

Mathematics Academic Policy Statement

St. Stephen's Episcopal School

2011-12

Grades

Grading will be determined by the teacher's evaluation of the student's class participation, homework, quizzes, tests, projects, papers, and final examinations (fall and spring terms). The teacher is free to weight each of the above as s/he deems appropriate prior to administration of the evaluation, with the exception of the final exams which bear a weight determined by the department. In general, grades are to be interpreted as follows:

- H:** The student has mastered the skills and expectations of the course. In addition, s/he has demonstrated a keen ability to successfully solve problems for which the student has not been shown a solution technique in advance.
- V:** The student has mastered the skills and expectations of the course. In addition, s/he has demonstrated the ability to apply knowledge to solve problems that extend beyond the mechanical.
- G:** The student has mastered the skills and expectations of the course. S/he has demonstrated the ability to solve mechanical problems.
- P:** The student has demonstrated sufficient basic knowledge and mechanical skills.
- U:** The student has failed to meet basic standards.
- X:** The student has failed to meet basic standards and is in serious jeopardy of term/year failure.

Weighting of Examinations

Course	Fall Term	Spring Term
Middle School	20%	20%
Algebra I	20%	20%
Geometry	20%	25%
Algebra II	20%	25%
Precalculus	20%	25%
Advanced Applications	20%	25%
Calculus	20%	25%
Multivariable Analysis	20%	25%
Statistics	20%	25%
Computer Science	20%	25%

Because of the cumulative nature of mathematics, exams will cover all material presented to date.

Advanced Courses

Students are admitted into advanced sections (including Advanced Calculus and Multivariable Analysis) by departmental recommendation only. A student may petition the department for the opportunity to be placed in an advanced section, however the department reserves the right to be the sole body making the placement decision. Once in an advanced course, a student must maintain a G or better average. Failure to maintain this standard may result in movement to a regular section of the course. Students enrolled in an advanced course who feel as though they are inappropriately placed and who wish to switch into a regular section must do so by the fall mid-term.

Academic Honesty

The department has realistically high expectations for academic honesty, academic effort, behavior, and attitude.

- Students may not look on another's paper during a test or quiz.
- Students may not have or use unauthorized materials during a test or quiz.
- Students may not share information with others about a test after taking the test, nor may they collect information about a test before taking a test.
- Students may not communicate with others in any way during a test or quiz.

To help clarify the expectations for out-of-class assignments, teachers will designate each assignment as being either **Independent / Collaborative** and **Sourced / Unsourced**.

Independent – No collaboration, consultation, editing, or guidance from another person is allowed. All work must be *entirely* the student's own.

Collaborative – Working with another person is permitted, keeping in mind the St. Stephen's guidelines for tutors and outside help, which are printed at the end of this document. Students may not simply copy another's assignment, and they may not present someone else's work as their own.

Sourced – Approved outside sources may be used, provided proper citation is given.

Unsourced – No consultation of outside sources (books, magazines, internet or otherwise) is permitted.

Any student who violates these standards will receive, at the discretion of the teacher and the department chair, a severe grade penalty. The student may receive other penalties through the Academic Dean's office.

Homework

Homework is assigned on a daily basis and is designed to average 30 minutes per night for Middle School and 45 minutes for Upper School in most classes. Assignments for students in college level classes such as Advanced Calculus, Advanced Statistics, or Multivariable Analysis may average an hour. Assignments are designed to reinforce concepts introduced in class and/or to encourage original thought and development of mathematical understanding. Those designed to stimulate original mathematical thought will necessarily include problems never before encountered by the student.

Test Make-up Policy

Students are expected to make up tests immediately upon return to school after an absence, unless the absence is due to illness. Failure to do so may result in a grade penalty. Exceptions to this rule are at the teacher's discretion. If the absence is due to an extended illness, the student will be given the number of days equal to the absence to make up tests and assignments. Chronic patterns of missing tests will be subject to review by the Department Chair and the Academic Dean. Students who miss class before a major test or project deadline are not granted an extension if the absence is a result of athletics, extracurricular activities, elective travel, or college admissions. If a student would like an extension in such a circumstance, s/he must communicate the potential conflict to the teacher well in advance and seek permission before missing school.

Unexcused Absences

A student who has an unexcused absence on the day of a test or quiz will receive a "0."

Readiness Clause

In all courses, any student who fails (U or X) the spring term, regardless of his or her work in the previous terms, will be subject to individual evaluation by the teacher, in conjunction with the department head, with respect to the student's readiness for the next year's work. The possible outcomes of this conference are:

- * a U for the year, to be made up;
- * an Incomplete for the term, with required make-up work;
- * a grade averaged according to the usual method.

Additionally, because the study of mathematics is cumulative in nature and requires a solid foundation in Algebra I, a student who passes with a P is not necessarily ready to successfully manage the challenges of higher levels of mathematics. To assure a sound preparation in basic skills, Algebra I students with weak skills or significant gaps in understanding will be required to repeat Algebra I before going on to the next level, even if they have received a passing grade.

Summer Acceleration or Remediation

A student may engage in two types of summer course work:

- 1.) S/he may retake a course that was failed during the academic year.
- 2.) S/he may take a course in order to accelerate within the mathematics sequence. (Note: A student must be recommended by his or her current teacher in order to be considered for the acceleration option.)

Any student who does summer course work to obtain credit must pass an exam administered by the St. Stephen's mathematics department before the first day of classes. All plans for summer work must be approved by the Mathematics Department before the end of the school year.

St. Stephen's Episcopal School Tutoring and Outside-Help Policy

The role of a tutor is to supplement teacher conferences by providing the additional support necessary for a student struggling with fundamental skills in a particular class. In some cases, hiring a tutor is a great choice; however, a tutor used in place of independent effort and/or conference time with a teacher can be an obstacle to real learning. A student's best and first resource should always be the teacher.

If students do seek outside help, they are reminded that all student work must conform to the SSES Academic Honesty policy. Regardless of whether an assignment is labeled "independent" or "collaborative," students must avoid handing in work that is the result of collusion, which is a form of academic dishonesty. Students and their parents should take extra caution when seeking outside help: tutors can help students build skills as well as review and process past work. They can also help guide students' critical thinking and brainstorming. On the other hand, tutors should never complete part or all of a student's work, nor should they direct students in such a way that their work is no longer the students' own. The same guidelines pertain to parents as they help their children as well. To ensure that work with a tutor does not stray into collusion, a good rule of thumb is that a tutor should avoid putting a pen or pencil to the student's paper.