

Frequently Asked Questions

This is the Frequently Asked Questions pdf for MAC1140. The following table of contents contains the questions, separated by overarching category. Click the question to go to the relevant portion of the pdf.

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1 Course Materials

1.1 Xronos

1.1.1 What is Xronos?

Xronos is an online learning platform developed here at UF in conjunction with Ohio State University, for providing interactive textbook support as well as homework problems and practice problems. It is entirely free and open source, and is accessible via the ‘assignments’ tab in Canvas.

1.1.2 I’m having problems with Xronos, what should I do?

All the common problems with Xronos are addressed in the [Technical Problems with Xronos](#) section below. Start there to see if your problem is addressed, and if it isn’t, see [the next question](#) on who to contact.

1.1.3 I have a problem/question that isn’t answered here. Who should I contact?

If you can’t find the answer to your Xronos problem in the [Technical Problems with Xronos](#) section below, then you should contact the Xronos developer directly at jnowell@ufl.edu. Make sure to attach a screenshot of exactly what you see when you click on the Xronos assignment in Canvas, as that will help diagnose the problem.

1.2 Textbook

1.2.1 Is there a textbook for this class?

Yes! The Xronos ‘assignment’ in Canvas is both an interactive e-textbook and homework/practice platform. The Xronos tiles contain information, lessons, videos, interactive Desmos lessons, and all sorts of other things to help students learn the content!

1.2.2 I like to work with physical materials, is it possible to get a physical copy of the text?

Absolutely! You can email the instructor asking for a pdf of the e-text. Keep in mind that this, clearly, lacks any of the interactive features that the online version has, so it is of significantly limited use, but it still has all the same content. It will display links to online content (such as youtube links in place of where the online version would embed the video) and boxes with question-marks in them, for the homework/practice, which obviously won’t be checked for accuracy in real time.

1.2.3 Why do we use an e-text, rather than one of the normal paper textbooks?

The e-text allows for considerably more interactive and informative segments, from embedded YouTube videos, to fully functioning Desmos lessons, to dynamic and unlimited practice problems. Arguably more important for students, it’s completely free, unlike most calculus textbooks. This saves UF students on the order of around a quarter million dollars a year in subscription and textbook fees for mathematics classes!

1.3 Homework

1.3.1 Is there Homework in this class?

Yes, the Xronos assignment is an e-textbook, homework, and practice pool all in one. You get credit for correctly answering questions on the given pages, and once you have answered all the questions you should get 100% credit, as demonstrated by the green bar filling on the relevant tile at the top of the page.

1.3.2 When is the homework due?

All the homework for this class is due at the end of the class, as per the calendar in the syllabus. See the calendar in the syllabus for a specific date (usually around the time of the final, but not always, so double check!)

1.3.3 Can I complete extra assignments to get bonus points?

There are no extra assignments for bonus points/extra credit in this course. That being said, there are often bonus points available within most of the specific assignments, for example any Exams and/or Projects in the course tend to have more points available than what the count for in the course. See the question on [extra points on exams](#) for details.

1.3.4 I thought Xronos was our textbook. Is it also homework?

Yes! Xronos has tiles with interactive features and lessons, making it an interactive textbook, but your homework grade comes from completing these lessons. This means anything from reading the text, to answering problems in the text, to watching videos.

1.3.5 Do I need to complete *all* of the Xronos to get full credit for Homework?

Depending on your instructor, most instructors (including myself) allow a small buffer for Xronos, to account for technical difficulties, and the fact that any new technology always has bugs. Although Xronos has come a long way and is in considerably better shape than it once was, it still has its share of flaws; although we like to get feedback so we can fix these flaws, we don't want to penalize students for not completing content that they couldn't complete for technological reasons. More about this buffer will be discussed at the end of the semester when we discuss calculating grades.

1.4 Costs

1.4.1 Is there anything I need to buy in advance of taking this course? Textbook, homework access, clicker, etc?

This course is designed to not require *any* purchases by the students to take it. You shouldn't need to purchase textbooks, online homework codes (e.g. WebAssign or Pearson), or clickers.

2 Technical Problems with Xronos

2.1 Trouble Accessing Xronos

2.1.1 My Xronos won't load, what should I do?

This could be for any number of reasons, and the answer depends on what you see. If you see something about not having authorization, check [the next question](#). If it just fails to load entirely, then it is likely one of two issues. First, verify that you are using the eduroam wifi network if you are on campus (if you are not on campus, you can use any network, including your private wifi). Second, some browsers have trouble with the cookies that Xronos uses, in particular Safari seems to have especial trouble. All the Xronos content is tested using the Chrome browser, so you should try downloading that and see if that fixes your problem. Also check the other questions in this section to see if your problem is addressed by any of these. If not, see the question above about [Who to contact if your Xronos problem isn't addressed here](#).

2.1.2 My Xronos was working, but now when I try to access it, it says something about not having authorization?

If you see an error about lacking authorization to see the user's content, this almost certainly means you attempted to load Xronos via the gradebook, rather than the assignments tab in Canvas. Double check that you are trying to access Xronos via the **assignments tab** of Canvas only.

2.1.3 When I log into Xronos I see the wrong class; it is showing something about OSU Calculus 1 and Ximera. Am I in the wrong class?

No you aren't! Unfortunately, currently the default page for technical errors defaults to the underlying project; Ximera at OSU. If you see something about calculus at OSU, this means you are having a problem connecting to the UF Xronos page, which means that you are having a network problem. You should verify you are on one of the networks that Xronos works on. Currently Xronos works on any off campus network (for example: Your wifi at home). If you are on campus, you need to be on the eduroam network. The various other UF networks (eg: ufgetonline, ufguest, etc) do not allow users to connect to Xronos, due to UF-IT rules and regulations. If you are off campus or using the eduroam network, and still see OSU's Ximera Calculus content, please contact the Jason Nowell on the Xronos team as outlined in the question [Who to contact if your Xronos problem isn't addressed here](#).

2.2 Trouble On Xronos Page

2.2.1 My Xronos seems to have stopped saving my grade. Whenever I leave the page and come back, nothing is filled in?

Typically this is caused because Xronos failed to save the content on the page (no kidding, right?) There is a way to tell if this is the case however, by looking for the blue button in the top right of the tile page you are having issue with. It should look like an old floppy disk/save icon if it's working, and it may either having a spinning-wheel-of-death, or an exclamation point if it has failed. It will fail to save if it cannot access Xronos via the internet access it has, which is usually from being on a campus network other than eduroam. Double check that your wifi network is

eduroam (or, if you are off campus, you can use any private network you want, including your own private wifi).

Finally, sometimes when trying to switch pages quickly, Xronos hasn't had time to save yet, and it will popup a warning that informs you that it may not have saved all of the current progress. You should avoid leaving the page until the blue icon resolves to the save icon, at which point you should be able to leave the site without that popup. If it seems to be taking more than about 20-30 seconds, this likely means it can't access the network, in which case you should check the wifi network as described above.

2.2.2 I am 99% sure that I am putting in the right answer, but Xronos says it's wrong. What should I do?

Most of the Xronos problems have been vetted closely to make sure they work, but nonetheless sometime things go awry. This is especially true with the unlimited practice sections, where random number generation can generate some fairly extreme edge cases that do weird things. Before you try to diagnose whether your answer is correct, you should check for an orange arrow in the top right, which means there is an 'update' available for that tile; which very well may be there to fix the issue you are having. If there is an update available, you will want to update the tile and try again. If the problem persists, then continue to the next step.

Your next step should be to meet with a TA to go through the problem. The TA has the experience necessary to confirm that your answer is correct, and that it is being entered correctly. If the answers was not correct, then they can also explain why. If the answer is indeed correct, and if Xronos is indeed rejecting it, the TA should then contact the Xronos Developer directly to let them know there is a problem.

2.2.3 My Xronos page loads, but there seems to be missing components/elements? Is it broken?

Typically a page with missing components or broken elements is a result of cookies not being saved/loaded properly. Safari is especially notorious for this problem (in many applications, not just Xronos unfortunately). All of the Xronos content is debugged using a Chrome browser, so you should try installing Chrome to see if this resolves the issue. If the issue persists, you should read the question above on [who to contact with Xronos trouble](#).

2.2.4 Is there a preferred operating system or browser that I should use to do work in Xronos?

All operating systems are known to work with Xronos, and the Xronos team actively debugs Xronos content using Windows and Linux systems on a Chrome browser. We strongly recommend that you use a Chrome browser if you are having issues, to see if any trouble you have is specific to your setup, or specific to the content. In almost all cases, using Chrome and the eduroam wifi (if you are on campus) resolves problems users have loading and utilizing Xronos.

2.3 Troubles Syncing Xronos to Canvas

2.3.1 My Xronos grade doesn't seem to be updating. How can I make sure to get credit for my work?

This is rare, but usually the cause is that Xronos is unable to save it's content remotely, which is usually an issue with the network connection. The solutions for this problem are the same as those in the question [about what to do if Xronos doesn't save your progress](#).

2.3.2 Canvas reports that Xronos is graded, but I haven't finished it yet. How do I get the rest of my points?

Unfortunately Canvas reports an assignment as "graded" whenever a grade is submitted. Since Xronos syncs its grades in real time, this means that, as soon as you log in and do anything on Xronos, Canvas will update the grade and then flag it as "graded". This really doesn't mean anything, it would be more accurate to say that a grade update has been submitted, rather than the assignment is graded. As you continued to complete more of the assignment, the grade will continue to increase in Canvas, up until the assignment is overdue, at which point no more grade updates will be accepted.

3 Course Assessments

3.1 Homework Grades

3.1.1 When is homework due in this class?

For MAC1140, all homework is due at the end of the class, typically within a couple days of the final exam. See the calendar in the syllabus for a specific date.

3.1.2 Do I need to do all of the Xronos work to get full homework credit? What if I have technical trouble?

Generally you should try to do all the Xronos work. However, technical difficulties occur, especially as Xronos is still under development. As a result, there is typically a point-buffer (the exact value of which is determined toward the end of the semester) that will be applied to make up for these technical difficulties. Essentially, toward the end of the semester, I will announce a point-buffer value; this point value will be added to all the Xronos scores **up to a total of 50 points**.

For example, if you earn 48/50 points on Xronos and the point-buffer is 5 points, then you would be granted the last 2 points for free, getting 50/50 points for Xronos. You would *not* be granted 53/50 points, so in this example, the last three points would be wasted. This is why it's a 'point-buffer' and not simply bonus points.

3.1.3 Do the 'unlimited practice' count toward homework? How much do I need to do to get full credit?

Currently the unlimited practice *do* count toward the total homework grade. You need to complete an *entire page fully* before hitting the 'try another' button. The amount of completed

work of a given tile is a percentage of answers given on that page (and video content watched, see the question below on how [videos contribute to completion](#)), in particular it's **not** on completing the individual problems over several 'try another' attempts. This means *you should complete the entire practice tile once before hitting the 'try again' button*. Note however, that if the initial numbers generated are awful, you should hit the 'try another' button before doing *any* of the problems on that page until you get decent random numbers, and *then* do the entire tile.

3.1.4 I finished every answer box on the page, but I still don't seem to have full credit for the tile. What gives?

In some specific cases, watching videos can contribute toward completion. This usually isn't the case, but if you complete all of the answer boxes in a given page and you still haven't gotten 100% of the credit, then you should try watching any videos on the page (or at least start them and let them run) to see if that finishes the completion percentage.

3.2 Participation Grades

3.2.1 Is there a participation grade in this course?

Yes. Participation grade is earned entirely in the discussion classes.

3.2.2 Is there an attendance grade in this course? Is that different than participation?

No. There is no attendance grade in this course, but I strongly advise attending as many lectures as possible. In my experience there are a *lot* more students that *think* they can do well without attending lecture than there actually are. There is a staggering correlation between students that do not attend lecture, and those that end up withdrawing, dropping, or failing the course.

3.2.3 Who is in charge of giving me participation credit?

The participation credit is entirely handled by your TA. Different TAs have different ways that they assign participation grade, and is not something governed by the instructor. If you feel that the methods required to get participation credit are unreasonable, you are of course welcome to bring it up with the instructor (see the question below on [what to do if you have an issue with your TA](#)). If you just want to know what you need to do to earn all your participation points however, that is not something the instructor can answer, as each TA has their own method. So you should contact your TA directly with your questions.

3.2.4 My participation credit doesn't seem to be updated on Canvas, what should I do?

Since the participation credit is assigned by your TA, you should contact your TA to find out what your current participation point value is. If it seems to be an unreasonable amount of time since you have either been able to earn participation points, or those points have been updated on canvas, you are also welcome to address your concerns with the instructor (see the question below on [what to do if you have an issue with your TA](#)).

3.3 Extra Credit

3.3.1 Is there extra credit in this course?

There is no intended extra credit in the course by design. However, there are some times during a specific semester where it makes sense to grant extra credit. When this occurs it is important to keep the following two things in mind:

First, all extra credit will always be offered to *everyone* in the class. This means that there will never be any individual extra credit assignments, only general offers to the entire class.

Second, all extra credit will be announced to the class as a whole, by the instructor. This will happen either in person, or via email/announcements on canvas, or (probably) both.

It is worth mentioning however that, even though there is no extra credit built into the course by default, there *are* more points available than what are counted, in certain assignments; most notably exams. These extra points function equivalently to extra credit, but the points are earned by doing excessively well on exams, and are not earned by any particular problem, question, or assignment. You can read more about this in the question explaining [why there are more points in exams than is listed in the syllabus](#).

3.3.2 I need just a few more points to get a passing grade, can I do some extra credit to get those points?

As mentioned in the question on [extra credit](#), there is no extra credit offered in this exam for specific individuals, only for everyone in the class at once. If no extra credit assignments have been offered, then there is no way to earn extra credit. However, there are a number of ways your grade will be improved automatically at the end of the semester; such as dropped quizzes, grade on the final replacing one of the exams, and Xronos buffer points. You may want to [read the question about calculating your grade](#).

3.3.3 I heard someone else is getting extra credit, can I get some too?

Generally speaking, this is almost certainly not the case. The student may be talking about participation grades or something else governed by the TA directly, but it should *not* be extra credit, which can only be given by the instructor and is not handed out on an individual basis as described in the questions on [extra credit](#) and [getting individual extra credit](#).

3.4 Quizzes

3.4.1 Are there Quizzes in this course?

Yes, there are quizzes almost every week during discussion class.

3.4.2 When are the quizzes administered?

The quizzes are administered by the TAs during discussion class.

3.4.3 How many Quizzes are there?

The specific number should be recorded in the syllabus, but typically there is about one quiz per discussion class, except for the first discussion class, and (under some circumstances) possibly during exam weeks. The syllabus calendar will have a complete list of when each quiz will be administered.

3.4.4 How do Dropped Quizzes work?

This course keeps ten quizzes, so the number of quizzes that are dropped are however many more than that are offered in the semester. For example, if there are 13 quizzes administered during the semester, then there will be 3 dropped quizzes. If there are 12 quizzes administered during the semester, then there will be two dropped quizzes.

3.4.5 I have an excused absence from the Dean of Students Office (DSO). Can I makeup a quiz?

In general the dropped quizzes are to allow for excused absences and/or emergencies. For this reason, under most circumstances, quiz makeups will not be offered. Read the question about [exceptions to the makeup quiz policy](#) below.

3.4.6 I have a whole *bunch* of excused absences from the DSO; can I make those up?

In the event that you have multiple excused absences that have forced you to miss quizzes, you can make up all but the dropped number of quizzes. For example, if the course has 13 quizzes in the semester, and 3 dropped quizzes, and you have *excused absences* for missing 5 quizzes, you will be able to makeup 2 quizzes; the other three will be your dropped quizzes.

3.4.7 How do I contact the DSO to get my excused absence confirmed?

Whenever you have an absence or miss classwork that you wish to be noted as an excused absence, you should verify your reason for missing class with the Dean of Students Office (DSO). You can find their up-to-date contact information online at: <https://dso.ufl.edu/about/contact/>. The DSO will verify the reason for missing class and will email the instructor directly to inform them on the missed class, and if it should be considered an excused absence or not. This will greatly simplify any future discussions about things like makeup exams or missing coursework, as well as provide a record in the event of things such as medical withdrawals.

3.4.8 I seem to be missing quiz grades in canvas. How do I fix that?

You TA is responsible for writing, administering, grading, and uploading grades of the quizzes. If you have problems with missing quiz grades, or incorrect quiz grade values in canvas, you should talk to your TA immediately. Be advised that the syllabus often has a 'one week policy' for grade disputes, so if you wait too long to dispute an incorrect quiz grade, it may not be fixable later on. It is your responsibility to verify your grades and check canvas regularly to ensure your grades are correct.

3.4.9 I think my quiz was unfair or graded unfairly, what are my options?

Generally speaking TAs try to make fair and representative quizzes, however doing so is surprisingly difficult. It is not uncommon to have one or two quizzes that are (accidentally) too easy or too hard, and this is often adjusted for by future quizzes or coursework by the TA.

However, if you think there is a systematic issue with the quizzes or grading, then you should first talk to the TA to see if it is a matter of misunderstanding (either by them or you; this is known to happen in either direction). If this seems unfruitful however, you should next contact the instructor of the course and talk to them about your concerns. You can see more about this in the question on [what to do if you have an issue with your TA](#).

3.5 Exams

3.5.1 Are there Exams in this course? If so, how many?

Yes. Typically there are either three or four exams during the semester, and then a final exam. You should consult the syllabus and the syllabus calendar to get the specific number of exams and their dates for the current semester.

3.5.2 What time are the exams in this course?

All assembly math exams are held from 8:30pm to 10:00pm. This is UF policy and not determined by the instructor (trust me, I would love to have them earlier!) which means that they cannot be scheduled earlier. The final exam is scheduled in advance of the start of the semester by the registers office, and is once again not determined by the instructor. You can find the time and day of the final by checking the registrars office website for the final exam schedule of the current semester and locating the course code in the displayed table.

3.5.3 I don't function too well late at night, can I possibly take the exams earlier?

Unfortunately, since the exam times are not up to the instructor, there isn't anything I can do about this. The only option available to students is to go to the DRC to see if you qualify for accommodations that would allow you to take the exam at an earlier time of day (reasons for this might include effects of medications, certain cognitive disorders, or extenuating circumstances). If the DRC determines that you need to take the exam earlier, they will give you paperwork to present to the instructor to that effect, at which point there will be a process by which different exam times can be assigned.

3.5.4 I have another exam scheduled at the same time as an exam for this class, which one do I go to?

There is official UF policy as to the hierarchy of precedence for exams.

First: In general, assembly exams (such as large lecture classes) get priority over non assembly exams. Secondly: If you have two assembly exams scheduled for the same time, then the course with the higher course number takes precedence.

For example; suppose you are taking MAC1140, MAC1114, and ACG4632 and all three happen to have exams at the same time on the same day. Since both MAC1140 and MAC1114 are assembly

courses, and ACG4632 is not, the MAC1140 and MAC1114 classes would take precedence, and the professor of ACG6432 would be required (by UF policy) to provide a makeup exam for you. Of the two assembly exams, since 1140 & 1114, MAC11140 would take precedence, and so you should go to the MAC1140 exam, and the professor for MAC1114 is required (again by UF policy) to give you a makeup exam.

3.5.5 Something came up, and I cannot make it to an exam. Can I get a makeup? What should I do?

The syllabus has a makeup policy listed for exams, you should read that carefully to get a good idea of what to do. That being said, generally speaking makeup exams are only given in the event that there is an excused absence. In order to get confirmation of an excused absence, you should contact the Dean of Students Office (see the question on [How do I contact the DSO](#)) to get the proper verification. The DSO will verify the paperwork for the absence and contact the instructor directly, and the instructor will judge whether it is an excused absence or not. Once this has been determined, the instructor will contact you to let you know if you can have a makeup exam, and if so, what to do in terms of registering for the exam and/or the details of the makeup exam (eg time, place, etc).

3.5.6 I calculated my multiple choice score based on the posted answer key and got something *very* different than my canvas grade. What should I do?

There are two possibilities. The first is that you may have recorded different answers on the scantron than you recorded on your exam sheet (or remembered) for later comparison. This is often the case if there is a one or two question difference. If you have a very significant different however, then usually it's because you bubbled in the wrong form code on your scantron. This means that your scantron would be (automatically) graded with a different answer key than what you expect. In either case, the best way to determine the cause (and any action that may be necessary to fix the problem) is to email the instructor to schedule a time to review your physical scantron to see what, if any, mistakes were made.

3.5.7 Can I see my scantron to see if there are mistakes between what I wrote on my exam and what I wrote on the scantron?

Absolutely! You can email the instructor of the course to set up a time to meet with them and review your scantron for any possible mistakes. Keep in mind the scantron must be kept with the instructor at all times, so you will only be able to review the scantron during your meeting.

3.5.8 I think my exam FRQ was unfair or graded unfairly, what are my options?

If you think your FRQ was graded unfairly, the first thing you should do is discuss it with your TA (who is the grader) in order to make sure you understand the reasoning behind the grade you received. If you still think the grade is unfair after discussing it with your TA you should email your instructor and ask to meet with them regarding the grade on your FRQ.

If you think the FRQ itself was written unfairly, you should contact your instructor and ask them about your concerns. Try to be specific with regards to what part(s) you are concerned about. Your instructor will likely email you back with an explanation of why the part(s) were written

the way they were, and hopefully address your concerns. If, however, you still feel remediation is needed, you can contact (TBD) and request to discuss your grievance with them.

3.5.9 Everyone I talk to seems to have done poorly on one of the exams, will it be curved?

A general math department policy is that no exam grades are curved. However, in the event that exams are abnormally low, instructors will occasionally offset these grades using one of several techniques to allow future grades to make up for the low exam grade. So, in general, the answer is no, the exam will not be curved. However, this does not mean that there won't be steps taken to help students recover from an otherwise poor exam score.

3.5.10 There were more than 50 points on our exam, but the syllabus says it only counts out of 50 points. Is it scaled?

No. Most exams will have more than the 50 points available. This is to allow a reward for students that do exceptionally well, as well as allowing a sort of buffer for students that struggle. For example, if an exam has 37 points in the multiple choice section, and 18 points in the free response section, that means there are 55 total points possible for the exam. However, the exam will still be counted out of 50, thus a student that gets 52 total points has earned 2 points of extra credit. Similarly, a student that lost a total of 20 points, would have gotten 35 out of 50, and so they would have gotten a better score than if there were only 50 points available.

3.5.11 According to my calculations there are more points available than should be possible according to the syllabus... did I mess up? Will the point ranges change?

Many assignments and some exams may have more points available than what they are counted as. For example, an exam may have 55 points available, even though it is counted out of 50 points (see [the question above on this](#)). These are intended as extra credit, or buffer points. This means that it is possible to get more than 100% of the "maximum" points listed on the syllabus. Regardless, the point ranges on the syllabus *will not change*, this just means it is easier to get a better grade in the course.

3.5.12 I heard I need my section number for the Exams; what is that, and where do I find it?

Your section number is a four digit code that is currently needed for the scantron to correctly file your grade. Keep in mind that the registrar's office generally provides a *five* digit code, which is not the section number that is needed for your exams (there is only 4 spaces available for the code on the scantron).

In order to find the section number, you should navigate to the math department website at <https://math.ufl.edu/courses/>. At the top of this page will be a link to the course listings for the math department. Locate your **discussion class** by the period and TA name, and then locate the four digit section number in that row for your specific section of the class. This is the four digit number that will be needed for the exam.

3.5.13 What should I bring to the Exams?

The only things you need at the exam is a pencil, a pen, and your Gator ID. All other items, including phones and backpacks, must be stowed at the front of the room. Keep this in mind when you go to an exam; if you don't want to leave your phone or backpack at the front of the room, leave it behind when you head out to take your exam, and bring only the pencil, pen, and Gator ID.

3.5.14 I get accommodations from the DRC, who should I talk to about that?

You need to make sure to get the specific paperwork from the DRC with your accommodations listed. You must give this paperwork to the **instructor**, not your TA. In almost all cases, in order to get your accommodations for your exams, you will need to register to take the exam at the DRC via your student portal. If you have any other questions about this process, you should contact your instructor and/or the DRC for more information. Keep in mind your TA will likely not know about accommodations, so make sure to contact your instructor with any questions you may have.

3.6 Grades in Canvas

3.6.1 I seem to be missing grades in Canvas, what should I do about that?

The vast majority of grades in Canvas are recorded by your TA. You should first contact your TA to see if the assignment has been graded, and ask about your missing grade(s). The TA can verify if they have gotten the assignment from you and if the assignment has been graded, and thus should be posted. If it is a multiple choice score from an exam, the instructor is in charge of uploading those grades, in which case you should contact them directly instead of your TA to ask about your missing multiple choice score. Depending on the circumstances, your TA or instructor will contact you to decide on any necessary next steps to resolve your missing grade.

3.6.2 Canvas says it has 'dropped' grades that I think shouldn't be dropped, what gives? Do I need to fix this?

Generally speaking, Canvas is pretty bad about dropping the correct grades, scaling the grades correctly if needed, and/or calculating grades. For this reason, when grades are calculated at the end of the semester, Canvas is generally not actually used. This means that (again, in general) you shouldn't worry about Canvas claiming it is dropping grades that it shouldn't, or that certain grades don't count toward your final grade that you think should... none of this is actually reflected in your final grade calculation for exactly this reason (that Canvas is unreliable). If you still have concerns, feel free to email the instructor of the course, however towards the end of the semester the instructor will almost certainly announce how grades will be calculate, and specifically, that these "dropped grades" in canvas are not something that students should worry about.

3.6.3 Canvas lists some assignments as 'not counting toward my grade', is this ok? Should I talk to my TA?

Canvas is pretty bad as a gradebook, so these things can be ignored as none of the grade calculations actually use the Canvas grade algorithm to determine your grade (Canvas is just a handy way to see all the grades you have earned, but when it comes to putting those numbers

together in a useful way, Canvas is pretty unreliable). See the question on [Canvas dropping the wrong grades](#) for more details.

3.6.4 How long should it take to get a graded assignment back, and/or to have the grade appear in Canvas?

Most assignments should be graded within a week of being handed in to the TA. Some assignments, such as a Model Project, or especially complex Free Response portions of exams, may take additional time, but you can always email your TA to verify whether or not the grading has been completed.

3.7 Calculating Grades

3.7.1 Is the listed grade in Canvas correct?

Not usually, or more accurately, the individual assignment grades should be correct, but Canvas tends to be unreliable when it comes to putting the assignments together in a way that reflects the syllabus (dropping the correct exams or quizzes, replacing certain exams with scaled version of the final, etc). For this reason, you should calculate your own grade utilizing the information in the question on [how to calculate your own grade](#), rather than relying on Canvas to give you a letter grade estimate.

3.7.2 How do I calculate my grade?

This course (as is the case for most courses in the math department) use a point system. Regardless of the course, the grading procedure should be clearly outlined in the syllabus, which should include how many assignments there are, how much they are worth, and what is required to get the various letter grades at the end of the semester. So always read the grading portion of the syllabus thoroughly. Moreover, keep in mind that the grade listed in Canvas is almost certainly incorrect, as mentioned in the question about [if the grade in Canvas is correct](#), so *never* assume that grade has anything to do with your actual standing in the course; always calculate the grade yourself!

For this course in particular, since we use a point system and not a percentage (or “weight average”) system as most high schools do, calculating your grade toward the end of the semester is fairly straight forward; simply add up all the points you’ve earned as described by the syllabus, and compare it to the chart in the syllabus that lays out how many points you need for each letter grade. Keep in mind that you will need to add up points *as described in the syllabus*. For example, most math courses drop a certain number of discussion quizzes. If your syllabus says that you have thirteen quizzes and you drop three of them, then you want to add up the ten highest quiz values you have earned (ie you drop/don’t count the three lowest value quizzes). Another common technique is to have some portion of the final exam overwrite the lowest exam score; typically in this class we use half the final exam because the final exam is worth twice as much as a semester exam. In this case, you want to calculate half your final exam (or what you think you will get on your final exam) and write down this value. Then add up all your exam scores and the half of final exam score, *except for whatever is the lowest score between them*. For example, if you have exam scores of 44, 41, and 47, and you expect to get a 98 on your final exam, then you would calculate half your final exam value ($98 \div 2 = 49$), then add up all the scores except the lowest one, which

is the exam which had a 41. Thus you would add up $44 + 47 + 49 = 140$. This is the total points you would earn from the exams (not counting the final exam itself).

If you aren't near the end of the semester it can be more difficult to know the grade you are heading for as you haven't earned enough points to get above the level of *E* yet. That being said, you can get *a rough idea* of what grade you are heading for by doing what's called a predictive projection of your future points, outlined below.

First you need to calculate the *ratio* of possible points that you've currently earned. To do this you need to add up all the points you have earned so far, then add up all the points that have been offered so far, and divide the total earned points by the total offered points. For example, if you have taken 7 quizzes, each of which worth 6 points, and earned a total of 36 points on the quizzes, that would be 36 points earned and $7 \cdot 6 = 42$ points offered. If you have also taken two 50 point exams and gotten a 32 and a 38 of them, that would be 70 more earned points out of 100 offered points, so your total would be 106 earned points out of 142 offered points. To get the ratio we would then use the fraction $\frac{106}{142}$.

Once you have the ratio of earned points over offered points, multiply that by the total available points for the course listed in the syllabus and compare that to the letter grade table in the syllabus. For example, if we had a total of 450 points in the course, then you would use $\frac{106}{142} \cdot 450 = 335.9$. Then you can look up that point score on the table in the syllabus to see what letter grade you currently heading toward. If this letter grade is lower than you want, this is a good indicator that you should seek out help or ask for study techniques to improve your performance. Note that it is **much** easier to get a better grade if you adjust your behavior/studying earlier in the semester, as oppose to later.

To make things easier I have built a Google Sheets grade estimator. Keep in mind that this is not a perfect grade calculator as it does not take into account any drops or replacements; eg replacing the lowest exam with a portion of the final exam grade (if such a thing is allowed in the syllabus) or dropping some number of quizzes (again, if such a thing is allowed in the syllabus). None the less this should give you a general idea of how you are doing in the class, letter-grade wise at any points in the course. If you want to calculate your grade exactly, you should follow the guidelines listed above and/or the ones in the syllabus.

[The Grade Estimator is Located Here](#). Make sure to save a personal copy so that you can use it (the one that is linked is the original and won't let you enter in any information, you need to save a copy to your own google account to then utilize it). This is to prevent students from seeing each others grades and/or having multiple students changing the sheet at the same time. Also make sure to read the instructions, key, and disclaimer carefully before you start (they aren't long, but they have important information).

3.7.3 I know that the class uses a point system, but what does that mean in terms of calculating my grade?

Generally speaking, it means that you don't have to deal with weighted averages for exam grades or anything like that, but it also makes it a little less intuitive to understand what letter grade you "currently" have in the course. A method for determining your grade during the course, as well as at the end, is outlined in the previous question about [how to calculate your grade in the course](#). It may seem a little complicated, but it isn't quite as bad as it may initially seem.

3.7.4 Can I lose points throughout the semester?

No, once you have earned points, you have them for the semester. This means you can build up your point values throughout the semester until you get to your desired grade and then you won't be able to fall back down to a non-passing grade after that point.

4 Lectures

4.1 Lecture Videos

4.1.1 Where can I find the lecture videos?

The lecture videos can be found on the 'Lecture Video and Xronos Progress' page. There is a link to this page on the Canvas homepage and/or a link in the quick-navigation bar on the left hand side of the Canvas site.

4.1.2 Are all the lectures recorded?

All the lectures are schedule for recording, but sometimes there are technological mishaps that result in corrupted or missing video. Although this happens somewhat rarely, it does happen, so students shouldn't rely on any specific lecture being recorded.

4.1.3 What are the differences between the lecture videos, and the 'lesson videos' I find on Xronos?

The Xronos assignment is intended to be an interactive textbook and practice rolled up together. As part of this, there are videos recorded and embedded into Xronos that cover specific skills or sections, and are intended as an instruction video on those specific aspects of the course (eg a specific skill, technique, or problem type). In contrast the lecture videos are the recordings of the actual live lecture as it occurred during that semester. Generally the lesson videos are more thorough and comprehensive for a specific skill as there are fewer time constraints than live lecture, but live lecture videos include questions from students as well as announcements for things happening during the semester (such as exam information, homework or course updates, etc).

4.1.4 When should I expect the lecture videos to be posted?

Lecture videos are usually posted as soon as the instructor receives them from the video processing center at UF. This typically happens within a few hours of the lecture occurring. Keep in mind however that *it can take up to a week* for the video processing center to provide the video, and sometimes the videos aren't recorded properly (see the question: [are all lectures recorded](#)). Generally speaking the lectures will be posted as soon as they are available, although if it has been several days you can contact the instructor to inquire as to the status of a specific lecture (see the question: [asking about video status](#)).

4.1.5 It's been several days and I haven't seen the last lecture video get posted yet, should I email my instructor?

As mentioned in the question [Are all lectures recorded?](#) it is entirely possible that some lectures may take much longer than others, and some lecture videos can be lost or corrupted. That being

said, it is rare and usually lecture videos are posted within 24 hours of the time the lecture was given. If it has been more than 48 hours and there is no video posted, you may email the instructor asking about the status of the video.

4.2 Lecture Content

4.2.1 What is the content of the lecture?

Generally speaking the lecture is reserved to introduce the mathematical ideas and concepts, and review how those ideas or concepts are used at a “big picture” level. Due to the relatively small amount of lecture time we have, compared to the relatively large amount of material necessary to cover, we don’t have extensive amounts of time to do lots of specific problems or examples however. For this reason a lot of this content is given in Xronos, and should be covered in your discussion classes. For more specifics you should read the response to [What is the point of Lecture?](#), and [What kind of work will we do in Discussion Class?](#).

4.2.2 Is there an attendance grade? If so, how? If not, why not?

There is no **lecture** attendance grade in this class. This is different than a *participation* grade, which is part of your discussion class, and covered in more detail in the response to [Do I need to attend Discussion? What happens if I don't?](#). My philosophy of attendance in lecture is simply this; if you can do well without attending lecture, then you shouldn’t be required to attend lecture. That being said, *the overwhelming number of students that think they can do well without attending lecture do not do well.* I *strongly* encourage students to attend lecture so that they have the opportunity to interact with the lecturer (eg ask questions, clarify steps, etc). Watching a video is not a proper substitute for live instruction, as has been demonstrated in countless studies on the topic. That being said, if you are one of the lucky few that can manage it and want to roll the dice, you are free to not attend lecture and take your chances.

4.2.3 Can I really skip lecture? Should I email you to tell you why I needed to miss lecture?

The short answer is yes, you can skip lecture, and no you need not (and frankly shouldn’t) email your instructor to inform them that you will/have missed lecture unless you have specific questions you want to ask about as a result. The long answer is given in the response to the question on [if there is an attendance grade](#) in lecture. You should definitely read the linked question if you are considering skipping lecture.

4.2.4 I’m very confident that I don’t need to actually attend lecture to pass this course, will I be penalized if I do that?

The short answer is no, there is no penalty for not attending lecture. Keep in mind that the reality is that **many** more people think they can do well without attending lecture than actually succeed at doing so. Math has a way of seeming easy, until it doesn’t; if you skip lecture because it seems easy, you may find that soon you are completely lost and have no idea how to even begin to catch up, let alone keep up. If you really do think you want to skip lecture, you should read the response to the question about [if there is an attendance grade](#) in lecture.

4.2.5 I have questions in lecture but I don't feel ok interrupting you to see how you went from one step to another. What should I do?

This kind of discomfort is absolutely normal and understandable but keep in mind that any question you have is almost certainly held by at least a half dozen other people in the audience. I would strongly encourage you to raise your hand during lecture to ask, to prevent getting lost early in the lecture and missing out on substantive content later in that same lecture. That being said however, not everybody is ok trying to ask questions in a large lecture and that's understandable. If you really don't want to ask questions during lecture, you can always try to catch the instructor after class to clarify points from lecture, attend office hours and ask for clarification on specific aspects of the lecture, or even write an email to the instructor specifying what part in the lecture you were confused by and ask for clarification. It's vastly more important to get *all* your questions answered regardless of how silly/trivial they seem, than it is to try and avoid seeming dumb or feeling like people judge you. It has often been my experience that students that ask even the most ridiculous questions, do significantly better than those that sit quietly confused. Actively participating in your education is the biggest indicator in your success as a student!

4.3 Role of Lecture

4.3.1 What is the point of lecture?

The role of lecture in this class is to introduce the concepts and the “big picture” of new skills and ideas in the course. As mentioned in the [question on the content of lecture](#) there isn't enough time to do a lot of concrete step by step examples in the course during lecture. Instead, the intent of lecture is to try and show how the ideas and concepts of the class intertwine, to go over new content at a general level, and to give an idea of the types of applications and questions you are expected to deal with using any new ideas or mechanics. Generally this means that lectures will have a certain level of abstraction that is required when discussing such generalities. It is important to realize that any future math course, including calculus, will be *considerably* more abstract during lecture than what you see in this class, so another goal of lecture in this course is to start preparing students to dealing with, understanding, and utilizing this level of abstraction in their learning process.

4.3.2 It seems like I have all the information I need in the Xronos text/practice. Do I need to attend lecture at all?

Xronos is continually being updated and improved for this course, and in a perfect world a student would be able to learn everything they need for the course simply from completing the Xronos assignment. However, as many studies have demonstrated, for many students, no matter how good an online resource is, it's still not a good substitute for live and interactive education. For this reason I strongly suggest you attend lecture and be an active participant in your education; ask questions if you don't understand something, point out errors if you think you see some, and answer questions when the instructor asks them of the class. This will *dramatically* increase your understanding and performance in the class, and will be a major contributor to success in future academic courses in general, not just mathematics courses.

4.3.3 What's the difference between Lecture and Discussion class?

Lecture is where the general ideas, mechanics, and skills will be introduced and initially covered. Discussion class, in contrast, is intended to be a setting where you can practice these skills both more concretely and more deeply. In essence, lecture is where you learn *how* a problem should be approached and solved, whereas discussion is where you actually *practice* solving problems.

4.4 Expectations for Lecture

4.4.1 What do you expect of us, coming into the lecture?

Generally speaking my expectations for students coming into lecture are simply that they are attentive, inquisitive, and professional in their conduct. Since attendance is not a requirement, and there is no attendance penalty (see questions [Is there an attendance grade?](#) and [Can I really skip lecture?](#)) if a student doesn't want to be in the room for lecture, I'd much prefer that they don't come, than that they come and are disruptive. Please be kind and patient with your fellow students, especially when they ask questions, and try to be an active participant in your own education; ask questions, offer solutions, and speak up if you think there is an error.

4.4.2 What should we be prepared for when we go to lecture?

Lecture is a lot of abstraction and general information, with some concrete examples and problems used to model procedures and problem solving methods. You should be prepared to take notes, make notations beyond what is said/written in lecture for yourself (eg write down questions about why something is done in lecture, or whether something else could be done instead), and generally be awake and alert enough to ask questions and/or participate when the instructor asks questions of the audience. Being an active learner is vastly better for your education and retention than just about any other single factor a student can do to help themselves.

4.4.3 Do I need to take notes?

Generally everything in lecture is recorded somewhere in Xronos. However, studies have shown that writing down information, even if it's physically copying notes you've already taken, significantly improves retention and understanding. For this reason I would encourage students to write down notes, at least for what seems to be the important points of lecture, more to help in understanding and retaining the information than anything else.

4.4.4 How much of what you do in lecture will be on exams or quizzes?

Everything covered in lecture is fair game for an exam or quiz. Generally speaking I try to include as much of the content covered in lecture as I reasonably can when I design exams, so chances are excellent that anything you see in lecture will show up on an exam at some point.

5 Discussion Class

5.1 Role of Discussion Class

5.1.1 What *is* a ‘Discussion Class’? I haven’t had one of these before.

A discussion class is intended to be a small subsection of the large lecture class where you can work in a smaller setting with drastically fewer students to practice your skills and solve more concrete problems. These discussion classes (also called recitation classes) are led by a teaching assistant (aka TA) who will give and present problems, help students find solutions, and generally guide students through problem solving methods.

5.1.2 What kind of work will we do in Discussion Class?

Each discussion class is entirely under the leadership of the TA leading that particular class, which is to say that each discussion class’s activities are determined by the TA leading that particular discussion. That being said, in almost all discussion classes there will be a regularly weekly quiz (typically 15-20 minutes in duration, designed to monitor students skills and understanding on the mechanics of the course) as well as participation credit as determined by the TA. Often Discussion classes will involved some kind of small group work, individual work, and/or questions (asked by students) presented by the TA as a guided walkthrough to demonstrate how to solve particular problems.

5.1.3 How is Discussion different than Lecture?

Lecture is mostly intended to introduce the ideas and techniques of the course (see [what is the point of lecture?](#)) whereas discussion classes are much more hands on and intended to allow students to practice the mechanics and problem solving techniques from the course under the supervision of an expert (the TA). While some questions are (and should be) asked in lecture, generally those tend to be questions about how a given step or idea was done. Discussion provides the opportunity for much more open ended questions to be answered by the TA, and much more concrete hands-on application of the ideas and mechanics from lecture.

5.1.4 Do I need to attend Discussion? What happens if I don’t?

Since this is college we treat all students as adults, which is to say that if you don’t want (or can’t) attend a class, that is your decision. However, in the case of discussion class, there is almost always a quiz that you will miss, as well as being regular participation grade points that you are likely to miss out on. As a result of this, not attending a discussion class can pretty seriously impact your overall grade in the course. How much it may impact your grade will depend on the specific grading scheme, which you can locate in the syllabus and/or discuss with your TA (in terms of the participation credit that you may miss). Also keep in mind that, in the majority of cases, quizzes do not get makeups. You can read more about this in the question [Can I makeup a quiz?](#)

5.1.5 If I am going to miss a discussion class, should I let you know? What about the TA?

Your instructor is not involved in most of the details of the discussion class; that is handled by the TA. If you are going to miss a discussion class, you should notify your TA directly. If you miss discussion for a good reason, you should go to the DSO and start the process of getting an excused absence [which you can read about here](#). There is no need to contact the instructor directly; the DSO will do this for you.

5.2 Expectations for Discussion Class

5.2.1 What should we expect to do in a discussion class?

You should expect to do more concrete examples and ‘get your hands dirty’ actually doing problems in discussion class, more so than in lecture. Your discussion classes are designed and administered by your TA, and often a quiz will comprise a decent chunk of the discussion class, however the intent of discussion is to do more hands-on problem solving and to get an idea of how to actually use the mechanics and concepts from lecture in actual applications.

5.2.2 Should I take notes in discussion class?

Taking notes almost never hurts, but most of discussion will involve either doing problems yourselves under the TA supervision, or asking the TA about doing certain problems from homework or lecture that you can’t figure out on your own. If the TA is presenting problems for the class, taking notes is ideal, but otherwise you are likely to be doing problems yourself in which case taking notes would be redundant.

5.2.3 I have questions in discussion, but I’m not really comfortable asking them during class; what should I do?

This is understandable and the hope is that the discussion class, being smaller, should help alleviate any such stress. However, if this is still the case, then the same advice applies as did in the similar question [asking questions in lecture](#). (replacing ‘instructor’ with ‘TA’ where appropriate.)

5.2.4 I feel like my discussion class doesn’t seem to be fulfilling the role you claim it should, what should I do?

Firstly you should address your concerns with your TA. Most TAs genuinely want to help students learn and understand the material, but without feedback it can be difficult for them to adjust their style to be better for their students. Students would likely be amazed at how accommodating a TA is willing to be in terms of what, and how, to present material during discussion class to benefit their students.

If you still have issues however, or there seems to be a personal issue between yourself and the TA, please refer to the question on [what to do if your TA is being unfair](#) for who to talk to.

5.2.5 I wish my TA would do more (insert activity here), should I ask them? Should I bring it up with the instructor?

The TAs are largely in charge of their discussion classes. If there was an activity you really liked in one of the discussion classes, tell your TA and they will likely try to fold it into more lessons. As mentioned in [the previous question](#) TAs generally want to help their students learn and understand, but without feedback it can be hard to know what works and what doesn't work when building lesson plans. This kind of feedback, that you liked some activity a lot, is extremely helpful to them for when they are building future lesson plans.

5.3 Discussion Leaders / TAs

5.3.1 Who is my TA? Are they a professor?

Your TA is (almost always) the person listed for your Tuesday or Thursday meeting of the class. Some students have only this day listed (hybrid students) and if you are an online student then you should see the TA listed along with the instructor for the class together. In any of these cases, your TAs should be indicated in the Canvas Shell for the course, as well.

In almost all cases the TAs for the course are current graduate students in the University of Florida department of mathematics. It is virtually unheard of that your TA would be a professor, or even a "doctor" of mathematics. Most TAs will introduce themselves during the first discussion class with how they would like to be addressed, but if you are not sure, don't hesitate to just ask!

5.3.2 I don't really like my TA, is there any way I can change what section I'm in?

To change sections you must contact the undergraduate coordinator for the mathematics department. Switching sections is almost never done however as sections tend to be filled up pretty quickly and pretty thoroughly, so keep that in mind when requesting a transfer. You can contact the undergraduate coordinator via the email: undergraduatecoordinator@math.ufl.edu.

5.3.3 I have a real problem with my TA on a personal level, what can I do? Who should I talk to?

If you are having a problem with your TA you should first attempt to air your grievance with the TA and see if you can come to some kind of understanding. Often problems are more a product of misunderstandings than actual malicious intent, and they can be cleared up with an honest (but polite and professional) conversation.

However, if you cannot (or are unwilling) to come to an understanding with your TA, you should contact your instructor with your grievance. Your instructor has the capacity to mediate between you and your TA and even take actions as necessary to override the TA. If, in the unlikely event, this still is insufficient, you should read the question on [what to do if you have an issue with your instructor](#).

5.3.4 I think my TA is grading unfairly and everyone else I talk to agrees with me, what are our options?

Often grading issues are due to a misunderstanding and can be cleared up with an honest (but polite and professional) conversation with the TA. Generally the same advice applies as in [the previous question](#) on what to do. First try to work things out with your TA. If that doesn't work (or if you are uncomfortable attempting to do so) go to the instructor. Otherwise, see the question on what to do if [you have an issue with your instructor](#).

5.3.5 I've heard from friends in other sections about how much easier/harder their TA's quizzes are and I think that is really unfair. Who should I talk to about this?

It is important to note that what one person thinks is easy, another person may find nearly impossible, and as such it is surprisingly difficult to write quizzes and exams to be an "appropriate" difficulty (often a TA might think they wrote a really easy problem, only to find that nobody in the class could do it). So you may want to discuss this with your TA to see if they realize the difficulty of the quizzes they have been giving. Also keep in mind that you may be finding your quizzes difficult, and even a large portion of people you know in that section may as well, but the majority of the TAs students may be finding the quizzes too easy; as mentioned, getting a "perfect difficulty" quiz is actually exceptionally difficult.

That being said however, let's assume for a moment that your TA is consistently writing harder quiz questions than other TAs. There are some other considerations you may want to think on before taking steps to try and get the difficulty toned down. This isn't to say you still won't want to take those steps and try to get easier quizzes (and those steps will be mentioned below) but this may not be as helpful as you initially think.

Keep in mind that one of the primary functions of the discussion quizzes is to help you prepare for exams. All the quizzes together are typically worth around the same as one of the several exams, so making quizzes easier may seem like a good way to get more points (or from the other perspective, having much harder quizzes may seem to be losing you more points), but the harder quizzes will prepare you much better for the exams, which contribute considerably more points to your final grade than the quizzes. In essence, having (reasonably) harder quizzes will actually help you earn *more* points in the long run due to better performance on exams during the semester. In contrast, having easier quizzes may make it seem like you are accumulating more points (since you will see better grades on a week by week basis), but it is likely to hurt you more on exams, and thus hurt your final grade more in the long run.

All the above in mind, sometimes a TA just has a poor grasp of the difficulty of the questions (or length) of the quizzes they are giving. After all, designing quizzes is a skill like any other, and this is often one of the first opportunities some of the TAs have had to practice this skill. If you believe this is the case, your best bet is to talk to the TA directly to voice your concerns. Make sure to give specific examples as to what is causing your difficulty; vague comments like "the problems are too hard" doesn't really help the TA fix the issue, since they may not know what is "hard" about the problem. In contrast you might say something like "each problem takes at least 5 minutes to solve, so having 6 problems is too many to do in the 15 minutes we have." or "your

quiz problems seem to require at least 3 or 4 different techniques from class all together. If we forget or mess up one of those techniques, the entire problem becomes a mess and we can't solve it, which causes anxiety and stress and leads to poor grades." These types of feedback are helpful for the TA to know specific aspect of their question design to try and improve upon in future quizzes. The vast majority of the time TAs will try to modify their problems and make better quizzes; after all, almost all TAs are genuinely interested in your education and improvement, so they usually take constructive feedback to heart.

Finally, if you have tried talking to the TA and can't seem to get anywhere with them, and you still genuinely feel like the quizzes or content being asked of you is unreasonable, you should read the question on [what to do if you have issues with your TA](#).

6 Communication

6.1 Communication with Instructor

6.1.1 What kinds of things should I email my instructor directly about?

Generally speaking your instructor is in charge of any official paperwork or communications at the institutional level. For example; DRC paperwork, DSO or progress reporting paperwork, or anything connected to your performance in the course. Additionally the instructor is in charge of course design, exam design, and anything outlined in the syllabus. Finally your instructor is a resource if you are having trouble with other people in the course such as a fellow student or a TA (see the question on [what to do if you have a problem with your TA](#)).

You can also email your instructor general math questions or anything aside from grade-related questions that you might ask your TA. Keep in mind however that there are hundreds of students to each instructor, and only about 60-90 students to a TA, so instructors tend to get vastly more emails than TAs, which means it tends to take longer to get back to everyone than your TA probably would.

6.1.2 Is there anything I should know about writing emails to my instructor (or any Instructor/TA)?

Absolutely. Keep in mind that all emails written at UF should be viewed as professional correspondence. In fact, because UF is a public university, all emails sent and received at a UF email address are public information; meaning that future employers could absolutely request and see emails that you have written from, or to, an @ufl.edu email address, such as emails to your professors or TAs. To this end you should try to be respectful and polite, even while presenting a grievance with your instructors or TAs. Making demands with language like "you will" or "you must" will both hurt your chances of getting what you are after by annoying the email recipient, as well as come across as unprofessional to anyone reading the correspondence. Instructors and TAs deal with an awful lot of unprofessional correspondence from students, and this means that when students take the time to compose their emails professionally it is noticed and goes a long way toward getting your requests considered favorably.

6.1.3 How long should I expect it to take for my instructor to get back to me?

Generally speaking you should allow up to two business days to get a reply from your instructor. Certain times of the semester (such as right before or after a major exam) it may take a little longer due to increased email traffic. Keep in mind that this is an upper limit; sometimes you will email your instructor while they are wrapping up their email queue and get a response within minutes. Sometimes you'll email them and be at the bottom of a pile of a hundred and fifty unread emails they have gotten in the last 24 hours and it could take a couple days before they have the time to get back to everyone that needs it. Don't expect that the response rate will always be the same; a quick reply one time doesn't mean the instructor is ignoring you if they don't reply quickly the next.

6.1.4 I emailed my instructor a week ago and haven't heard anything back. I don't want to nag, but should I email them again?

Due to the volume of email instructors and coordinators tend to get for a given course, it is not unheard of that some emails fall through the cracks and are missed for whatever reason. If you have waited more than four or five business days (roughly a week) feel free to email your instructor again politely mentioning that you are trying to followup on a previous email that you had sent. Most instructors genuinely try to reply to all the emails they get, but the volume of correspondence that happens for some semesters can be quite intense (I have averaged almost seventy new emails every single day across an entire semester before) and sometimes things get missed with no malicious intention. That being said, try to give your instructor time to get back to you; if it's been a day or two don't followup immediately unless it really is time sensitive. If it is time sensitive, then your best bet would be to attend office hours, or try and catch your instructor or TA after class to discuss it with them in person.

6.1.5 I think the instructor is acting unfairly. Is there someone I can contact above them with my concerns?

If you have an issue with the instructor you should first attempt to air that dispute with the instructor themselves. Most instructors/TAs/professors/etc genuinely want to help their students and do the best job they can while teaching, and as such, most conflicts are born more out of a misunderstanding (on the part of either party) rather than genuine disregard or malicious intent. That being said, there are plenty of reasons why attempting to work things out with the instructor may not resolve the conflict. If this is the case, and you genuinely feel like you cannot work out the issue with the instructor themselves, you should contact the coordinator for the course (if they are not the same person as the instructor). You can contact the math department to determine who the coordinator for the course is. If you cannot make headway with the coordinator (or if it is the same person as the instructor that you have issue with) you should contact the undergraduate coordinator whose job is (among many other things) to act as a mediator between the math department faculty and the undergraduate students. You can email the undergraduate coordinator at undergraduatecoordinator@math.ufl.edu. Be sure to give specifics about our grievance and any steps you have already taken in an attempt to resolve the problem yourself as that can help with the process of resolving the problem.

6.2 Communication with TAs

6.2.1 What kinds of things should I email my TA directly about?

Your TA is your main point of contact for almost all grading and math mechanical questions. Your TA has significantly fewer students than your instructor, so you should expect faster turnaround times on average for emails from your TA. Moreover, your TA is the one that grades just about everything that you submit for grading, meaning that they are the one to ask if you aren't sure why you got a particular grade on a specific assignment or problem. Moreover they have significantly more one on one contact with you and know a lot more about your progress and level of ability in the class because they have been grading your work.

In general you want to contact your TA regarding why/how you earned any specific grade, and if you have quick questions (or need faster answers) about any of the mathematics in the course. In contrast your instructor is the one to talk to regarding any official paperwork or progress in the course; especially if you have anything that needs a signature from someone in the course.

6.2.2 How long should I expect it to take for my TA to get back to me?

A good rule of thumb for any correspondence with an instructor or TA is two to three business days. That being said, this is an upper limit on how long it should take to get an email back; most TAs tend to be able to get back to their students within twenty four to thirty six hours, whereas instructors may average closer to forty eight.

6.2.3 I emailed my TA repeatedly and haven't gotten a response, or got a response that I think is unfair/unjustified. What should I do?

First you should talk to your TA about the issue. Most TAs are genuinely invested in your success and helping you do well in the course, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they understand what you are asking them or that they are interpreting your questions or requests the way you think they are. Most problems are an issue of communication, and as such most of the time these issues can be resolved by simply talking to the TA during office hours (or scheduling an additional office hour/meeting time if you don't want to be interrupted by other students) to carefully discuss your issue and make sure you are both on the same page. That being said, obviously this isn't always the case; sometimes there is a genuine issue between a student and a TA. In this case you should contact the instructor directly with your issue. Make sure to include as many details about your grievance as possible, and include any steps you have taken yourself to rectify the problem. The more detail you can provide, the better your instructor can try to resolve the issue. Keep in mind that it will take some time for the instructor to determine what is going on, and to take any necessary steps, but be assured that the math department in general, and the instructors in particular, take these things seriously and we try our best to resolve any issues to the benefit of everyone involved.

6.2.4 The TA seems to be ignoring my emails and/or the issue I am trying to address with them. Do I have recourse above that TA?

Yes you do. You should read the answer about what to do if [your TA is being unfair or you cannot get a satisfactory answer to a question](#). In short, you should contact your instructor with as much detail about the problem you are having as you can, along with any steps you have already taken in an attempt to rectify the situation yourself.

6.3 Communication with other Students

6.3.1 I would like to communicate with other students directly to work on projects and/or form a study group. I can't seem to find the contact info they gave me, can I get it from my TA/instructor?

Technically it is illegal for any person working for the university to give you contact information of any student at the university. This violates federal law; the "FERPA" act. So, the short answer, is no we cannot.

6.3.2 Is there some way I can discuss issues with other students from other discussion classes in an open way, maybe on Canvas?

There are discussion forums on Canvas that most instructors allow students access to for these kinds of things. This can be a good way to discuss something that you think is a class-wide issue (good or bad) and get feedback from other students, as well as TAs and/or instructors.

6.3.3 I have an issue with another student, they are being aggressive and/or inappropriate to me. What can I do?

You should contact your instructor as soon as possible to report this behavior. Please give as many details as you are comfortable with, and depending on the nature of the behavior, the instructor will take appropriate actions. If the other students are acting aggressive and/or threatening and you have any fear for your immediate safety you should instead call 911 and report the behavior immediately.

6.3.4 I am concerned with a fellow student, they seem depressed and/or in trouble. What can I do?

UF has a network for exactly this purpose called "U-Matter We Care". You can find their website here: <https://umatter.ufl.edu/>. They will help you make the ideal people know about your concerns for the student in question, and can do so anonymously in case you don't want to be involved in the situation on any level. If you see something, please say something to the U-Matter group, we want all our students to succeed and have a positive and healthy experience at UF.

6.4 Communication with Math Department

6.4.1 I have concerns that I would like to address with the math department directly, how do I do so?

Note that rarely should a student need to contact the math department directly about anything related to the class they are taking. More commonly a student might need to do so regarding an issue about taking (or determining which) class in a future semester, in which case you should see the question about [who to talk to about advice for future math classes](#).

That being said, if you feel you need to discuss something with the math department, then the person to contact is the mathematics department undergraduate coordinator, who is the point of

contact for undergraduate students. See the question about [who the undergraduate coordinator is, and how to contact them](#).

6.4.2 Where is the math department?

The Math Department is located in Little Hall on the third floor on the east side of the building (the access is toward the center of the building however).

6.4.3 I have questions regarding advising for future math classes; is there someone I can talk to?

There are two types of questions that students typically have; which course would be ideal for them from a mathematics perspective (eg “am I ready to take calculus if I only get a C in this course” type questions), or which course should they take in order to get to a certain course for their major (eg “do I need calculus three to take linear algebra?” or “is calculus three required for my major?” type questions).

In most cases, the person you will want to talk to is the undergraduate coordinator of the course; see the question on [who is the undergraduate coordinator](#). If you are looking for general advice about how the current course relates to future courses, or what math courses to take given a specific interest (eg “I really enjoyed learning about derivatives, what other math courses do more with this?”, or “I’m thinking about changing to a math major, what courses should I take to see if this is right for me?”) then your instructor or the math undergraduate coordinator will be able to discuss the generalities with you. Note that the undergraduate coordinator is the only one that can help you get into specific classes and/or discuss actual concrete math course progression plans for your major; see the question on [who to talk to if you are having issues getting into a specific course](#) for more details.

6.4.4 I seem to be having trouble getting access to a specific math course, is there someone in the math department I should talk to?

If you are trying to get into a specific course, or if you want to switch section of a course you are in, the only person that can help you (in the math department) is the undergraduate coordinator. See the question on [who is the undergraduate coordinator](#) for more details about who the undergraduate coordinator is and how to contact them.

In particular, your instructor might be able to suggest which courses to consider to pursue interests or continue your math education (although they will not necessarily know how that might fit into your graduation timeline for your specific major), but the undergraduate coordinator is the one that can actually place you in relevant courses, potentially open more sections, or do any of the other things that might help you get into a specific course in a specific semester. Keep in mind however that the undergraduate coordinator doesn’t have fiat power; they can’t always get you into the course you want, but they are just about the only one in the math department that has the authority to try.

6.4.5 Who is the undergraduate coordinator and how can I contact them?

The undergraduate coordinator is a math instructor who is specifically appointed to help undergraduate students with everything from advising on course selection to problems getting into classes, to mediating issues between faculty and undergraduate students. If your issue requires assistance at a different level (either outside of the math department or someone else within the math department) the undergraduate coordinator will know that too, and direct you to the proper person to discuss your issue with and, depending on the circumstances, contact that person on your behalf as well.

The person in the roll of undergraduate coordinator of the math department changes periodically, but they have dedicated contact information that will reach the current undergraduate coordinator whomever that might be. Their email is **undergraduatecoordinator@math.ufl.edu**. You can also find more out about the current mathematics undergraduate coordinator at the mathematics department administration webpage found at: <https://math.ufl.edu/people/administration/>.