

*The study of mathematics cannot be replaced by any other activity that will train and develop man's purely logical faculties to the same level of rationality.—C.O. Oakley*

Dear Students (and Parents of Students) of PreAP Precalculus,

Welcome to another new year filled with new possibilities, new challenges to conquer, and new expectations to rise above. Your exceptional abilities, accomplishments, and acumen in mathematics have qualified you for this amazing college-level course. While this is not an Advanced Placement course, it does carry the status, weighted average, and thrill of learning more math as well as the workload and pacing of such a course. By the end of the year, you will have learned and practiced enough to confidently take any subsequent math course at any level. This goal will be realized through a variety of methods with great emphasis on individual practice. You will indubitably succeed if you are an involved (rather than a passive) member of this class.

#### I. WEBSITE/TEXTBOOK

My website, [www.korpiworld.com](http://www.korpiworld.com), is the primary source for you to get your in-class notes and homework worksheets. I have had several years' experience grading the AP Calculus tests, and this experience has given me great insight into the knowledge and skills that are needed to be successful for life after Precal. With this in mind, the notes and worksheets I have developed not only follow the state standards, but are also very closely aligned with the College Board curriculum for both AP Calculus AB and BC. Students wishing to have another resource for learning the material may check out a campus textbook. This is entirely optional, and students will not have to bring this book to class, nor will homework be assigned from it. While the textbook contains all the information contained on the website, its scope and sequence are a bit different than what we will be covering in class.

#### II. ATTENDANCE

Regular, daily attendance is critical for success in this class. I really look forward to seeing you each day. If you do, though, have a compelling and unavoidable circumstance for your absence, you are expected to get what was missed as soon as possible. Morning tutorials, study groups, and the website are available options to ensure you catch up and catch up quickly. And don't be tardy either.

#### III. CLASSROOM

1. The main rule for this class is to **care**. Care about yourself. Care about your classmates. Care about learning and making the most of each new assignment and assessment. From caring comes respect and courtesy. Whatever takes place in the classroom will be for the purpose of helping you or your classmates progress further down the road to understanding and mastering the subject. Be an asset to yourself and others, not a liability. Private, irrelevant conversations during instruction time and off-task behavior does not help you or your grade and is very distracting to the rest of us, so avoid them at all costs.
2. Come to class prepared to learn, because when the bell rings, it's "Game On!" Bring your pre-printed notes with you (or downloaded to your iPad), pen/pencil/stylus, and your TI **graphing calculator** (83 or 84 family). You may take notes in a composition book, spiral, or on your i-pad on Notability (I'd encourage this). You will need real paper (lined or unlined) on which to take quizzes.
3. Be prepared to tackle the warm-up on the screen when you enter the classroom. Once the bell rings, I expect private conversations to cease and noses put to the grindstone. Occasionally, the warm-up will be a timed quiz. Time starts when the bell rings, so again, don't be tardy.

#### IV. HOMEWORK WORKSHEETS

1. Just like sports, music, and numerous essential skills, practice is essential to mastery in mathematics. It would not be a surprise if this class proves to be a struggle for you on some level at some point during the year. This is normal and not a bad thing at all. If there's no struggle, there's no progress. Much like sweating and working through frustrating performance plateaus in sports or physical training, you

can work through the struggle in math by using the skills you already have, developing new skills I will teach you, and using the resources available to you (tutorials, website, textbook, study groups, tutors, online, etc.) Some of your practice will be in class, sometimes it might be done with your peers, often it will involve your calculator, but it will always involve your deliberate, concentrated efforts.

2. Homework worksheets are tailor-made to maximize your learning-to-effort ratio. I have personally selected each and every problem on each and every worksheet. I assure you, they are valuable and manageable. They will earn you points in one way and **ONE WAY ONLY: THE KNOWLEDGE YOU ACQUIRE, SKILLS YOU DEVELOP, EFFICIENCY YOU EARN, AND THE CONFIDENCE YOU ATTAIN** in diligently and earnestly tackling them will help you do well on quizzes and tests. As this is a level 3 class, as dictated in the course catalog, homework (worksheets) are not given any direct numeric value in determining your course grade. While no points are given to homework **THERE IS NO MORE IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO IN CLASS TO HELP YOUR GRADE (not to mention level of understanding) THAN TO DO YOUR WORKSHEETS DAILY AND RELIGIOUSLY.**
3. You will want your homework/WS time to be very efficient. Here are some tips:
  - Do something every day from your worksheet. Do the problems similar to the ones discussed in class that day. Come into tutorials the next morning to get assistance before new topics are discussed, watch the videos on YouTube, and/or get help from consulting the online KEY.
  - Those of you who are very careful and neat, thus slow and subject to bouts of homework paralysis, will have to settle for less than perfect here and there in order to get the job done without unnatural stress.
  - Those of you who are careless, thus fast, will have to slow down and show more work than you are used to showing on your assignments. You have to effectively communicate your process as well as your product; method and correct notation are important, not nit-picky, parts of the subject.
  - Another important resource is your fellow student. University research indicates that math students who worked regularly with a study group performed at a significantly higher level than those who did not. Study groups are an excellent way to get help and to reinforce what you know. You can waste a lot of time waiting for inspiration, when one suggestion from a study partner can get you going again. Try doing your homework worksheets with a good mix of people. But be warned: Copying does not equal Collaboration. ***You may learn in groups, but you will take assessments on your own!***
4. The amount of material we need to cover in PreAP Precalculus makes it impossible for me to take time out of class to go over every problem assigned. You should plan on using tutorial time before school to get extra help with problems not explained in class, consulting the online key for a hint, or watch the online videos of the lesson (link on my website).
5. This course emphasizes communication skills. With that in mind, writing and problem analysis will play a crucial role in your success. Many of the class activities, lessons, worksheets, quizzes, and tests will emphasize this important skill, such as “Justify” and “Explain the reason for your answer.”
6. Remember, doing homework daily is the rule, not the exception. Although worksheets are never **due**, you should **do** them daily. Again, there is no more single important activity you can do in this class to be successful than to treat your homework with the respect it deserves and work on it with due diligence.
7. Every Friday, two hand-crafted multiple-choice questions will be due at the beginning of class. These questions will be over any subject matter covered that week in class and will be over the same concept or skill. In other words, they are two different versions of the same question. These will count as a quiz grade. I will discuss this more in class.

## V. GRADING

1. Homework worksheets are 0% of your 9-weeks grade.
2. Quizzes make up 30% of your 9-weeks grade. Quizzes are helpful in convincing you to keep up and to help me determine if you are doing so or not. They will be of the announced and unannounced variety and will always be during the first 5 to 10 minutes of class. The quizzes will cover content from previous notes, worksheets, or formulas and theorems you are expected to know. They will be timed and neither notes nor worksheets will be allowed on quizzes.
3. Tests are 70% of your six-weeks grade. We will have three per 9-week grading period (roughly every three weeks). These tests will be in two formats, consisting of both multiple-choice and free-response answers. Each worksheet is in this format as well, so you'll have plenty of practice working each type of question. I have even been known to pull test questions from homework worksheets. Of course, these tests will be timed as well so that you can get comfortable working under time pressure. They must also be completed in one sitting. All students who score below a 70 on the original test are eligible to retest, after they correct their mistakes. All retests will be in the morning on the announced date and have a maximum score of 70.

## VI. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Unicorn honor code embodies an ideal of character, conduct, and citizenship, and is an important part of our school's mission and core identity. This applies especially to academic honesty and integrity. Passing off someone else's work as your own represents intellectual fraud and theft, and violates the core values of our academic community. To be honorable, you should understand not only what counts as academic dishonesty, but also how to avoid engaging in these practices. You should:

- review each course syllabus for the professor's expectations regarding course work and class attendance.
- attribute all ideas taken from other sources; this shows respect for other scholars. Plagiarism can include portraying another's work or ideas as your own, buying a paper online and turning it in as if it were your own work, or not citing or improperly citing references on a reference page or within the text of a paper.
- not falsify or create data and resources or alter a graded work without the prior consent of your teacher. This includes making up a reference for a works cited page or making up statistics or facts for academic work.
- not allow another party to do your work/exam/quiz or submit the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from the course teacher. **Cheating also includes taking an exam/quiz for another person, looking on another person's exam/quiz for answers, using exams/quizzes from previous classes without permission, or bringing and using unauthorized notes or resources (i.e., electronic, written, or otherwise) during an exam/quiz.**
- not facilitate cheating, which can happen when you help another student complete a take-home exam/quiz/assignment, **give answers to an exam/quiz, talk about an exam/quiz with a student who has not taken it**, or collaborate with others on work that is supposed to be completed independently.
- be truthful about the submission of work, which includes the time of submission and the place of submission (e.g., e-mail, online, in a mailbox, to an office, etc.)

You should understand that penalties result from dishonest conduct, ranging from failure of the assignment to expulsion from the clubs/organizations such as NHS. Please speak with your teachers if you need clarification about any of these policies.

## VI. FINAL THOUGHTS

This will be a rigorous course, but you will succeed if you work hard and actively participate in class. I expect the best from each and every one of you, and in return, you can expect my best efforts, providing the instruction, support, and encouragement for any diligent one of you to meet my expectations. Your success in this course is a joint effort among me, your parents, and of course, you the student. I earnestly believe that those who are successful in mathematics can be successful in *any* subject or discipline. The habits of mind and the required daily discipline developed in learning math are skills that transcend math and the classroom. These are valuable skills that will stay with you the rest of your lives and will help you be successful in many of your future endeavors. You are exceptional, and I know you are destined to do great things.

I look forward to working with you this year,

~Kevin Korpi

## VIII. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Room: 903
- Website: [www.korpiworld.com](http://www.korpiworld.com). **Monday Mails** are posted each Monday morning on this website, second link from the top.
- Email: [kkorpi@nbisd.org](mailto:kkorpi@nbisd.org) (**this is the BEST way to get in contact with me**)
- Phone: 830-627-6093
- Tutorials: Weekdays beginning at 8:00A.M. (except Wednesdays—Hall Duty)

***Do not falter. Do not shrink. Just think out your work and work out your think.—Nixon Waterman***