

OVERVIEW OF THE COMBINATION COURSE Mat-009/013A

The combination Mat-009/013A course allows students to combine the Basic Mathematics (Mat-010) requirement with the first part of the Algebra I (Mat-013A) requirement. Students are selected for this course on the basis of their Accuplacer scores on the computation and algebra sections. (A table of these cutoff scores can be found in this manual under the Placement and Results section). Students who successfully complete this combination course are required to take the second half of the Algebra I course, Mat-013B, in order to fulfill their Algebra I requirement.

Rationale

Traditionally, students who do not reach the cut-off score on the algebra and computation portion of the Accuplacer exam take an entire semester of Basic Mathematics (Mat-010, a 3 contact-hour course). Following the successful completion of Mat-010, with a grade of C or better, students take a one-semester Algebra I course (Mat-013). For many of these students the full semester of Mat-010 is more than they need (some get so bored that they walk away) and the one semester of Mat-013 is too fast (some have so much difficulty that they walk away). It seems logical to shorten the basic mathematics part and lengthen the algebra part over two semesters. Following the successful completion of Mat-009/013A, students register for Mat-013B in order to fulfill their algebra requirement.

Format

The students in the combination course will be learning Mat-013A in a scheduled course that meets twice a week. They will be purchasing the text for the Mat-013A course. The Mat-013A instructor will probably have time to weave in some basic mathematics skills into his or her lesson. (Suggestions for doing this are included in the Mat-009/013A outline and syllabus). In general the meetings for this class are used for algebra.

In order to complete the basic mathematics requirement, students will be working on Mat-009 (a one contact-hour version of Mat-010) using a software package called Aleks. Students must purchase the Alex student kit in the bookstore before the second day of class. The student's skill level is assessed and then students are led through the program as they master the skills they are lacking. This part of the course has a lab component (time spent on task using the software), a quiz component and a cumulative final exam component. Students are required to sign up for working in the Developmental Mathematics Lab/Tutoring Center for 1 hour per week for a 6-week period. They will also be able to work on the program from any computer off-campus.

The Role of the Instructor

The instructor of the Mat-009/013A course will be teaching the algebra portion of the course as he or she ordinarily would, reviewing some basic mathematics in the first six weeks, if possible. The instructor is also the overseer of the progress of the student in the basic mathematics part of the course, responsible for making sure the students are on task by checking reports available in Aleks. The lab faculty will help move the student along and is totally aware of the requirements of the Mat-009 course. It is the instructor who gives the midterm and final grade in Mat-009.

Mechanics of the Course

A full explanation of the mechanics of the course is included in this manual and a hard copy will be put in your mailbox.

Questions and Concerns

If you have never taught a combination course before, or even if you have, this might seem overwhelming at first. Please feel free to contact Susan Shulman (Ext 3734), Claire Vassiliadis, (Ext 3115) or Dr. Maria DeLucia, Chairperson, with any questions or concerns you might have. The lab faculty will also be happy to answer any questions you have.