

ATYP 2026-27 Algebra I Syllabus

Wednesdays 1:20-3:50pm

Classroom: Sangren 4320

Instructor

Theo Niemann (He/They)

Office Hours: By Appointment

Contact: theodore.niemann@wmich.edu (email me whatever, whenever)

Website

go.wmich.edu

Use to access **eLearning** for our course, your **WMU email**, and Help **Session Meetings**

You should be checking your WMU email frequently and use this email to communicate with me

Supplies for Class

Textbook (provided): *Algebra I, Prentice Hall Mathematics High School Math Series by Bellman, Bragg, Charles, Hall Handlin & Kennedy, 2007*

Calculator: The TI-83 or TI-84 graphing calculator. While there are several topics that this calculator will be necessary for, the primary goal of this course is for the students to develop solid skills and comprehension of the Algebra I material using paper-and-pencil. (Note: some parts of the Final exam do not allow calculator use).

Graph Notebook: for in-class notes and exercises.

Loose Leaf Grid Paper: for a headstart on homework if class time permits

Folder or Binder: to stay organized and hold all relevant course materials.

Pencil(s) and eraser: Math should be completed in pencil, not pen or marker. Mistakes happen and should be easily correctable.

Scanner App: to scan in weekly homework assignments (I like CamScanner or Adobe Scan)

Ruler (optional) to be used for drawing straight lines.

Highlighter and/or Colored Pencils (optional) can be useful in identifying important information in graphs or drawing attention to specific parts of notes/homework.

Stapler (optional)

Three-Hole-Punch (optional)

Highlighted items in the list above will be available in class for student use

Grading Scale

A (80 - 99%)

B (70 - 79%)

C (60 – 69%).

40% - **Homework**

40% - **Exams**

15% - **Quizzes and In-Class Activities**

5% - **Class Participation**

To obtain credit for the course, students are expected to perform satisfactorily in all categories and averages must meet the minimum requirements.

Homework grades falling below 60% three times indicates that the program might not be suited to the student. A conference between the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the teacher will be arranged.

Exams

Each Exam grade is weighted equally with the average of the previous six homework grades. Exam 1 and Exam 2 are written by the instructor. The Final Exam is the Michigan Standardized Exam covering all Algebra I content.

Homework

→ Mastery comes from practice, i.e., **doing homework problems – on a daily basis.**

Concepts and skills are honed through study and completing homework assignments on time.

Before attempting HW problems from the new section, **read the section for understanding and review your notes from class.** Expect to spend an hour a day on your homework.

→ Show all of your work and give detailed, complete answers on all of your assignments and exams to earn full credit. Your work is what matters, not the answer. **Answers with little or no work to support them usually receive at best half credit, sometimes less.** Showing your work allows us to give partial credit if your answer is incorrect and makes disconnects in your understanding more clear. In your career, you will almost always be expected to justify your work. Start now where we can help with feedback.

→ Homework is due each week **at 9pm the night before our class.** Please submit a PDF digital scan (using an app like Adobe Scan or CamScanner) to eLearning. For the first few weeks, you will also hand in the physical copy of your homework at the beginning of class. Specific, individual due dates are outlined in the homework schedule on eLearning.

→ Formatting is an important part of communicating mathematics, and students are awarded points for clarity on every homework grade. Start each problem by writing the problem number on the left of the margin. Box up or circle your final answer. Clearly label each section and each problem number. Show steps/methods on separate lines. If an answer comes from your calculator, state clearly the procedure you used and/or draw a sketch of your graphing screen. Use a ruler for straight lines. Put your name on the top right-hand corner and the week number below that. If I cannot read your work or find your work, I cannot grade it and provide you feedback. A sample document lives in eLearning to demonstrate formatting expectations.

→ Homework will be graded in a timely fashion each week with instructor feedback. This may be a sampling of the problems or all of them. To assist in feedback to the student, the assignments have an overlap of sections from one week to the next.

→ Students are encouraged to take risks, to make mistakes and to learn from them. Once homework has been graded, you may synthesize instructor feedback by turning in homework corrections and earn back **all missed points.** Corrections must be done on an entirely different sheet of paper and the original homework included. Each corrected problem should be identified by the section number and problem number. **Corrections on all homeworks will be accepted up until the second to last week of the semester. Corrections are never required, but always encouraged!**

→ With feedback and corrections, turning in anything is better than turning in nothing. **Late homework can be turned in the following week if you email me before the start of class to let me know your plan to get it in.** If you don't email me, or if a week later, if homework is still missing, parents/guardians will be notified. One should not make a habit of completing homework late. A conference between the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the teacher will be arranged for students who are turning in homework late more than once or twice.

Class Time

Exact order may vary, but these procedures can be expected:

- Addressing homework problems students found difficult. If a student has difficulty with more than three questions, an email should be sent to me before class starts.
- Discussions covering new topics
- Group Activities/Exercises for practice/mastery
- Corrections/Revisions on previous homework (time permitting)
- Mastery Quiz (time permitting)

Other Important Academic Considerations:

- One of the most important aspects of this class is the need for clear, logical and concise communication of algebraic concepts. **A correct answer to a problem is not the end by itself – I seek for the flow of reasoning in arriving at the answer. Students should be asking: What properties allow me to do that? What operations do I use? Is the answer reasonable?**
- Every homework problem assigned should be completed. Do not give up on a difficult problem. Chances are, those are probably the most important ones. Discuss with a classmate, seek help from a parent or ask for assistance by contacting me. There are a variety of ways we can effectively communicate outside of our class time for support!
- Please be reminded that being absent for ATYP is the equivalent of missing an entire week of your home school. Experience has shown that skipping a week proves to have a negative effect on student overall class performance and final grade.

AI Policy

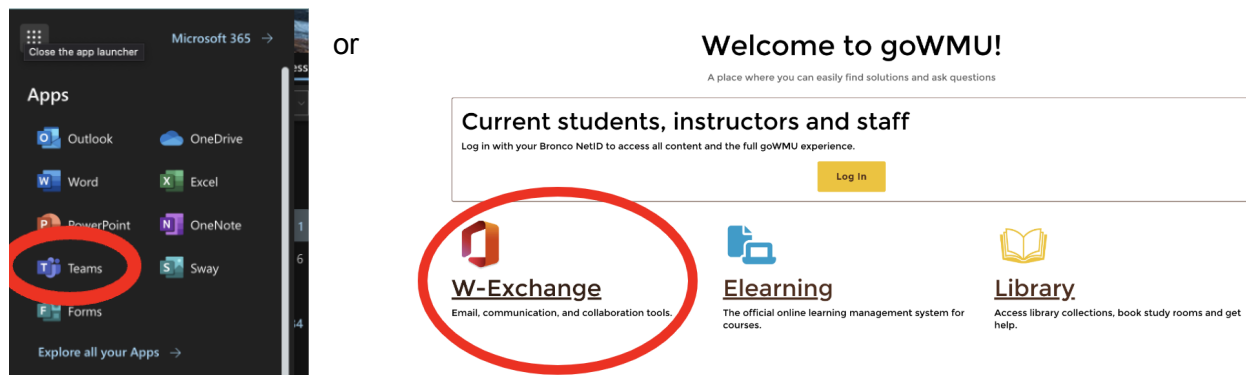
Tools such as Chat GPT, photomath, Gauth AI, Wolfram Alpha, etc. should not be used by students for this class. The expectation is any work you do and any assignment you submit is your own work. Use of unauthorized tools is an issue of academic dishonesty. Action will be sought by the university regarding any such events.

We are in the classroom to learn, communicate, and try with each other—something using AI tools robs not just you, but also your classmates of. The prevalence of AI usage clarifies that your thinking is what matters most: expect me to ask you questions about your process. As your instructor, I would rather receive work that demonstrates errors in understanding than work that gets to the right answer without any coherent logic. Experts become experts by learning from their mistakes. AI offloads mistakes for later in your math career. Take me up on unlimited homework corrections and opportunities for exam corrections, or go to help sessions. When you need help, you're surrounded by classmates and instructors who you can ask. Chances are, if you need help, so does someone else.

That being said, I understand AI usage in the classroom is often a bandaid fix to bigger issues, so I am offering every student **two "I was going to use AI but..." passes** where twice per semester you can email me for a similar level of convenience you might turn to AI. I'll give you detailed help with your homework, 1 on 1 instruction with any lesson, a deadline extension, corrections before submitting, or some other kind of homework help, no penalty, no questions asked.

Help Sessions

Students are highly encouraged to attend help sessions. Help sessions can be accessed on Microsoft Teams. Teams can be located a number of ways. An extremely easy way to access Teams is through the waffle in the upper left-hand corner of your WMU Outlook email or through goWMU (see below). You will locate the Team titled “Math Help Session 2025-26.”



For students who wish to, attendance can be recorded and students can earn dropped assignments or quizzes. Students may count up to one help session per week toward the following totals:

- 8 help sessions attended = 1 (lowest) homework dropped
- 15 help sessions attended = 1 (lowest) homework dropped AND 1 (lowest) quiz score dropped

Students **must** complete the [Help Session Attendance Check-in](#) within an hour of attending each help session. I will cross reference these submissions with the data provided by Teams and the tutors. Students are expected to spend at least 30 minutes in attendance, and ask at least one question while attending the help session toward the dropped assignments.

Help sessions run Sundays 4-6pm, and Mondays and Tuesdays? 7-8pm.

You can contact the help session tutors at todd.ellis@mac.com and isabelle.tai@wmich.edu

Course Topic Outline

- Variables and Algebraic Expressions
- Real Numbers and their Properties: Natural Numbers, Whole Numbers, Integers, Rational and Irrational Numbers
- Solving Equations/Inequalities & Solving Systems of Equations/Inequalities
- Families of Functions: Approached through four ways of representing functions (Words, Tables, Algebraic Expressions, Graphs)
 - ◆ Linear
 - ◆ Absolute Value
 - ◆ Exponential
 - ◆ Polynomial
 - ◆ Quadratic
 - ◆ Radical
 - ◆ Rational
- Number Patterns and Sequences
- Variations and Functions
- Statistics
 - ◆ Central Tendency: Mean, Median, Mode, Range
 - ◆ Scatter Plots and Linear Regression
 - ◆ Probability
 - ◆ Permutations and Combinations

This document is living and subject to change throughout the semester. The most up to date version will live on the course's eLearning page.