Writing assignments will ordinarily be due about once a week, on Monday. Exercises will also be given from time to time. All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. Late assignments will be penalized 50%. Assignments which are more than one class period late will receive no credit. There will also be an oral class presentation.

Writing assignments must be done by word-processor, unless your handwriting is neater and more legible than computer print-out.

There will be two one-hour tests, on Monday, October 4, and Monday, November 8. The final exam will be given on Monday, December 20, from 8-10 a.m., and will cover the whole course.

For each hour test, you may improve your score by rewriting your answers and handing them back in. Your new answers will be graded, and your actual score will be the average of the old score and the new. The tests will be handed back at the next class period after they are taken; in order to be eligible for extra credit, you must hand in your rewritten answers by the next class period after that.

If you miss an hour test or the final exam, you will not be allowed to make it up unless you were sick or otherwise unavoidably absent. If this happens, you must call me (my number is listed above) preferably before the test, or as soon as possible afterwards. In general, tests must be taken when they are scheduled; you may not take them at a different time because you are behind, or because you wish to be out of town.

All the exercises and writing assignments together will count toward \( \frac{3}{3} \) of your grade; each hour test will count \( \frac{1}{2} \), and the final exam will count \( \frac{1}{3} \).

Normally, you will not be allowed to take an Incomplete unless there is some serious reason, such as illness, which prevents you from completing the work of the course. Just getting behind is not a sufficient excuse. If you are taking the course Pass/Fail, you must get at least a C- to pass.

In all your work, correct use of the English language, including clear expression of ideas, as well as the mechanics of spelling, punctuation, grammar, neatness, and legibility will be considered in determining your grade.

You are responsible for all the material in the assigned sections of the text. Some of this material may not be discussed in detail in class. There may also be some material discussed in class which is not in the text. You are responsible for this material too.

Please note my office hours listed above. If you are having any difficulty with the course, please don’t hesitate to come in and get help. This is what you are paying for.

Grading Policy: I follow the standards which are stated in the USD Undergraduate Bulletin (p. 55): A, superior; B, very good; C, average; D, inferior; F, failure. Note that “superior” seems to indicate a considerably higher level of performance than “very good”. Thus, to get an A, you will have to demonstrate substantial mastery of the material of the course.

Because my exams are intended to test your understanding, they will be more difficult than those you are probably used to. I recognize this, and consequently I also use a non-traditional grading scale. Typically, I assign letter grades to percentage scores more or less as follows: 85–100 → A; 80–85 → A–; 75–80 → B+; 70–75 → B; 65–70 → B–; 60–65 → C+; 55–60 → C; 50–55 → C–; 30–40 → D; 0–30 → F. These grade lines are not absolute, and I may in some cases adjust them up or down if, in my judgment, an exam is easier, or harder, than I intended.
Writing Assignment # 1: Due 13 September 2004

For this assignment, you are to read the two essays "History of mathematics: Why and how", by ANDRÉ WEIL (originally a talk given at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Helsinki, 1978; I have copied it from WEIL’s Collected Works) and "Mathematics: an Historian’s Perspective", by JOSEPH DAUBEN (from The Intersection of History and Mathematics, Birkhäuser, 1994).

These essays present contrasting views on the historiography of mathematics (i.e., how the history of mathematics ought to be written). You are to write an essay (of 2-4 pages) discussing the issues debated by WEIL and DAUBEN and stating your own opinion, with supporting arguments. WEIL and DAUBEN raise many issues, and you will not be able to do justice to all of them in an assignment of this length. It would be best to pick 2 or 3 points and comment on them in some depth. As you will see, WEIL and DAUBEN disagree on many things. Part of the purpose of this assignment is to get you to think about these points of disagreement. You are not expected to get the “right” answer, but your essay should show evidence that you have considered the issues thoughtfully.

Please do not pad your essay. It will be graded, not on length, but on its development of ideas (and, of course, on clarity of expression, grammar, spelling, neatness, legibility, etc.).