

Attention all Calculus I Students: Required Pre-calculus Refresher Course

College-level mathematics is exciting and empowering, and the Mathematics Department wants your experience to begin in the best way possible! We know it is easy to feel rusty after a summer or more away from mathematics; therefore, we are providing and requiring a 6-week online preparation course —the ALEKS Prep. for Calculus—for all students who will take MATH 201, an introductory calculus course.

This should help you get back into the groove, and help you fill in gaps in your pre-calculus knowledge. Results from past years show that working through this online course will get you started on the path to success in college calculus. By doing the course over the summer, you can complete your first required assignment before the semester even begins.

Below we have provided information to help you understand what to expect and how to get started. This year we have reduced the number of topics covered and changed the grading scale.

What is the ALEKS Prep. For Calculus Course?

A “smart course” for students intending to enroll in Calculus I. It begins with a diagnostic test, then has work on topics that are just right for you. The course will take you through five important pre-calculus content areas: Functions & Graphs; Rational Expressions; Radical Expressions; Exponentials & Logarithms; and Trigonometry.

Is this required?

Yes, for all students enrolling in MATH 201: Calculus I. For students taking MATH 201 in the Fall semester 2018, your mastery of the five content areas as of **Aug. 27, 2018** will determine part of your MATH 201 grade. Achieving at least 90% in all five content areas will earn you an A- on the assignment; a higher grade is earned by exceeding this goal. Students taking MATH 201 in the Spring semester 2019 should complete the course by **January 22, 2019**.

Why is this required?

Different high school mathematics courses emphasize different topics, and it is easy to forget some of them after a summer or more without practice. This course will help refresh and fill in any gaps in your pre-Calculus knowledge. Don't worry if you find the course challenging -- it is not intended to discover whether or not you should take calculus, but rather to help you be as confident and successful as possible when you do.

When should I begin and when do I need to complete the course?

The course will be available by July 15. If you plan to take MATH 201 in the Fall semester 2018, we recommend you begin by **Aug. 1, 2018 and complete the course before Aug. 27, 2018**. If you plan to take MATH 201 in the Spring Semester 2019, we recommend that you begin by **Jan. 1, 2019** and complete the course before **Jan. 23, 2019**.

How do I begin?

Log into your myBucknell account, then click on the link to access the Prep. for Calculus course;

the link will be available July 15. The link should appear under your list of Moodle Courses.

Once you are logged into ALEKS, you will start with an adaptive diagnostic test to assess your knowledge and to determine which topics you need to brush up on. The program then takes you to problems on topics that are just right for you, retesting you along the way.

Allow three hours for the initial diagnostic test, though you may save your work and log out of the system at any time. We cannot predict how long it will take you to complete the course; everyone will need to spend an individual amount of time on it, and you will work according to your own schedule. **Be assured, though, the time you give the course is time well spent ensuring the best possible start to your university mathematics career!**

What if I run into difficulty while taking the course?

For technical problems with the software, click on Help at the top of the screen, or contact the ALEKS support team (http://www.aleks.com/support/contact_support). For all other problems or for mathematical questions, go to the ALEKS Prep. For Calculus Moodle page available through your myBucknell page or email math-precalcadmin@bucknell.edu.

Can I take the course in a language other than English?

The course is offered in English and Spanish. Once logged in, you can change between the two by clicking the arrow at the top right of your screen.

What if I score higher than 90% on the diagnostic?

Achieving 90% in all five content areas will earn you an A- on the assignment, and a higher grade is earned by exceeding this goal. We recommend that you view the pie chart to identify areas where you could use some additional practice and take advantage of your access to the course.

What if my diagnostic score is low?

Don't worry; your—and everyone else's—mathematics background is unique. You have been admitted to Bucknell because we know you can succeed here. The online course is not intended to discover whether or not you should take calculus; it is a resource to help you hit the ground running when you do. Your academic success at Bucknell will not be the result of your ALEKS score as you begin; rather, it will be the result of your dedication to learning throughout your time at Bucknell. The online course is just the beginning. If you have any concerns at all, please email math-precalcadmin@bucknell.edu.

Department of Mathematics, Bucknell University, December 2017.