

COURSE POLICIES – MATH 401: SENIOR SEMINAR

INSTRUCTOR: Janice Sklensky

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OFFICE HOURS: Tentatively, M 2:00-2:50, T 2:30-3:20, W 11:30-12:20, Th 10:30-11:20, F 12:00-12:50.

OVERVIEW:

As the “capstone” to your undergraduate mathematics career, we hope Senior Seminar gives a completed feel to the major. Because each of you has constructed your major differently and has different hopes and dreams for what to do with it, my aim is not to cover particular *material*, but instead is to create a culminating mathematical *experience*. You will pursue an idea from a first glimmer of interest to a deep understanding, read technical non-textbook material, and communicate mathematically.

Most of this will be done through an independent semester-long project on a topic of your choice. You will pick a journal article that interests you and which explores a topic that is related to, but is not covered in, one or more of your math course(s). The paper will serve as a starting point for your explorations; you will then move beyond this paper using additional references.

COURSE STRUCTURE, GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS:

We begin the course by reading and discussing a paper together. This gives you experience reading non-textbook material while you are searching for your own topic. The remainder of the semester, you will present your work to the class, and ask questions of the other students about their work. Thus class-time will reinforce your understanding of your own topic, and also allow you to learn about the other students’ topics. Class participation is absolutely essential. The semester will culminate with a final paper on your topic and a half-hour presentation at the end of the semester that will be open to the public.

As part of preparing for the final paper and presentation, toward the end of the semester, you will formally be reviewed by other students and formally review other students’ papers and presentations.

EVALUATION

Weekly prep, presentation, & participation	25%	Abstract for Presentation	2%
Selection of Article	1%	Prep for/Review of Peer-Reviewed Talks	3%
Outline of Paper	5%	Prep for/Review of Peer-Reviewed Drafts	4%
Outline of Presentation	4%	Participation–Final Presentations	2%
Rough Draft of Paper	10%	Final Presentation	16%
Preparation for/meeting about Presentation	8%	Final Paper	20%

SOME IMPORTANT DATES:

2/1/12	Class in the Woolley Room; start looking for your first article
2/6/12	First article should be selected (e-mail me the pdf file)
3/26/12	Outline of Paper due
4/4/12	Outline of Presentation due
4/13/12	Rough draft of Paper due, 3:30pm
4/16-4/22/12	Prepare Presentation. Give, receive reviews of practice talk(s).
4/20/12	Abstract of Presentation due (e-mail it to me)
4/23/12	Feedback due - peer reviewed presentations
4/25/12	2nd draft of Paper due for peer review
4/30, 5/1/12	Final Presentations
5/2/12	Feedback due, Peer-Reviewed Paper
5/7/12	Final Paper due, 5pm (e-mail it to me. pdf file if possible; .doc if not)