

Spring 2010 Course Syllabus

Math 50 – Elementary Algebra

(Online – NO on-campus requirement)



Sections # 29623, 28642, 28666 (4 units)
ALEKS Course Code: Y6PYR-9DF6T

Since this syllabus is our contract, I suggest you study it well and print a copy to keep by your computer. It is especially important that you print the fourth page which contains the schedule and grading scale.

Instructor: Stephen Toner

Web Page: <http://www.stevetoner.com>

e-mail: toners@vvc.edu (Include your name in subject line)

VVC voicemail: 245-4271 ext. 2770

Office: Bldg 30 (Liberal Arts), office "U"

Office Hours: M,T,W,Th: 7:20 - 7:40 am

Tues & Thurs: 9:50 – 11:15 am

Spring Calendar:

Feb. 16 Classes Begin

Apr. 9-17 Spring Break

May 7 Last day to drop with a "W" grade

May 31 Memorial Day Holiday

June 12 End of Spring semester

Prerequisite: Math 10 or Math 12 with a grade of "C" or better, or eligibility as determined by placement on the VVC assessment exam. **Be sure that you meet this requirement.**

Course Description: This course covers signed number arithmetic, square roots, order of operations and algebraic expressions. It also covers equation solving, factoring, graphs of linear equations and solving systems of equations.

Attendance Policy: It is your responsibility to keep your enrollment status current. You risk receiving an "F" if you decide to quit without officially withdrawing. You are responsible for checking the discussion forum regularly. All online homework assignments and exams **must** be submitted on or before posted due dates (as listed below).

A Note about calculators: **Calculators are not allowed at any time in this course, unless prompted online through ALEKS.** While I cannot monitor what you are doing at home, you are on your academic honor not to be using one. If it is discovered that you are using one, it will be considered academic dishonesty and you will be turned in to the Office of Student Services for academic dishonesty.

Textbook: *Introductory Algebra, 2nd edition*, Miller / O'Neill / Hyde.

Choice #1: Purchase ALEKS online for \$63, tax included. Electronic access to your text is included.

Choice #2: Purchase ALEKS from VVC bookstore for \$86.95 plus tax (same as choice #1, but you can use your financial aid). Electronic access to your text is included.

Choice #3: Purchase loose-leaf version of text at VVC bookstore for \$145.95 plus tax. ALEKS access is included in the bundle.

Go to "www.aleks.com/sign_up" and enter the Course Code: **Y6PYR-9DF6T**. If you have an access code, enter it. Otherwise, click on "purchase an access code online" link. Choose the 18-week option.

In a way, this is a "bookless" class. If you go with Choice #1 or Choice #2 above, you will still have access to the book electronically. If you desire to have a book to hold and read, that will be at your discretion. You will not be required to have a copy of the actual text to complete any part of this course.

Statement of Access: Students with special needs are encouraged to meet with instructors to discuss the opportunity for academic accommodation and be referred to disabled student program and services per Administrative Procedure (AP 3440)

Homework Policy: Practice is essential. All ALEKS homework for a given chapter will be due by the day of the test for that chapter. The average of these ALEKS homework assignment scores will be worth 100 points. In addition to completing homework through ALEKS, you will **also** be responsible for filling in the appropriate pieces of your ALEKS pie. Chapter "deadline suggestions" denoted by dotted lines on your ALEKS pie will be posted to mark your progress through the course. At the end of the semester, the percentage of your pie which you have completed will be worth up to 200 points. Do not fall too far behind in your ALEKS pie work, as ALEKS will assign you material sequentially.



How to Study and Work in this Class:



- Obtain your text as described on the first page of this syllabus. When you arrive at the ALEKS web site, take 15-20 minutes to follow the orientation / walk through. After that, take the **initial assessment**. This is the most important test you will take in the class, as it will determine what you do and don't know.
- After taking the initial assessment, find the link to the class forum at the top of your screen. This will be where you will be able to post and answer questions you may have.
- Next, go to the "My Pie" tab within the ALEKS website. Work to complete all of the problems in the dark green (Arithmetic Readiness) pie slice first, as these are pre-algebra topics that you should have mastered before starting into the first chapter's homework. ALEKS has artificial intelligence built into it and will give you a customized set of problems to work based upon your personal needs. It will only allow you to do problems that you are ready for. If there are prerequisite skills needed before learning a new problem type, it will make you learn those skills first. As you are ready to study additional topics, they will appear in your pie.
- Next, go to the homework tab and start working your homework. Many of the first assignments will be rather easy to help get you started. If you do not have an actual book and are opting for the electronic version, after submitting your homework, hit the "Explain" button on one of the homework problems. This will open up an explanation as well as a link to your textbook. If you click on the link to your textbook, the chapter will open on your screen. You will then be able to print the chapter if you wish, or save it to your hard drive for easy access later. You will also find links to helpful video explanations.
- As you have questions working your homework, read the text and watch any videos I have suggested to you for that particular section. Hit the "Explain" button to access your text and video explanations. If you have additional questions, post them in the class forum.
- After you have finished each chapter's homework assigned to you in the homework section, click on the "My Pie" tab and start working the Pie problems for the chapter there.
- Watch the schedule (last page of this syllabus) for all deadlines. All deadlines are fixed.
- **You may re-do any of your homework assignments as often as you wish before their deadline to improve your grade. However, you are only allowed ONE two-hour attempt on each chapter test.**
- Chapter tests can be found in the homework section and may be taken any time prior to their deadlines. Do **NOT** attempt the chapter tests until you are **fully**-prepared, as you will only be allowed one two-hour attempt. If you accidentally start a test ahead of time, you will not be given a second attempt. Instead, it will need to count as the lowest-scoring chapter test to be dropped from your grade.
- **Tutoring** will be available in the Math Lab Monday through Friday afternoons, from 1:30-5:15 pm. If you need any tutoring help or use of math computers, please go to room 21-155 (in the Advanced Technology building) during those hours. Outside of those hours, please go to the information booth at the east end of the Tech building to sign in for tutoring help.
- Tutoring is also available during my office hours listed at the top of the first page or by appointment.

Some of My Philosophies:

- **Online math classes tend to be more difficult** than traditional math classes because of the amount of reading involved and the absence of face-to-face communication. An online math class may also require **more time expenditure** because you as a student need to obtain course materials and competency from a variety of sources, i.e., reading your textbook, watching video lectures, searching various web sites, etc.
- **Online courses are not for everyone.** They are intended for students who are unable, for various reasons, to attend class regularly in the traditional face-to-face setting. **If you are looking for an “easy way out” of the rigor found in the traditional classroom, this online class will not likely suit you.**
- **Learning involves interaction.** To be successful in this course, it would be wise for you to devote an abundance of hours using all of the resources available to you. Do not forget that I am one of your major resources. Many students try to make this class into an independent study course, (unsuccessfully, I might add!).

Helpful ALEKS Reminders:

- Your initial ALEKS assessment is **the most important**, as it will establish your starting point for the semester’s assignments in your ALEKS pie. **Set a couple of hours aside for this first assessment!**
- Every time you complete 20 topics or spend 10 hours working, ALEKS will reassess your progress on material you have recently worked on in order to verify whether you have mastered the material or not (unless it is within 24 hours of a scheduled exam). You may find that it will skip you forward or drop you backward based on the answers you enter.
- If you get stuck on a particular problem while working in your ALEKS pie, hitting the explain button may increase the number of exercises you need to get right to complete each topic. Instead, hitting the explain button while you are in the *homework* section of the course will not penalize you. This will also bring up the option to access and save your textbook for further help.
- Taking good notes while working through your ALEKS pie will give you valuable examples to look at when you are given periodic assessments (**but you may not use your notes during an exam!**)
- If you need help working a particular type of problem, make sure to post a note to the discussion forum. You may find that others have had similar questions and answers to their questions may help you out.

Miscellaneous Items:

- ❖ **Withdrawal from this course is the sole responsibility of the student. If you fail to withdraw from the class without contacting Mr. Toner, you run the risk of receiving an “F” on your transcript.**
- ❖ If you have a learning disability or physical need that requires special accommodation, please advise me **prior to 02-22-10** (the start of the second week of class).
- ❖ Students are encouraged to read the Victor Valley College Catalog for additional information on college policies, student rights, and student responsibilities.

Student Code of Conduct

While students may work together on the researching of any assignment, it is expected that each of their writing assignments reflect substantial individual effort. Any student who commits plagiarism or is found to have **cheated on a scheduled exam** is subject to a zero score for that specific exam and **a term grade of “F” for this course**. Students should be aware that cases of cheating and/or plagiarism will be forwarded to the appropriate college administrator promptly. The college administration has a range of sanctions that may be imposed including, but not limited to, academic suspension or expulsion from the college.

It is expected that you are ALONE when taking any exams. You may NOT seek anyone’s assistance during exams. There should NOT be anyone looking over your shoulder helping, prompting, or correcting you. It is assumed that you are taking ALL exams without the aid of a calculator, unless one is provided by ALEKS for that particular problem.

Selected Codes from the Student Handbook:

Any student found to have committed the following misconduct is subject to disciplinary sanctions:

- ❖ Acts of dishonesty, including, but not limited to the following: cheating, plagiarism, receiving any form of help on exams or midterms, or other forms of academic dishonesty.
 - ❖ Disruption or obstruction of teaching.
 - ❖ Physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, coercion, and/or other conduct that threatens or endangers the health and safety of any person.
 - ❖ Conduct which is disorderly lewd, indecent, or obscene or expression which interferes with the college’s primary educational responsibility.
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Notes for the Table below:

- These are the suggested dates for you to study the sections and practice the sections within the text. **Do not procrastinate. Deadlines will be strictly adhered to.**

Course Schedule

Week 0			ALEKS class website becomes available for enrollment on 2/08/10
Week 1	Feb. 16 – Feb. 20	Review Topics Start Ch 1	
Week 2	Feb. 21 – Feb. 27	Finish Ch 1 Start Ch 2	All HW and Chapter Test for chapter 1 must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday February 28th.
Week 3	Feb. 28 – Mar. 6	Finish Ch 2	All HW and Chapter Test for chapter 2 must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday March 7th.
Week 4	Mar. 7 – Mar. 13	Start Ch 3	
Week 5	Mar. 14 – Mar. 20	Finish Ch 3	All HW and Chapter Test for chapter 3 must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday March 21st.
Week 6	Mar. 21 – Mar. 27	Start Ch 4	
Week 7	Mar. 28 – Apr. 3	Finish Ch 4	All HW and Chapter Test for chapter 4 must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday April 4th.
Week 8	Apr. 4 – Apr. 10	All Ch 5	All HW and Chapter Test for chapter 5 must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday April 18th.
	Apr. 11 – Apr. 17		SPRING BREAK
Week 9	Apr. 18 – Apr. 24	Start Ch 6	
Week 10	Apr. 25 – May 1	Finish Ch 6	All HW and Chapter Test for chapter 6 must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday May 2nd.
Week 11	May 2 – May 8	Start Ch 7	* Last day to drop and still receive a “W” is May 7th
Week 12	May 9 – May 15	More Ch 7	
Week 13	May 16 – May 22	Finish Ch 7 Start Ch 8	All HW and Chapter Test for chapter 7 must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday May 23rd.
Week 14	May 23 – May 29	More Ch 8	
Week 15	May 30 – June 5	Finish Ch 8 Start Ch 9	All HW and Chapter Test for chapter 8 must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday June 6th.
Week 16	June 6 – June 12	Finish Ch 9	All HW and Chapter Test for chapter 9 must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Friday June 11th.
			ALEKS PIE work to be completed by noon on Saturday, June 12th. At that time, the percentage of the pie completed will be attributed to your grade.
			ONLINE FINAL EXAM to be taken between 12:01 AM on Friday June 11 th and 11:59 PM on Saturday , June 12 th . (Set up to 4 hours aside!)

Grading Policies

Online homework average – completed online at the ALEKS website	100 points
Chapter Tests – 25 points per chapter for 9 chapters (lowest chapter dropped)	200 points
ALEKS pie completion – the percentage of your ALEKS pie you complete	200 points
Final Exam to be completed online the last two days of the class (see schedule)	200 points
Total Points Possible: 700	

Grading Scale

616 to 700 = A (88.00% or above)	
546 to 615 = B (78% - 87.99%)	
490 to 545 = C (70% - 77.99%)	
455 to 489 = D (65% - 69.99%)	(A “D” is a useless grade, so the usual 60% cutoff is ignored.)
Below 455 = F	