Dear Math 150 Student,

Howdy! Welcome to Texas A&M University and to Math 150. I am excited to get to know you and work with you this semester. I love teaching students mathematics. In this guide you will find words of wisdom, your first assignments, and answers to frequently asked questions.

Supplies: Our textbook is an online text which you will access through WebAssign, our online homework system. See http://www.math.tamu.edu/courses/eHomework/ to access WebAssign. You will need to purchase an account access code directly from WebAssign online during the first two weeks of class. After that, you risk being locked out of the system and missing important assignments. Please put your name on your belongings (textbook, notes, etc.); you would be surprised at how often students leave their belongings in class. Please do not try to access WebAssign before classes start; please wait until September 1. You will need 4 of standard Aggie Scantron forms, a #2 pencil and an eraser.

Web Site: Please visit my personal web site to see what is available. On my web site you will find my office hours, the Math 150 first day handout (syllabus), your Math 150 contract, many resources, and Week-In-Review (WIR) problems. I suggest you do the WIR problems before attending the WIR or looking at the solutions.

Personal web page: http://www.math.tamu.edu/~sherry.scarborough/
My Math 150 web page: http://www.math.tamu.edu/~sherry.scarborough/150topics.html

Bring to Class: On Monday, September 1st you will need to bring to class your Math 150 Chapter 1 notes, which can be found in Howdy eCampus Math 150. Always bring the appropriate chapter notes with you to class so you can work the problems along with me. On all class days you will need your notes, your TAMU student ID, a pencil and the knowledge of your Math 150 section number. In fact you can sometimes get points for correctly indicating your section number on certain assignments!

Attendance: You are required to attend ALL classes, including recitation, for the full time allotted. It is hard to understand why a student would choose to handicap him or her-self by not attending his/her class, especially a math class, for the full amount of time. Plus you could miss an in-class quiz, and leaving early or arriving late would be disruptive to others in the class. Please realize that I know that sometimes there are extenuating one-time circumstances and we would rather have you part of the time than none of the class time. Please get your investment (time, and yours or somebody's money) out of this class by attending class and recitation, asking questions, attending office hours, and doing the week-in-review problems provided online.

Recitation: On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays you will have lecture class with me. On either Tuesday or Thursday (depending upon your section) you will have recitation with a teaching assistant (TA). Our teaching assistants often come from around the world as this is an internationally-known university. At first it may take some time getting comfortable with your TA’s accent. You can be a big help by asking him/her to repeat what he/she said, to ask him/her to speak louder, or ask him/her to write it on the board. On the other hand, he/she can be a big help for you since he/she knows his/her math! During the very first recitation on the first week of school, you will have an opportunity to ask your TA questions about him/herself so you can get to know each other better.

Yes, you have recitation the first week of class. In recitation, you will get answers to your questions and you will be taking quizzes. For your regular exams, you will be taking part of your exam in recitation and part of your exam in lecture. The exam in lecture will be work-out, and you will have to show all appropriate work to receive full credit. The exam in recitation will be multiple-choice, and there will be no partial credit. You will need a standard Aggie Scantron form for your recitation exams (and for your comprehensive final exam which will be taken in the lecture room). Scantrons will not be returned, so mark your answers on your exam.

Scavenger Hunt: Your first individual quiz “Quiz 0 Scavenger Hunt” is found at http://www.math.tamu.edu/~scarboro/150fall2014quiz0.pdf. Print out the quiz and follow its directions. It is due no later than your recitation during the second week of school.
No Walks: The mathematics department policy does not allow its instructors to give walks, that is, all classes must be held, unless the university is closed. If I have to miss class for any reason (jury duty, illness, conference, or a meeting), then there will be a qualified substitute instructor.

Shhh! Exam and quiz contents are confidential until the exam or quiz is returned. You may not discuss the contents of an exam or quiz until they are returned; to do so violates the Aggie Honor Code. Even the fact that there is an in-class quiz is confidential. You may never discuss the contents of the final exam since it is property of the mathematics department and will not be returned.

Make-ups: No make-up examinations will be given without a university excused absence. An absence for a non-acute medical service or regular check-up does not constitute an excused absence. To be excused you must notify me, Dr. Sherry, by acknowledged email prior to an excused absence if such notification is feasible. Please note that all make-ups must go through me, though you are welcome to copy in your TA. You are required to notify me by the end (5pm) of the second school day after missing an examination. For injury or illness too severe or contagious to attend class, you must provide written confirmation to me of a visit to a health care professional affirming date and time of visit. You must also give the health care professional permission to verify this information when contacted. The sooner you contact me regarding an absence, the better. The Texas A&M University Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class Form will NOT be accepted. Please see your Math 150 First Day Handout for the list of makeup exam times. There will be no makeup quizzes, since at the end of the semester when final grades are calculated your 2 lowest quiz grades are dropped. There will be no makeup homework assignments, since at the end of the semester when final grades are calculated your 2 lowest homework grades are dropped.

Class Interactions: Since I appreciate having an active class, I encourage you to ask questions, to ‘pause’ me when I get too excited and go too fast, and to ‘rewind’ me when I need to go over a step or problem again. I really appreciate those who ask questions in class, and volunteer answers (right or wrong!) in class. The only dumb questions are the ones you do not ask. Even if you cannot figure out how to ask the question, just tell me to run it by you again. It is my job to be the translator --- to figure out what you are trying to ask, so the more information you give me, the better I can figure out what to say. One of my guidelines in life is to learn from my mistakes. We can learn a lot from wrong answers, so please blurt out answers. I can say and enhance your learning so much more from offered comments and answers, than I can to silence. I also appreciate when you can help your neighbor by pointing out a needed thought in the notes. However, please be courteous and respectful to your classmates and to me by not randomly chatting during class time so I will not need to use the virtual ‘mute’ button!

Zebras: If after you give an answer (for example you say the answer is 5), then I will ask ’5 zebras???' meaning, “What are the units?” Oh 5 meters!

Funny Face: Sometimes when I am asked a question, I must have this really funny face (some have said mad or stern face); something like :-| . This expression means you have asked a really good question, I am trying to figure out how best to answer it, or I am trying to figure out the logistics for what is being asked. I am just concentrating. I am not mad, nor do I think you are stupid --- it would upset me greatly for you to think that I thought that! I have learned to tell my students to not misread my expression. I really care about you and work really hard to best answer your questions. :-)

Emails: You need to daily check your TAMU email, as I will often send the class important information. When you email me please put your name, 150, and section in the subject line so I can best help you (example: Beth Smith, 150-504). This semester I teach 18 sections of Math 150, and have about 360 students. You are important to me, and I would like to give you personal attention so I need to know who you are, what course, and what section so I can best answer your questions! If the answer to your question will benefit most students, please wait until class time to ask it, so I am not answering the same question multiple times in emails! Please do not send me attachments to your emails; imagine if hundreds of people sent you emails with attachments.
Homework: It is critical to do all the text’s exercise problems and to understand the class notes before the next class and before your online assignments. You will not turn in the text homework. There will be graded online homework on http://www.math.tamu.edu/courses/eHomework/. At the end of the semester when final grades are calculated, two of your lowest online homework grades will be dropped. I will help you with your homework or math concepts if you come to my office hours. Please bring your class notes with you when you come to my office hours so I can best help you. You cannot afford to get behind in a college math class. After I am set up in class and before class starts or after class, I would love to answer homework questions or other questions.

Note Card Assignment: Your “getting-to-know-you” note card assignment is due no later than the third week in recitation (Tuesday September 16th or Thursday September 18th depending upon your section number). You need to have a picture of yourself that is about 2 inches by 3 inches that you will attach to a colored 4-inch by 6-inch index card, which I will provide. Please attach the picture with staples or tape (no paperclips). On one side of the index card, you are to put your name, your picture, Math 150-section number, fall 2014, phone number, your email, your group’s name, your career plans, your hobbies and interests, something interesting or unusual about yourself, and other things you would like me to know. On the back of the card put 4 of your Math 150 classmates’ names, emails and phone numbers. Please also record your classmates’ names, emails and phone numbers on the first page of your class notes so you will have this information readily available! Your four Math 150 classmates just have to share the same lecture time as you; they do not have to be in your group or in your section. I strongly suggest that you form study groups and help each other learn the material. You can earn a 10-point bonus on your note card grade if during my office hours, you personally hand me your completed note card no later than Monday September 15th. Note that there is a maximum grade of 110 possible.

Here is the note-card grading-rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5pts</td>
<td>Appropriate colored note card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10pts</td>
<td>Picture of self (stapled or taped to card; NO paperclips)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10pts</td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5pts</td>
<td>Math 150-5xx (appropriate section number)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5pts</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5pts</td>
<td>Phone</td>
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<tr>
<td>10pts</td>
<td>Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10pts</td>
<td>Group’s Name (you will find out your group’s name in recitation during the 2nd week of school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10pts</td>
<td>Career plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10pts</td>
<td>Hobbies/Interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10pts</td>
<td>Something interesting or unusual; or something you would like me to know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10pts</td>
<td>On back of note card: names, phones, and emails of 4 other classmates from your Math 150 lecture class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What should you be doing? You should be skimming the notes and textbook ahead of the lecture so you are ready for the lecture. You should be doing the homework problems from the textbook on what we have already covered so you will be prepared for the next class, in-class quizzes and recitation! You should be doing your graded homework in WebAssign.

In-Class Quizzes: There will be some in-class quizzes, mostly given in recitation. They will be unannounced. Please do not ask if we are having a quiz (not in class, not in emails); just always expect and be ready for one. This helps students keep up with the material. Due to privacy issues, you may only pick up your graded paper. Even if someone asks you to pick up his/her paper, you may not. It is my job to help you get ready for calculus, so please know that I have your best interest at heart! No calculators are allowed on quizzes or exams!

Group Work: In recitation you will usually work on group quizzes, known as group worksheets. You will be assigned to a group the second week of school. As you enter your recitation classroom during the second week of school, check the recitation classroom door for your group assignment. Find your other group members and sit together with them on non-exam days for the rest of the semester. Your group will decide upon your group name. Treat your group as your new place of work. Treat your group members with respect and come to recitation prepared
with the knowledge required to contribute to your group. If you do not contribute to your group, you can be ‘fired’ (disassociated) from your company (group) after being given notice. See Disassociation Form on http://www.math.tamu.edu/~sherry.scarborough/150topics.html. Group work means that you need to work together as a team to answer all of the questions in a manner that each of your group members understands how to do each problem. It does NOT mean that person A does problem 1, person B does problem 2, and person C does problem 3 such that each person writes the his/her answer down on the graded worksheet without the others having knowledge of how the problem was worked. It is important that each of you understand how to do each of the problems on the worksheets. Please carefully read the instructions on the worksheets so that the present group members get proper credit for that worksheet.

**Exams:** You need to bring the following to your exams in here:
- Your TAMU student ID
- The standard Aggie Scantron form for your recitation exams and your comprehensive final exam
- Your #2 pencil
- Your eraser

No calculators are allowed on exams, since calculators are not allowed in Math 151 Calculus I. Please do not enter the lecture or recitation classroom on exam days until you are cleared to do so. To enter the classroom, you must have in hand your #2 pencil, eraser, and TAMU student ID. All other belongings (including all phones, cameras and electronic devices off, and your hat) must be in your backpack. After entering the room, you must drop off your backpack by the back or front wall before going to your seat.

What is the best way to study for your regular exams? Work all of the appropriate Week-In-Review problems while making sure that you understand the concepts. Work all of my old posted exams while allowing only 50 minutes to work each exam. Do you understand the concepts well enough to be able to do an exam in 50 minutes? “Work a problem yourself” is not the same as “watching someone else work the problem” as you will not be graded on how well you watch or listen to someone else working the problem!

What is the best way to study for the final exam? Work all of the Week-In-Review problems for the whole semester, while making sure that you understand the concepts. Work all of your old exams and quizzes for this semester while mixing up the order of the problems.

Please use the plethora of resources I have provided on my Math 150 web page. You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink. I certainly hope you will ‘drink’ your fill of all the resources I have provided to ensure that you learn the concepts in the course. I sincerely want you to be successful in this course as well as in your upcoming calculus courses!

**Following Directions:** Since students often miss points by not following directions, I have decided to add this paragraph in hopes that it will help you! If the solution to a problem is a point, then give a point (for example: (2, 3) and not x = 2 or worse 2, 3 with no parentheses). If the answer has units attached to it, give the units (for example: 5 apples and not just 5). If you are asked to give a fraction in lowest terms, give \( \frac{2}{5} \) and not 0.4. Your online homework system is especially sensitive to this. If you are asked to read an email or directions, please do so. I make a sincere effort to be very clear on what I expect.

**Math Frustrations:** Please spend at least 5 minutes on a math problem you do not understand before asking for help. Read your notes and the text on similar problems. Did you know your online text shows the solution, not just the answer, to the exercise problems? However, please do not spend more than 10 minutes on one math problem you do not understand, as I do not want you to get unduly frustrated! If you do not understand a problem, you should go the online Week In Review (WIR) problems from previous semesters, attend the Week-In-Reviews for this semester, attend help sessions (great place to get help with your online homework) and attend my office hours. You should ask me questions before or after class, or form study groups. See HELP on the first day handout.
Email exchanges (unsolicited and unedited, except names have been changed) from former students:

On 04/30/2012 03:44 PM, Joe wrote:

Hello Dr Scarborough,
You probably don't remember me, but I was your student last sememster in math 150. I had a class around ten MWF. I actually wanted to thank you for teaching me the sign chart! It helped me out sooooo much!! I made a B in math 151 after making a B in your class. Once again thank you!! :) I hope your semester went well and your students listen when you say it helps out in the future.

Joe
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Sent: Tuesday, May 1, 2012 12:32:35 PM
Subject: Joe 150 - fall 2011 Re: Thank you!! Old math class.

Hi Joe,
Thanks for your note of appreciation. I do remember you and where you sat! I always appreciated your class participation!

May I please use your email in my future Math 150 classes, without your name? I think it would positively impact some students to hear from a past student.

Keep up the good work! Stop by some time!
Dr. Sherry
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Date: Tue, 1 May 2012 21:31:14 -0500 (CDT)
From: Joe
To: Sherry Scarborough <scarboro@math.tamu.edu>
Subject: Re: Joe 150 - fall 2011 Re: Thank you!! Old math class.

Dr. Scarborough
Of course you may use my email! Hopefully that will get some students to understand that you're preparing them correctly wheather they like it or not. I would love to stop by! I hope your semester end great!

Joe

On Tue, 2 Jul 2013 14:43:39 -0500 (CDT), Adam wrote:

"One suggestion I feel would really help is if you had former students come into class on the first day and tell the class a few helpful facts about the course. Examples:

"Go to the help sessions if you need any help."
"The math labs [recitations] serve as checking points to see if you are ready for the exam."
"Repetition is key to succeed, you can't learn math from just watching."
"A college math course is not like a high school math course....[explain differences]."
You are Special: You are special and so is everyone else. Your grades will be calculated the same as everyone else’s. After you turn in your final exam, there is nothing more you can do for your grade. If you are concerned about losing your scholarship, getting kicked out of school, or not getting in the major you want, you need to seek help the whole semester, not just come to me the last week or two of school. I do care about you and about your learning. This is college; it is up to you to seek help. If you are having trouble with math, please come to my office hours, attend the Week In Reviews, attend help sessions, etc. If you are having personal issues or other problems, please let me know so I can direct you to those who can help.

Pep Talk: Some of you will not perform as well as you had hoped on an exam or an assignment. You may naturally question whether you belong in college or question your abilities. You may feel like you are alone and isolated. Maybe you are the first in your family to go to college and are in totally new territory. Believe in yourself! There is a saying, “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” Just keep working hard; just keep trying and get help where you need it. Life is full of successes and failures. Winston Churchill said, “Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.”

Personal: I am very happily married to Richard Talbert, a local transactional attorney with a CPA license, and we share four children, ages 25 to 31. Most weeks, Richard and I ballroom dance, either during lessons or at local dances. I am quite passionate about my dancing. Some of my favorite dances are tango, samba, rumba, waltz, and quickstep. I can trick and slalom water ski. I play bridge, 42, and shoot-the-moon dominos. I love to read, can ride a unicycle, love flowers and plants, like to hike in forests and in mountains, and like to do the morning Sudoku’s with Richard. This summer Richard and I cruised to Alaska with my dad and second mom. Besides the pristine and wild nature of Alaska, one of the highlights was that I was a Finalist on Dancing with the Stars on that cruise. Later in the summer I visited South Fork, Colorado, where I met up with my daughter Natalie. The highlight of that trip was ATV-ing on Mount Del Norte.

Enthusiastic: I sincerely look forward to meeting you and I strongly encourage you to visit me during my office hours. You do not need an appointment, nor do you need to email me that you are coming to my office hours. This is your open invitation to come! I just wanted to let you know that I am enthusiastic, energetic, and love teaching students mathematics.

Remember my goal is for you to learn the mathematical information needed to prepare you for calculus!

Here’s to a great semester!
Gig 'Em,
Dr. Sherry Scarborough, ’80

P.S. What to call me?
Dr. Sherry

Professor Sherry
Professor Scarborough
Dr. Scarborough

(NOT "Mrs. Scarborough" as I am Mrs. Talbert since socially I am part of Richard and Sherry Talbert).

P. S. S. The Dr. title means I have earned a Ph.D. The Professor title means I have earned the rank of Instructional Assistant Professor.