

1 Contact Information

Professor: Stephen Robinson

Office: 127 West

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2 Office Hours

Monday-Saturday: 8:30-9:15, 11:00-12:00

Or by appointment

3 Text

Discrete Dynamical Systems: Theory and Applications, by James T. Sande-
fur

4 Prerequisites

Linear Algebra and Calculus

5 Course Content and Goals

Chapters 1-4,6, and 7.

Improved modeling skills.

Improved ability to discuss, explain, and prove theoretical ideas.

6 Homework

Every day I will suggest a short list of problems. I expect you to attempt those problems that day, and I expect you to prepare solutions that are clear, complete, and precise. I will collect two of your solutions at the end of class on the following day. No late homework will be accepted. Each solution will be graded on a three point scale. Your total homework grade at the end of the semester will be worth 30% of your grade.

Motivated students will test their understanding further by looking through all of the problems at the end of each section that we study. This does not mean that you must prepare written solutions for all of the problems, but you should be sure that you understand what each problem is asking for, and that you are confident that you have a strategy for solving the problem.

7 Midterm

There will be one midterm exam, currently scheduled for Thursday, July 22. There will be both in-class and take-home parts to this exam. No calculators, textbooks, or notes are allowed in the room during the in-class part of the exam. Graphing calculators, Excel, Maple, your textbook, and your own class-notes are allowed on the take-home part, but you may not use any resources beyond this. No makeup exam will be offered. It will be worth 30% of your grade.

8 Final Exam

Our Final Exam is scheduled for Monday, August 9th, 2:00-5:00. This exam will be cumulative, but will emphasize the material covered during the second half of the course. No calculators, textbooks, or notes are allowed in the room during the exam. (Note: I might contrive a way to allow these resources on a limited portion of the exam. We will talk more about this later in the semester.) No makeup exam will be offered. It will be worth 40% of your grade.

9 Grading Policy

If you consistently demonstrate an ability to perform standard computations and solve standard problems, then you have a good chance of earning a C or better. If you can also solve some more difficult problems and provide some insight as to why the methods work, then you have a good chance of earning a B or better. If you become adept at solving standard and nonstandard problems, and if you can clearly justify all of the methods that you use, then you have a good chance of earning an A. Hard work is a prerequisite for earning a good grade (A, B, or C), but no amount of work will guarantee you a particular grade. Just do the best that you can, and then be proud of the grade that you have earned. If you are ever unsure about a grading policy, or if you are not sure where you stand, then you are welcome to ask.

Here is the grading scale that I will use at the end of the semester. I reserve the right to make adjustments to this scale, but I will not adjust the boundaries to anything higher than those listed below. Pluses and minuses are assigned to grades that are near a cutoff point.

A: Total $\geq 90\%$

B: $75\% \leq \text{Total} < 90\%$

C: $60\% \leq \text{Total} < 75\%$

D: $45\% \leq \text{Total} < 60\%$.