

# Information sheet for Math 204 Fall 2015

**Class meets:** MTRF 9:00 - 9:50 am in BH 217

**Instructor:** Branko Ćurgus

**Office:** BH 178

**Hours:** MTRF 10 am

**Email:** curgus@wwu.edu

**Course website:** [http://faculty.wwu.edu/curgus/Courses/204\\_201540/204.html](http://faculty.wwu.edu/curgus/Courses/204_201540/204.html)

**Text:** *Linear algebra and its applications, Third edition* by David C. Lay

**Material covered:** We will cover Sections 1.1-1.5, 1.7-1.10, 2.1-2.5, 2.7, 3.1-3.2, 4.1-4.7, 5.1-5.3.

**Technology:** For classroom demonstrations I will use the computer algebra system *Mathematica*. I will use version 5.2 which is available on many campus computers. I will provide basic information on how to use it and welcome questions about it during my office hours. I would like to encourage you to start using *Mathematica* since I believe that it will enhance your understanding of math that you are studying. However, you can succeed in class without using any technology. Many calculators have the capacity to perform matrix algebra which can be helpful when there are tedious computations to perform. As with *Mathematica*, you will benefit from learning how to use a calculator. In the Math Center in BH 211A you can get help from students who are calculator experts. Calculators are allowed but not required on exams; my exams are technology independent.

**Course Objectives:** The successful student will demonstrate: (1) Ability to translate between systems of linear equations, vector equations and matrix equations; (2) Understanding of the concept of (reduced) row echelon form of a matrix and ability to perform elementary row operations to reduce a matrix to its reduced row echelon form; (3) Ability to use (2) to solve equations from (1) and answer related existence and uniqueness questions; (4) Understanding of the concepts of linear combination and span; (5) Ability to represent the solution set of a system of linear equations in parametric vector form and understand the geometry of the solution set; (6) Understanding of linear dependence and independence of sets of vectors; (7) Understanding of linear transformations defined algebraically and geometrically, and ability to find the standard matrix of a linear transformation; (8) Ability to perform matrix operations including computation of the inverse and determinant of a matrix; (9) Knowledge of all aspects of the Invertible Matrix Theorem; (10) Understanding of the notions of a vector space and its subspaces and knowledge of their defining properties; (11) Knowledge of the definitions of a basis for and the dimension of a vector space, and ability to compute coordinates in terms of a given basis and to find the change of basis transformation between two given bases; (12) Ability to find bases for the row, column, and null spaces of a matrix, find their dimensions, and knowledge of the Rank Theorem; (13) Ability to find eigenvalues and eigenvectors of a matrix; (14) Knowledge of the Diagonalization Theorem and ability to diagonalize a matrix.

**Exams:** There will be three “mid-term” exams and a comprehensive final exam. The dates for the “mid-term” exams are Tuesday, October 13, Tuesday, November 3 and Tuesday, November 24. The final exam is scheduled for *three hours* on Monday, December 7 from 8am to 11am. There will be no make-up exams. If you are unable to take an exam for a very serious reason verified in writing, please see me beforehand. This does not apply to the final exam which cannot be taken neither early nor late.

**Homework:** A list of suggested homework problems will be posted daily on the class website. Homework will not be collected. To succeed in class you should do each problem on your own. While working on problems you should recognize which theoretical tools are being used to solve a particular problem. As a result you will acquire general problem solving strategies, which is one of the goals of higher education. Incidentally, this will also lead to your success on exams.

**Grading:** Each exam and assignment will be graded by an integer between 0 and 100. Your final grade will be determined using the following formula

$$FG = \lceil 0.2 * E1 + 0.2 * E2 + 0.2 * E3 + 0.4 * FE \rceil.$$

In the above formula the symbol  $\lceil x \rceil$  denotes the ceiling of a real number  $x$ . Your letter grade will be assigned according to the following table:

F : 0 - 49	D : 50 - 54	C- : 55 - 59	C : 60 - 64	C+ : 65 - 69
B- : 70 - 74	B : 75 - 79	B+ : 80 - 84	A- : 85 - 89	A : 90 - 100

**This course** is an extremely fast-paced course. A lot of new concepts will be introduced. It takes time to internalize these concepts. Therefore it is essential that you keep up with the material presented every day; do the homework problems; look for help if you encounter difficulties.

**How to succeed:** Doing well in mathematics depends on understanding not memorizing. Exercise critical thinking while reading the text and doing the problems since understanding cannot be achieved through superficial studying. Talking to other students is a good way to check your understanding. If you feel that you are not on your way to understanding the material do not hesitate to ask questions. Use the Math Center in BH 211A. I will be glad to talk to you during my office hours, or you can make an appointment.