

STUDENT GUIDE FOR MAT-009 COMBINATION COURSE Fall 2009

Congratulations! As a result of your Math Accuplacer scores you have been given the opportunity of registering in Mat-009/013(A), which is a combination of Basic Mathematics (Mat-010) and Algebra 1 (Mat-013 or Mat-013A). However, to successfully complete this combination course, it is necessary for you to understand the course and know your responsibilities.

What is the Mat-009/013(A) combination course all about?

- Mat-013 or Mat-013A is a beginning algebra course that meets twice a week in a traditional classroom setting.
- Mat-009 is a short, concentrated course, lasting approximately 6-7 weeks, during which your Basic Mathematics skills are assessed and a computerized individual study plan is set up for you.

What are your responsibilities?

- For approximately the first six or seven weeks of the semester you will agree to learn, on your own time, the Basic Mathematics skills you are lacking or need to brush-up on while using an online computer software package called ALEKS.
- You will agree to commit 1 hour per week (total 6 hours) to work on ALEKS and take the necessary ALEKS generated quizzes in a math lab.
- While attending class during your regular class time, you will be concentrating on learning the Algebra portion (Mat-013 or Mat-013A) of the combination.
- Although you are working on the Basic Mathematics skills on your own time, your instructor will be going over some Mat-009 Basic Mathematics concepts during the Algebra portion of the class and review some of the more challenging skills, as well as overseeing the progress you are making on ALEKS.
- Because Mat-009/013(A) is a combination course, at the end of the 6 weeks you must successfully complete the Mat-009 portion of the course with a grade of 'C' or better to continue with Mat-013 or Mat-013A studies. If you are not passing the Mat-009 portion of the course by the week of October 19, you will not be allowed to take the final exam and you will be administratively withdrawn from the algebra portion of the course.

What is ALEKS?

- ALEKS is the software program that you will be using to master the Basic Mathematics skills needed to successfully complete Mat-009 with a final grade of 'C' or higher which will allow you to continue to study algebra.
- **You will need an ALEKS code in order to use the software for the course. The code will be in a package that you can purchase at the MCC bookstore. The package will include the algebra text, *Introductory Algebra*, by Hyde, O'Neill and Hyde, second edition, published by McGraw-Hill, the ALEKS access code that will be used in Mat-009 and again in the algebra component of the course after Mat-009 has been completed. There will also be an access code in your package for MathZone, that will probably be optional).**

You must purchase this package by the second class meeting. You will have a lab and ALEKS orientation on the second-class meeting and you will need the access code to get started.

- Immediately upon creating a student account ALEKS will generate an Assessment Test. Based on the problems you answered correctly and incorrectly, ALEKS will create a personalized plan of study for you.
- ALEKS will show your outcome of the assessment test as a pie graph that has been divided into four sections called Intermediate Objectives. They are:
 - 1) Whole Numbers
 - 2) Fractions
 - 3) Decimals, Ratio, Proportions, And Percents
 - 4) Geometry
- Each section of the pie will be shaded or not shaded indicating which skills you need to work on. Your goal is to completely shade your pie. ALEKS will be recording your progress on your pie in a graph to be viewed by you and your instructor. The percent of your pie that has been completed by the end of the six weeks will count as 20% of your final Mat-009 grade.
- ALEKS wants you to be successful so it is designed not to allow you to work on any skills until you have mastered the prerequisite skills. Your instructor will give you suggested completion dates for each of the sectors of the pie.
- Your instructor and/or the lab faculty will explain how to work on ALEKS so that you master the skills you need to complete your pie graph.

How many Quizzes will I be required to take?

- During the next 6 weeks you will be required to take an ALEKS Mastery Quiz (on the computer in the Math Lab, MH-142) that coincides with each of the four sectors of your pie.
 - Mastery Quiz #1 is on Whole Numbers
 - Mastery Quiz #2 is on Fractions
 - Mastery Quiz #3 is on Decimals, Ratios, Proportions and Percents
 - Mastery Quiz #4 is on Geometry

IMPORTANT NOTE

Even though there is a tab called quizzes, the practice and mastery quizzes will not be accessible under this tab. Instead, these quizzes are found under the tab labeled 'Homeworks'. The reason for this is that the Aleks system is programmed to make students take assessments categorized as quizzes at a certain time, rather than during a time interval. Since this format did not work for our purposes, we had to list quizzes under the Homework tab. Please remind your students of this idiosyncrasy.

- There will be both Practice Quizzes and Mastery Quizzes. Although the Practice Quizzes will not be part of your grade you **must** take at least one practice quiz for each before you take the Mastery Quiz to be sure you have mastered all the skills needed for that objective. Many students try to rush to take the mastery quizzes and forget about the practice quizzes. This is a very bad idea. Students who do not take enough practice quizzes to insure that they know the

material, often do poorly on the mastery quiz. **Mastery quizzes, unlike practice quizzes, are allowed to be taken only one time.**

- The 4 Mastery Quizzes **must** be taken one at a time, in the Math Lab, MH-142 according to the Quiz Schedule dates given to you by your instructor.
- Before taking any mastery quiz, you must call over one of the lab faculty staff to show that you have completed a practice quiz that indicates that you are proficient in the skills you are working on. The lab faculty person will tell you if you can proceed to the mastery quiz. After you have completed the mastery quiz and before you click on the submit button, you will alert a lab faculty member who will permit you to sign and date the 'Quiz Sheet' which will be sent to your instructor.
- The Quizzes will count as 30% of your final Mat-009 grade. **To get credit for the Quiz you must take each Quiz in the Math Lab and sign the 'Quiz Sheet.'**

When is the Final Exam for Mat-009?

- At the end of the Basic Mathematics portion of the course, during the week of October 19, the cumulative final exam for Mat-009 will be administered by your instructor in your regular classroom.
- You will be **permitted** to take the final exam only if you have taken the 4 quizzes in the Math Lab.
- You must achieve a grade of 65% or higher on the final exam in order to pass the course.
- The Mat-009 final exam will count as 50% of your Mat-009 final Exam.

What are the requirements needed to pass Mat-009?

*To successfully complete Mat-009, you must earn an average of 70% (which is a grade of 'C') or higher. Your grade will be determined as follows:

- ✓ 20% - of the percent of your pie graph that you completed
- ✓ 30% - of the average of the 4 Mastery Quizzes taken and submitted in the Math Lab
- ✓ 50% - of the achieved grade of 65% or higher on the Mat-009 Final Exam

***A passing grade of 'C' or better is needed in Mat-009 to remain in Mat-013 or Mat-013A. If you have not passed with a 'C' or better, you will be administratively withdrawn from the Mat-013 or Mat-013A portion of the class and advised to register for the traditional Mat-010, Basic Mathematics course for the next semester.**

Day #1 of Class

- On the first day of class your instructor will explain the format of the Mat-009/013(A) course to you and your responsibilities.
- You will be given a syllabus, course outline and a contract to sign.
- You will be asked to think about your school and work schedule or any other time commitments you may have before choosing the required one hour per week for the next six weeks to work on ALEKS in the Math Computer Lab.
- Keep in mind that it may be necessary for you to spend more than the required 6 hours to fully learn the basic skills you need to successfully pass Mat-009. However, one of the advantages

of this program is that you may work on ALEKS on any computer with Internet access on or off campus for as much time as you need above the six mandatory hours to become proficient with the Basic Mathematics skills.

Day #2 of Class

- On the second day of class you will be meeting in your regularly scheduled classroom and shortly after your instructor will take you to a math lab for orientation to Aleks and the lab rules.
- You will **bring the ALEKS access code** that came packaged with your text with you to the Math Lab and a lab faculty member will guide you through creating a personal ALEKS account. Make sure that you have this code with you by the second class meeting.
- You will then take an ALEKS assessment test (on the computer.) The ALEKS assessment test will take approximately 30-45 minutes and must be completed once it has begun. (You will not be able to re-take the assessment test.)
- Your assessment test results will show you in a pie graph what Basic Mathematics skills you already know and the skills you need to work on and master in order to receive the grade of ‘C’ or higher required to pass the course.
- Before leaving the Math Lab, you will indicate the weekly hour you have committed to work in the Math Lab on the ‘Sign-Up’ sheet.

Rest of the Semester

- You will be working on two courses at once until you have completed the Mat-009 course (by approximately October 23)
- You will be attending the lab at least one hour a week to work on Mat-009 and regularly attending your algebra class. **Do NOT** go to the lab instead of going to your algebra class at the scheduled time.
- Once you have completed Mat-009, you will continue with your algebra part of the course
- Your Aleks code will still be active and you will be switched into an algebra on Aleks instead of Basic Mathematics once the Mat-009 course is completed. The work on Aleks in your Algebra class will also count as part of your Algebra final grade.