

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 assignment, hints for points on quizzes, 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. A WebAssign account costs \$48.95. You will need to purchase an account 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 get an access code for WebAssign before classes start.

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, August 29th you will need to bring to class your Math 150 Chapter 1 notes, which can be found in your Math 150 course in <http://elearning.tamu.edu/>. 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.

You will need to take to recitation a **completed** copy of your Math 150 contract, which can be found on my Math 150 web page or in your Math 150 course in <http://elearning.tamu.edu/>. Please take care of this the first week or two in recitation!

Yes, you have recitation the first week of class. In recitation, you will get answers to your questions and you will be doing group worksheets and individual 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 Scantron form 882E 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.

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.

Make-ups: No make-up examinations or assignments 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 or assignment. 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.

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*). I teach 12 sections of Math 150 and one section of Math 365, and have about 320 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 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 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 can 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 13th or Thursday September 15th 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 with tape (**no paperclips**). On one side of the index card, you are to put your name, your picture, Math 150-section number, fall 2011, 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! I strongly suggest that you form study groups and help each other learn the material. This note-card assignment grade is NOT one of the quiz grades you can drop since it is very important to me to get to know you, however if you follow these directions, it should be an easy 100 assignment-grade. You can earn a 10-point bonus on your note card grade if *during my office hours you personal hand me* your completed note card *before* your recitation class on the week of September 12th. Note that there is a maximum grade of 110 possible.

Below is the note card grading rubric:

5pts	Appropriate colored note card
10pts	Picture of self
10pts	Name
5pts	Math 150-5xx (appropriate section number)
5pts	Fall 2011
5pts	Phone
10pts	Email
10pts	Group's Name (you will know your group's name in recitation during the 2 nd week of school)
10pts	Career plans
10pts	Hobbies/Interests
10pts	Something interesting or unusual
10pts	On back of note card: names, phones, and emails of 4 other classmates

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!

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. In the grade book there is no distinction between quizzes or group worksheet assignments. While the note-card grade is a quiz grade, it will not qualify to be a dropped grade. 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. Hint: During the second week of class some of your quiz questions will be based upon the *Student Help Links* "Logging Into WebAssign," "Navigating the Student Home Page," "Set-Up of Online Assignments," "Resources Available Post Due Date," "Special Notifications," and "Words of Wisdom" found at <http://www.math.tamu.edu/courses/eHomework/studenthelp.html>.

Exams: You need to bring the following to all of your exams in here:

- Your TAMU student ID
- Scantron form 882E 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, TAMU student id, and all other belongings (including all phones, cameras and electronic devices off, and your hat) 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 take 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, quizzes, and worksheets for this semester.

Please use the plethora of resources I have provided on my Math 150 web page. I realize that 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. 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** 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 come to **my office hours**. You should ask me questions before or after class, or form study groups. See **HELP** on the first day handout.

Personal: I am very happily married to Richard Talbert, a local transactional attorney with a CPA license, and we share four children, ages 22 to 28. 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 am the advisor of the Texas A&M Ballroom Dance Association (TAMBDA). They are always looking for new members and you do not need a partner to join. It is a great way to learn to dance and to meet other really interesting people. There is a link on my web page to TAMBDA. I also trick and slalom water ski. I play bridge, 42, and shoot-the-moon dominoes. For the last couple of summers I have played on my church's slow-pitch coed softball team; I had never played softball before that! 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. Our dog, Bentley, is a whippet. This summer we spent our vacation in South Fork, Colorado.

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.

Here are three questions (for points) that you will be asked about the second week of school. "Section number?" "What is the appropriate title, first name, and last name of your Math 150 instructor? Spelling counts." (Answer: Dr. Sherry Scarborough). "What is your teaching assistant's name? Spelling counts."

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 (most students feel most comfortable with this one!)

Miss Sherry

Sherry

Dr. Scarborough (like Simon and Garfunkel's song "Are You Going to Scarborough Fair?")

(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.