MATH 432  History of Mathematics        Fall, 2015

Instructor:       Dr. Thomas Seidman
Office: MP 438    (410) 455-2438
E-mail: seidman@umbc.edu
Home page: http://userpages.umbc.edu/~seidman

Much of the relevant communication will be available online through the “message link” —
http://userpages.umbc.edu/~seidman/s15/m-432

Lectures: TuTh 2:30–3:45pm        Office Hours: TuTh 4–5:30pm

Text: Victor J. Katz, ”A History of Mathematics (Brief edition)” (2004 Pearson/Addison-Wesley) [I will also provide additional reading material by way of the message link.]

Course Learning Objectives: The historical development of various aspects of Mathematics, particularly the concepts of number, function, rigor. [Part A: We will begin by discussing and contrasting the mathematics of ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece. We will look at the transmission of mathematical culture through the Arab world and the solution of polynomial equations in Renaissance Italy. Part B: We will discuss the development of ”Analysis” to obtain a rigorous treatment of Calculus and differential equations. Part C: If time allows, we will discuss some aspects of current mathematical research – as the growing use of computers,etc.] Also, as this has been designated a ”writing intensive course,” we will spend some time on writing.

There will be a Midterm Exam, right after Thanksgiving.
The Final Exam will be given Thursday, Dec. 10, 1:00–3:00 pm

There will be two major writing assignments:
For the first (about 8–12 pages) you will be asked to submit a fairly detailed outline and then a draft before submitting a final version. You will then have the opportunity to submit a revised version for final grading.
The second (to be considered a take-home portion of the Final) will consist of 2 questions
(see userpages.umbc.edu/ seidman/f15/432summary):
1. What did you learn in this course? (personal summary)
2. What grade do you deserve? (with justification taken from your answer to question 1.) [Besides being graded as a second major writing assignment, its content will be taken seriously in determining the course grade.]

Grading: Your final grade for the course will be computed approximately as follows:
Homework 20 %  Writing Assignments 25+10 %  Midterm 15 %  Final Exam 30 %

Academic Misconduct: By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC Directory.