

MA 313 - MA – Patterns, Functions and Algebraic Reasoning
UAB Department of Mathematics - Summer 2025

Instructor: Dr. Tricia Phillips (she/her)

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Class Time: MTWRF 8-10am (University Hall 4004)

Office Hours: By appointment (email to arrange)

Office: University Hall 4053

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Class Materials: *Required:* graph paper and a binder or folder for organization; *Optional:* scissors, ruler, colored pencils/pens or highlighters. There is no official textbook for this course.

Course Description: (3 semester hours). Problem solving experiences, inductive and deductive reasoning, patterns and functions, some concepts and applications of geometry for elementary and middle school teachers. Topics include linear and quadratic relations and functions and some cubic and exponential functions. Number sense with the rational number system including fractions, decimals, and percents will be developed in problem contexts. An emphasis will be on developing algebraic thinking and reasoning. *Prerequisite:* Minimum grade of C in MA 102, MA 105, MA 106, MA 107, MA 110, MA 125, MA 168, or MA 225.

This course helps fulfill the math requirements for Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education majors, as well as for Mathematical Reasoning Track students.

Course Overview:

The focus of this course will be to help enhance your mathematics background so that you may teach a rich K-8 grade curriculum as specified by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics and the Alabama State Course of Study: Mathematics*. This course will be taught differently from perhaps any mathematics course you have ever taken. It is guided by UAB's participation and collaboration in the Greater Birmingham Mathematics Partnership. This is a joint venture between UAB (Schools of Education, Engineering, and Department of Mathematics), Birmingham-Southern College, the Mathematics Education Collaborative (MEC), and several local school systems. The project has its foundations in the work of Dr. Ruth Parker of MEC and the constructivist view of learning. Constructivism is a theory of teaching and learning based on the work of Jean Piaget. It emphasizes the learner taking an active role in constructing her/his own learning as the learner interacts within an environment.

The goal of this course is that you become mathematically powerful students and that you become competent and confident problem-solvers. The content and experiences in this course will lead you toward this goal. My role as the instructor will be to provide guidance and support as you make sense of mathematics. True understanding will only come when you make sense of a situation. My role is not to tell you everything about the subject, nor is it to answer all of the questions that will arise as you engage in problem-solving. You will at times experience confusion and perhaps frustration. This is a natural part of the learning process. I will try to help you reflect and work your way out of confusion before your frustration becomes debilitating to your learning. Don't be afraid of wrong answers. Sometimes learning occurs by multiple attempts down wrong paths until you find a correct path.

The structure of the course encourages you to learn while working in groups and as an individual as you solve problems. Engaging with others in collaborative problem-solving will help you see several ways of solving a problem and appreciate a variety of points of view. In groups, you are not to ‘teach’ someone how to solve a problem and you are not to direct others to think in a certain way. Each person must think for themselves and make sense of the situation. For many problems, I will insist that you not be satisfied with simply finding one way to solve a problem. Instead, I will challenge you to solve problems in multiple ways. While getting the right answer is a goal in solving a problem, understanding how you got to the answer is also important, as is being able to communicate your understanding to others. While collaborative learning is desired, you are at the same time individually accountable for learning the material.

Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

- apply inductive and deductive reasoning to problems;
- identify and solve problems involving patterns that form linear and quadratic functions;
- create and thoroughly explain expressions for patterns involving summations and/or figurate numbers;
- apply a variety of problem-solving strategies in order to solve both geometric and word problems involving patterns;
- identify patterns on Pascal’s Triangle and write an expression that works for multiple patterns identified;
- identify properties of geometric figures and apply these in problems;
- demonstrate knowledge of concepts of number and number relationships, number systems, number theory, estimation, and computation in the context of problem solving;
- communicate mathematical ideas orally and in writing including making mathematically convincing arguments;
- demonstrate the ability to interact within groups, and with the class as a whole, while demonstrating cognizance of working with peers at different levels; and
- demonstrate a positive disposition toward persistence and reflection in doing mathematics.

Grades

Grade Components: All grades will be posted on Canvas.

| Assignment | Percent |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Attendance/Participation | 5 |
| Article Reviews | 10 |
| Menus | 60 |
| Presentation | 5 |
| Mathematics Portfolio | 20 |

Final Grades: The final grade for this course will be assigned using the following scale:

| Total Points | 90-100 | 80-89 | 70-79 | 60-69 | 0-60 |
|--------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Letter Grade | A | B | C | D | F |

Important Note: Missing 3 or more classes during the semester that are unexcused will result in an automatic F for the course.

Assignment Descriptions

Attendance/Participation:

Attendance and active participation in all class sessions is required. Attending class but not actively participating results in a score of 50% for that class session. Attending class and actively participating results in a score of 100% for that class session.

Article Reviews:

You will submit a reflection on Canvas for each set of articles/videos assigned to read, watch, and think about. Participation in class discussions regarding the assignments are also required.

Menus:

Menus consist of a set of problems you will work on solving throughout the term and you will submit a neatly written / scanned PDF on Canvas. Using GoodNotes is a great option if you choose to write on a tablet and submit the PDF.

Presentation:

This course values the various perspectives that individuals have in which we will call “ways of seeing” in the context of the mathematical tasks explored. Each student will be expected to share their work for a task at least once throughout the term during our group processing times during class.

Mathematics Portfolio:

This assignment will include tasks to demonstrate the development and growth of your conceptual understanding, use of processes and strategies, problem solving abilities, and abilities to communicate mathematically. You will submit a PDF on Canvas.

Class Policies & Student Expectations

Class Preparation & Collaboration:

I expect you to show respect to the instructor and classmates by putting away distracting items such as cell phones and coursework not related to our class. I ask that you have a positive and productive disposition toward yourself, your classmates, and mathematics and are respectful of fellow classmates and the instructor as you share ideas. During group work, I expect everyone to contribute to the discussion (if you don’t know how to answer the question, then *ask* a question).

You are expected to spend a substantial amount of time working through the course activities and assignments every week. Please know that time management and self-motivation are key components for success in this course. Most students who take this course find it beneficial so please keep an open mind.

You may collaborate with peers on solving menu tasks. However, it is imperative that you are able to solve problems on your own to be prepared to share your way of seeing with the class. A good guideline is that after you have solved a problem, you should feel confident that you are able to explain your solution to the class.

Make-up Policy:

Late Work: There are no make-ups for assignments and no late submissions are accepted – all deadlines are in Central Time. It is recommended that students work far in advance of deadlines to ensure they finish assignments on time.

Absences: For absences from class, it is still the student's responsibility to turn in assignments due that day *prior* to the deadline in order to receive credit. In addition, students should obtain a copy of the work done in class from a classmate in order to stay caught up in the course. In the case of an excused absence (e.g. DSS accommodations, illness, unsafe commute due to weather safety recommendations, military duty, jury duty, official UAB activities), the student must inform the instructor *prior* to their absence and must send the instructor a copy of the missed classwork via email from the day of their absence in order to receive participation credit that day, after discussing with a classmate what was missed that day. *Note:* Students with an unexcused absence are still expected to stay caught up with work but do not receive participation credit for their absence.

If a student has an unplanned or emergency circumstance that temporarily prevents them from participating in the class for an extended period of time (e.g. documented hospitalization, mandated isolation for COVID-19, jury duty), then the instructor should be contacted to discuss.

Excessive Absences: Attendance is fundamental to course objectives and for interaction with the instructor and peers to thoroughly learn concepts. Missing 3 or more classes (>20%) with unexcused absences will result in a grade of F for this course; note that excused absences (see list above) do not count toward the 3.

Inclement Weather:

Class will be canceled for weather only if UAB cancels classes as communicated through the university's official emergency notification system. Otherwise, class will be held as scheduled.

Instructor Support - Emails & Office Hours:

I will respond to your emails as promptly as possible (usually within 24 hours, except on weekends). If you email me after 5pm, expect a response the next day unless it is over the weekend in which case I will respond the beginning of the following week. Please check your email and Canvas course regularly for announcements and updated class documents. Students are expected to check their UAB email daily and respond within 24 hours to instructor emails (with the exception of weekends). All students are required to obtain and use the UAB email address that is automatically assigned to them as UAB students, as official correspondence will be sent **ONLY** to your @UAB.edu email address.

During office hours, you may drop by without making an appointment to receive assistance on any assignment.

AI Tools:

The use of AI tools is strictly prohibited in this course. Academic misconduct is present in an academic work wherever AI assistance has been used when unauthorized. Such behavior is considered deceit and a violation of UAB's shared commitment to truth and academic integrity. Deceit constitutes academic misconduct and is subject to review according to UAB's Academic Integrity Code. The developments around AI are in flux and the rules that are expressed in

this syllabus are subject to change on short notice.

Intellectual Property:

My materials in this course are for your use only and may not be reproduced or distributed without my explicit written consent.

Success Tips:

Hard work goes a long way and the more effort you put in, the more understanding you will have – that includes coming to class on time, fully participating in the activities of the day, and spending sufficient time each week outside of class on course material. Actively participating in class dialogue, rather than simply observing, is essential for understanding. Most importantly, ask questions – inside the classroom, in office hours, or over email. The earlier on you ask questions, the better, since concepts in mathematics build upon each other. Although [you are responsible for your own learning](#), I encourage you to communicate with me so I know best how to help you succeed. I offer the following pieces of advice for your consideration:

- Review notes and do math every day.
- Actively participate in class every day.
- Help each other.
- Go to office hours.
- Analyze and understand your mistakes.
- Ask plenty of questions.
- Don't let yourself get behind.
- Go to the Math Learning Lab.

UAB Policies & Resources:

Math Learning Lab (MLL):

Located in Heritage Hall 202, the MLL offers in-person tutoring (no appointment needed, open Monday through Friday from first to last day of classes except holidays, breaks, and Final Exam week). No food or drink is allowed except bottled water.

University Academic Success Center (UASC):

The UASC provides students with a host of free services and resources that include Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction. For more information, [click here](#).

Academic Misconduct:

UAB expects all members of its academic community to function according to the highest ethical and professional standards. This is outlined in the University's Academic Integrity Code found [here](#).

Disability Support Services (DSS) Accessibility Statement:

UAB is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students. If you are a student with a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and you require accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services (call 205-934-4205, visit their website, or visit their office located in Hill Student Center Suite 409) for information on accommodations, registration, and procedures. Requests for reasonable accommodations involve an interactive process and consist of a collaborative effort among the student, DSS, faculty, and staff. If you are already registered with DSS, please contact them to discuss accommodations that may be necessary in this course.

Title IX Statement:

In accordance with Title IX, UAB does not discriminate on the basis of gender in any of its programs or services. The University is committed to providing an environment free from

discrimination based on gender and expects individuals who live, work, teach, and study within this community to contribute positively to the environment and to refrain from behaviors that threaten the freedom or respect that every member of our community deserves. For more information about Title IX, policy, reporting, protections, resources, and supports, please visit the UAB Title IX webpage.

[Student Counseling Services:](#)

Student Counseling Services supports students in achieving personal, academic, and lifelong goals by providing individual and group mental health services, prevention and outreach programming, crisis and emergency support, and consultation services. Student Counseling Services advocates for safe and inclusive learning environments in the university community. Counseling is free and confidential. You can make an appointment by calling the Student Health and Wellness Center at 205-934-5816. Their office is open Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm and is located at 1714 9th Avenue South.

[Divisive Concepts:](#)

All University faculty, instructors and teaching staff have the academic freedom to explore, discuss, and provide instruction on a wide range of topics in an academic setting. This class may present difficult, objectionable, or controversial topics for consideration, but will do so through an objective, scholarly lens designed to encourage critical thinking. Though students may be asked to share their personal views in the academic setting, no student will ever be required to assent or agree with any concept considered “divisive” under Alabama law, nor penalized for refusing to support or endorse such a concept. All students are strongly encouraged to think independently and analytically about all material presented in class and may express their views in a time, place, and manner, consistent with class organization and structure, and in accordance with the University’s commitment to free and open thought, inquiry, and expressions.

[Shared Values Statement:](#)

Collaboration, integrity, respect, and excellence are core values of our institution and affirm what it means to be a UAB community member. A key foundation of UAB is diversity. At UAB, everybody counts every day. UAB is committed to fostering a respectful, accessible and open campus environment. We value every member of our campus and the richly different perspectives, characteristics and life experiences that contribute to UAB’s unique environment. UAB values and cultivates access, engagement and opportunity in our research, learning, clinical, and work environments. Our university aims to create an open and welcoming environment and to support the success of all UAB community members.

Tentative Schedule

| Class # | Date | In-Class | Assignment Due |
|---------|-----------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | M: May 12 | Course Intro Dot Image Group Task: Eric the Sheep Groupwork Rules Group Task: Pentominoes & Process Menu 1 Handed Out & Intro Pre-Assessment | |
| 2 | T: May 13 | Group Task: Tile Stacks/WISH Table Navigating the Pentagon Intro Menu 1 Work (Cowpens) Menu 1 Work (Bullpens) Group Task: Beans & Ways & Process | <i>Last Day to Drop/Add</i> |
| 3 | W: May 14 | Reflection Discussion Process Cowpens Process Bullpens Menu Demonstration & Expectations Group Task: Handshakes Menu 1 Work (Robbie the Robot) | Article/Video Reflection #1 (8am) |
| 4 | R: May 15 | Process Handshakes Menu 1 Work (Robbie the Robot) Menu 1 Work (Increasing Pattern #1) | Menu 1: One Task (3pm) |
| 5 | F: May 16 | Menu 1: One Task Feedback Process Robbie the Robot Menu 1 Work (Increasing Pattern #1) Menu 1 Work (Polygon Perimeters) Group Task: Trains of 5 with Pascal's Triangle | |
| 6 | M: May 19 | Reflection Discussion Process Increasing Pattern #1 Process Polygon Perimeters Group Task: Cuisenaire Rods Social vs Logico-Mathematical Knowledge Number Talk Intro | Article/Video Reflection #2 (8am) |
| 7 | T: May 20 | Number Talk #1 Navigating the Pentagon - algebraic to all 4 Navigating the Pentagon - tabular to all 4 Navigating the Pentagon - graphical to all 4 Navigating the Pentagon - verbal to all 4 | <i>Last Day to Withdraw ("W")</i> |

| Class # | Date | In-Class | Assignment Due |
|---------|-----------|--|---|
| 8 | W: May 21 | Number Talk #2 Menu 2 Handed Out & Intro Discuss Ice Cream Cones&Diagonals on a Polygon Menu 2 Work (Cubes Pattern #1) Menu 2 Work (Increasing Pattern #1) | Menu 1: Remaining Tasks (3pm) |
| 9 | R: May 22 | Menu 1: Feedback Process Cubes Pattern #1 Group Task: Tennis Tournament Process Tennis Tournament Menu 2 Work (Increasing Pattern #1) | |
| 10 | F: May 23 | Process Increasing Pattern #1 Menu 2 Work (Ice Cream Cones) Menu 2 Work (Increasing Pattern #5a) Menu 2 work (Diagonals on a Polygon) Portfolio Handed Out & Intro Pre- and Post-Assessments Handed Out | Menu 2: One Task (3pm) |
| | M: May 26 | <i>No Class - Memorial Day</i> | <i>Work on Ice Cream Cones Increasing Pattern #5a, and Diagonals on a Polygon</i> |
| 11 | T: May 27 | Process Ice Cream Cones Process Increasing Pattern #5a Process Diagonals on a Polygon Group Task: Painted Cube Task | |
| 12 | W: May 28 | Group Task: Painted Cubes & Poster | Menu 2: Remaining Tasks (3pm) |
| 13 | R: May 29 | IDEA Surveys Bowl-A-Fact Menu 2 Feedback Painted Cube Gallery Walk Portfolio Discussion & Semester Reflections | Mathematics Portfolio (8am) |

Note: The course syllabus and schedule serve as a contract by which the student must comply. The syllabus and schedule are subject to changes through announcements made in class and/or email.