

## Course Syllabus – MA 090 Beginning Algebra

**Class Time and Location:** 7:00 PM, Monday & Wednesday, WS3602

Instructor: Roger Contois ([rcontois@nmu.edu](mailto:rcontois@nmu.edu))  
Office and Phone: NSF – Room 1005; 227-1841 or 227-2020  
Home phone (evenings only) 228-8211  
Office Hours: 5 – 6:30 PM – M W,  
Others by appointment

### Course Objective:

The main objective of this course is to develop mathematical skills, both in problem solving and critical thinking, that will serve as the foundation for subsequent mathematics courses and provide a valid experience in the mathematics that may be needed for other fields of study.

### Requirements:

1. Attendance is required and will be taken daily. If you have more than 4 unexcused absences\* and your final average is on the borderline, you will receive the lower grade. Remember, each evening class counts double since it meets for 2 periods. In case of an illness or other emergency that would result in class absence, you will be responsible for keeping up with assignments.
2. Homework will be assigned daily and must be completed daily to get full benefit of the course. The course material is nontraditional, and usually all of the problems in a section will be assigned. I suggest you keep homework problems in one notebook and class notes in another.
3. Occasionally you will be assigned to a group to do exploration-type problems. The group may have to meet outside of class time to finish the work. Every student must participate in group-work and I require a signature from each person when the group solution to the assignment is submitted. The problems will count toward a quiz grade and each person in the group will get the same grade. These assignments will be due as announced in class. As with quizzes, it usually is not possible to make-up a missed group assignment.
4. Quizzes will be given often (and not necessarily announced) and there may be group-work problems, and graded take-home assignments that together will account for an equivalent of 1 exam. Quiz questions will often come directly from homework assignments and your homework notebook is the **only** access you will have to those problems. (**So, do your homework in a notebook separate from your book and class notes!**) No make-up quizzes will be given even for excused absences.
5. Tests will be given at the end of each chapter. Tests will cover reading, homework, and concepts discussed in class. **You must take tests at their scheduled times and no make-up is possible for any test unless you notify me before test time. A documented excuse is necessary in order to take a make-up test.**
6. There will be a comprehensive final exam during the last week of class and will equal 2 test grades.

\*If you call to explain the absence, it may be considered an “excused” absence.

**Approximate Grading Scale:**

A: 90-100%; B: 80-89%; C: 70-79%; D: 60-69%; F: <60%

Note: Most of the assessment is through written work. However, instructor observations of individuals in the group-work process may play a minor role in evaluation.

**Final Exam:**

Students who have missed no more than 4 hours of class (no more than 2 hours may be unexcused) **and** have an 80% average or above after all quizzes and chapter exams may skip the final exam and receive their current score as their grade in the class. If you miss more than two classes (4 class hours), please don't ask to skip the final. **As this class meets for 2 hours per time, each absence = 2 class absences!**

**Required materials:**

1. Text: *Beginning Algebra, Once and For All*, by Jane Jamsen and Gwen Hetler, Kendall Hunt, 2002
2. Calculator: Any **scientific calculator** will do. A graphing calculator is not necessary.

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**Material to be covered:**

Chapters 1 through 6 and part of chapter 7.

**Other Notes:**

The Math Lab will be open by the second week of the semester. The schedule will be posted on the door of the Math Lab as well as in the Math Office. All-Campus Tutoring service usually begins the third or fourth week of the semester, but they have a limited number of math tutors since that service provides tutors in all subjects. However, All-Campus Tutoring is available in the evening hours when the Math Lab is typically closed.

I prefer you see me before or after class (or during office hours) if you have questions or concerns about the material or the class, in general. If you need to see me at other times, you will have to get in touch with me to make an appointment.

If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Disability Services Office at 1104 University Center (227-1737). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state, and University guidelines.