

Syllabus for Math 441: Introductory Topology

Fall 2023

Course Information

Instructor: Sam Spiro.

Lectures: MW 3:50-5:10pm, Lucy Stone Hall B123.

Office Hours: Monday 11:30-12:30, Wednesday 2:00-3:00; both in Hill 207.

Website: samspiro.org

Textbook: *Topology* by Munkres (second edition). The textbook is required for completing the homework assignments. We will cover all of Chapters 2-3, most of Chapter 4, and have bonus content at the end depending on time.

Thanksgiving Break: The lecture scheduled for 11/23 (i.e. the day before Thanksgiving) will be entirely optional and will not cover any new material that will be tested in any way. **Be Aware:** there is still homework due that day.

Attendance: Attendance is encouraged but entirely optional.

Communication

Discord: A class Discord server will serve as the class's main source of communication. Information on how to join the server will be available on Canvas.

Email: My email address is sas703@scarletmail.rutgers.edu. However, *I do not check this often* (roughly once every 1-2 days). If you need general information regarding the class, you should post in the Discord. If you need to contact me directly, *email me as early as you can* to guarantee I reply in a timely matter.

Feedback: You are strongly encouraged to tell me which parts of the class are going well/poorly. You can tell me these things directly, or use [this link](#) to give me advice anonymously.

Class Participation: Active participation is a crucial element of this course. I will repeatedly select students at random to answer questions. **I do not care if you give correct answers** (in particular, wrong answers tell me what material I need to explain better!). You can always reply to my questions with "I don't know" or "I wasn't really paying attention", at which point I will move on and ask another student.

Exams, Homeworks, and Grades

Exams: there will be one in-person midterm (held in class) and one in-person final exam. The information is as follows:

Midterm: October 25 (Week 8).

Final: December 18 4:00-7:00pm (Week 16).

Other things to note:

- Neither notes nor calculators will be allowed for the exam.
- You must bring your student ID to the exam.
- There are no makeup exams. If due to truly exceptional circumstances you must miss an exam, contact me as soon as possible.

Homework: There will be weekly homework assignments listed on the website samspiro.org which are due the following Wednesday by 11:00pm (late assignments will not be accepted) via Gradescope. Some important notes regarding homework:

- **No points** will be given to homework assignments that are difficult to read (e.g. due to poor quality scans, bad handwriting, or incoherent arguments). For those with bad handwriting (such as myself), it is strongly recommended you type your assignments, e.g. using Latex or Microsoft Word.
- You may use **any resource** at your disposal for homeworks (including fellow classmates, the internet, Chegg, etc) **provided you cite** whatever sources you use for the homework and you write your solutions by yourself and in your own words. To emphasize, these resources are **NOT** allowed for exams, only for homeworks.
- It is strongly recommended that you first try to solve the homeworks on your own before turning to other resources in order to maximize how much you understand the material before the exams.
- Your lowest homework grade will be dropped if you post to the Discord at least once.

Grading: Your numerical grade will be computed as follows:

$$15\% \text{ Homework} + 35\% \max(\text{Midterm}, \text{Final}) + 50\% \text{ Final} .$$

Your letter grade will be based off of your numerical grade at the end of semester and the following scale. The scale is guaranteed, *but may be adjusted to be more generous* (for example, if your cumulative average is 80, then your final grade will be *at least* a B).

A	B+	B	C+	C
90	87	80	77	70