as zero, so (for example) if you miss a test, the grade for your missed test will be dropped.

3 Course policies (an FAQ)

This section deals with questions about accommodations, missed tests, and other exceptional (yet common) cases.

1. *This week is super busy and I don't think I can finish the homework on time. Can I have an extension?*

Yes. There's a form for that, provided on Moodle. I don't need to know why you need the extension; just what you want extended, when you want it extended to, and whether you need anything from me to help complete the work.

2. *What happens if I get sick?*

I'll do my best to be accommodating of any illness that interrupts your studies. There is no need to provide details of the illness. If you miss a week or more of work, please get in touch to make a plan for catching up. One of the biggest challenges in math is that once you fall behind, it's difficult to catch up on your own.

If you're staying home to avoid spreading illness to others (thank you!), but well enough to attend class, I'll try to provide you with a video link via Teams or Zoom.

3. *What exactly does academic honesty mean?*

In short, that any work you represent as your own, is your own. Much of your work can be done in groups, but not all of it. I will assume that you have access to a calculator, including online tools Symbolab, or Wolfram Alpha, or our Jupyter notebooks.

Use of these tools is acceptable, but take care that you are not overly reliant on them. What is not acceptable is having someone else do your work for you. This includes tutors, classmates, friends, family members, and online "homework help" sites. If you submit work that somebody else did for you, you are committing an academic offence. ***This includes getting AI to write your assignments.***

Penalties for academic dishonesty are outlined in the [Academic Calendar](#)¹. Depending on the severity of the offence, penalties for a first offence can range from a grade of zero on an assessment, to an F in the courses. Academic offences are also reported to the Dean of Arts & Sciences. They keep a record of each offence, and students with multiple offences can be subject to supplementary discipline.

¹uleth.ca/policy/resources/student-discipline-policy-academic-offences-undergraduate-students

4. *Does that mean I'm not allowed to get help with my homework?*

Not at all! But keep in mind that your course instructors will be available for help, free of charge. (OK, maybe not free of charge, but you've already paid for it with your tuition.) We will be responding on the discussion forum regularly, There will be time to ask questions in every class, and there will be online office hours. The Student Success Centre will also be running free help sessions (details TBA).

Some of you may still decide to pay for tutoring, and that's fine. But you have a duty to disclose sources of help on an assignment, and the individual tests are still tests, even if you won't have someone watching over your shoulder.

You should probably avoid the various paid "homework help" websites. Most of these don't offer help. They offer worked solutions for a price. Getting those solutions won't help with your understanding. More importantly, the people working for these sites are paid (poorly) per solution, and they often provide incorrect and/or badly written work. (We saw plenty of examples of this last Spring, and yes, all those students now have discipline reports on file.)

5. *What do I do if I can't write a test during the scheduled time?*

If you know in advance that you will not be able to write during the test window, let me know, and I'll arrange for an alternate time. If you miss a test due to illness, your test score will be replaced by your exam grade, or the average of your other three tests, whichever is higher.

6. *What if I miss the final exam?*

If you are unable to write the final exam, you will need to contact Academic Advising. They are responsible for authorizing rescheduling of exams. Usually if you miss an exam due to illness, an incomplete grade is recorded. You will write a makeup exam at a later date, at which point your grade will be updated.

7. *Do I need a doctor's note?*

No. This wastes health care resources and your time. Just email me to say you were sick, and spare me the details. However, if you miss more than one test due to illness, we'll need to meet to discuss how to adjust your grade.

8. *I receive learning accommodations. What arrangements can I make?*

First, make sure that you have registered with the University's [Accessible Learning Centre](#)². No need to let me know: they notify me of every student with accommodations.

If there are any adjustments I can make to facilitate your learning, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. All students deserve an equal opportunity to learn. Note that the HTML textbook is designed with accessibility in mind, and should work with screen readers.

9. *Life intervened and I can't keep up this week. What do I do?*

Send me an email. Extensions are usually granted as long as they're granted ahead of time. Online homework extensions need to be in place before solutions become available. Book an appointment with me as soon as you feel like you're falling behind and I'll do my best to get you up to speed.

4 Course schedule

We will follow the schedule below as closely as possible. Friday classes will consist of lecture overview of content for the following week.

If nothing is indicated for a certain class, assume that we will be working together on problems from the sections covered on the previous Friday.

²ulethbridge.ca/accessible-learning-centre

Table 4.1 Schedule for Spring 2024

Monday	Wednesday	Friday
	Jan. 3: Syllabus, overview.	Jan. 5: Sections 1.1 - 1.3
Jan. 8: Lab 0	Jan. 10	Jan 12: Sections 1.4 - 1.5
Jan. 15	Jan. 17	Jan. 19: Sections 2.1 - 2.4
Jan. 22: Lab 1, Asst. 1 due	Jan. 24	Jan. 26: Sections 2.5 - 2.8
Jan. 29	Jan. 31: Test 1	Feb. 2: Sections 3.1 - 3.3
Feb. 5: Lab 2	Feb. 7	Feb. 9: Sections 3.4 - 3.6
Feb. 12: Lab 3	Feb. 14	Feb. 16: Sections 4.1 - 4.3
Feb. 26: Asst. 2 due	Feb. 28: Test 2	Mar. 1: Sections 5.1 - 5.2
Mar. 4: Lab 4	Mar. 6	Mar. 8: Sections 5.3 - 5.5
Mar. 11	Mar. 13	Mar. 15: Sections 5.6 - 5.8
Mar. 18: Asst. 3 due	Mar. 20	Mar. 22: Sections 6.1 - 6.3
Mar. 25: Lab 5	Mar. 27: Test 3	Mar. 29: no class (Good Friday)
Apr. 1: no class (Easter Monday)	Apr. 3: Sections 8.1 - 8.3	Apr. 5: Lab 6
Apr. 8: Asst. 4 due, no class		