

ALEKS Prep for Pre-Calculus

Math 120 --- Pre-Calculus (Errthum, Spring 2013)

- **What is Aleks?**

Aleks is a software package designed to assess and improve your skills in the algebra and functional review topics needed as you begin to learn Pre-Calculus. The material tested by Aleks is basically the material contained in Chapters 1 & 2 of the Pre-Calculus text.

- **How do I get it on my computer?**

- You must first purchase an Aleks license from the WSU bookstore. Don't attempt to purchase one online; students have tried this in the past and it has been a nightmare for them to get everything set up properly.
- Go to www.aleks.com, and on the left side of the screen below the login boxes is an option: "New User? Sign Up Now!"
- Click on that and you will be brought a screen that asks you for your "Course Code" if you are K-12 and higher education. The code for Pf. Errthum's Math 120 Spring 2013 course is: **UF6GJ-EMUQC**
- Once that code is entered, it tells you whose class you are signing up for. If you entered the code correctly, the class should have your instructor's name.
- It will then ask you to enter your "Access Code." **THIS CODE IS THE ONE YOU PURCHASED FROM THE BOOKSTORE.**
- The first time you log on to Aleks, it will have to download a plug-in for your internet browser that allows you to interact with Aleks properly, view equations, etc.
- If you need assistance, see your instructor during office hours.

- **What is the MAC, and how can it help me?**

The Mathematics Achievement Center, or MAC, is a tutoring lab for mathematics students. Math tutors will usually be present and available. For more information, including the hours that tutors are available, see the MAC website at www.winona.edu/mathematics/MAC.

- **What do I need to do after I have it on my computer?**

- You will take the Initial Assessment on your own outside of class (Aleks will automatically prompt you to do this). From this assessment, Aleks will determine what topics you need practice on and will adjust your practice sessions accordingly.
- Remember that part of the purpose of practicing on Aleks is to familiarize yourself with the interface so that when you take your Final Assessment, you will not lose points needlessly simply because you are unfamiliar with the software.
- When you complete enough of the practice problems in each area correctly, the software asks you to take a "Progress Assessment" in that area. You will continue through this cycle until you have a high enough percentage correct on a progress assessment (generally 80% or higher). You can work on the review problems on your own schedule, a little at a time.
- **Calculators are not allowed** during the Final Assessment, so don't use them during the practice. Aleks will at times provide you with an on-screen calculator.

- If you have specific questions about a certain type of problem, you are encouraged to seek assistance from your instructor during their office hours or at the MAC, where tutors will be available to help. Experience has shown that the students who gain the most from this review process will put in approximately 10 to 20 hours of Aleks work between their Initial Assessment and their final Requested Assessment.
- **When will the “Aleks Requested Assessment” be, and how much will it be worth?**
A comprehensive Requested Assessment will be given on Wednesday, February 6th in class. (**Make sure to bring your laptop to class that day!**) That score, plus 10% points, will constitute the Aleks part of your grade. So for example, if you score 80% on the Aleks Requested Assessment, then you will receive $(0.80 + 0.10) * 94 = 84.6$ points out of 94 points for that portion of your course grade (which counts as 10% of your final course grade).
- **What is the difference between a Progress Assessment and a Final Assessment?**

| Progress Assessment | Final Assessment |
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| is given to you automatically by Aleks, with no action by me, after you have completed either about 10 hours of practice problems or have filled in enough additional pieces of your “learning pie”; | is only available to you after you have contacted me by email to request it, and I have scheduled the assessment for you; |
| tests only part of the complete course, with emphasis on what you have learned most recently; | tests all of the material in the Algebra and Functional Review Topics (like the Initial Assessment); |
| does not count toward your grade; and | counts toward your grade; and |
| may be taken anywhere with internet connection, without a proctor or supervisor. | must be taken in class or in some other proctored situation. |