

Dear Dr. Kumaresan:

I am Samantha Menell's mother. It was nice to meet you last night, and thank you for helping Sam.

I am happy to hear that Sam came to see you today. She told me about her test grade (65%), and she told me that you are offering to allow corrections and extra points. I just want to make sure that we are all on the same page.

Despite Samantha's strong performance in Biology and Math last year (A-and A), it was recommended that she Algebra II this year. Given her interest in math, she chose to push herself and take Trigonometry this year. Sam mentioned that you told her not to give up and you think she can recover. Is this correct? Do you know how long she has to keep trying before she would need to drop down to Algebra?

Sam has severe anxiety which I believe interferes with her performance on exams. We have been and will continue to meet with the school and try to get her 504 status and extra time on tests. Anything you can do to help her would be greatly appreciated.

Please let me know your thoughts. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you

Dear Dr. Menell,

Thank you very much for writing. I apologize that I could not write back to you right away yesterday.

Sam and I had a good conversation yesterday during office hours. We were able to go through the test together and she mentioned to me (and I could see) that she had studied a lot, but unfortunately, she panicked a little bit on the test and ran out of time. I would like to give her and the other students an opportunity to get their grades up, so I will indeed be offering up to 1/4 of the missed points back in exchange for a corrected test next week. I hope this will help Sam get her grade up to at least the 70 range.

I want to encourage Sam to keep working hard. I really admire her for wanting to challenge herself at this higher level. As you know, the pace of 433 is much faster than 432, and there is often an adjustment period for students who move up to this level. Students have until the end of 2nd quarter to switch classes, and their grades do not follow them. Given that, I would love to see Sam try to at least finish out this quarter. There will still be one more test (and hopefully another quiz) before the end of the quarter, so I'm hoping she can pull the first quarter grade up with a good performance there.

At the same time, the material up to this point has been mostly review of last year (with a few new things). From now on, the course will start to get a little more challenging because the students will not have seen some of the upcoming topics before. I would hate for this class to be a constant source of stress and anxiety for Sam, so if she is feeling that way, you can make a decision earlier than the second quarter.

I have told Sam that I want to do everything I can to help her at this level. I will make myself available whenever she wants to come in, so please have her come and see me whenever she is able (or make use of the math center). I think it would be great to see how she does for at least the end of the quarter, and then go from there.

As for the extra time, I agree with you that it may be helpful for Sam to get some accommodation. I have noticed in class that even though she understands what to do, she may need a little bit of time to digest and finish her work. I will share my perspective with her Dean. Hopefully something can be worked out.

I hope this helps - please let me know if I can answer any more questions for you.

Best,
Michael

Thank you so much. I agree with everything you have said, and really appreciate your help and encouragement.

I'd love to see her stay in your class and succeed.

She will continue to come to you for help. Anything you can do for her with Dean Mooney and the school would be amazing.

Please keep me posted. Have a nice weekend.

Jennifer