

How to Use MyMathLab Effectively

(Start on course list page)

These are the basics of getting into and using your online course. After you have registered in CourseCompass then you can log in and you will see something like this screen. You may have just one course listed or you may have more if you have taken a previous class using CourseCompass. We'll click on our course – this will get us into our main class website. The first thing to notice is the Announcements page – I'll post important announcements here frequently. It may take a moment to load, so wait to see if there are any new announcements before you go work.

When you log in for the first time to our course, you will have completed Part 1 of the orientation, taken the orientation quiz and received your course ID, and registered for the MyMathLab course. Please note that MyMathLab has the option of temporary access to the site if you are waiting for financial aid and don't immediately have the funds. You must register for MyMathLab today in order to complete the required orientation assignments by the due dates.

The first thing you'll need to do is run the Browser check – there is a link for it here in this first announcement. You'll only need to do this once on any computer that you are using.

Once you've completed that successfully you'll next go to the "How to Enter Answers Using the MathXL Player" tour and learn some things about how to use the MathXL notation on the homework. Then you'll go to complete the orientation assignment part 2. This will ask you to do several things as you move through the problems – complete each step to finish the orientation. In order to access it from our Home Page you can click on it here under the upcoming assignments or find it in the calendar.

Once you've completed this orientation assignment you will be finished with the orientation for this course. You won't need to go back to CANVAS this semester – you will do everything through our class MyMathLab site.

Let's do a little tour of our class site.

This link called "Course Information" has the syllabus and the course calendar posted here. Please be sure that you have printed the course calendar and posted it somewhere you will see very often – by your computer, on the fridge, somewhere so that you keep track of those deadlines.

These are called "breadcrumbs" along the top of the course here – they show you the path that you went – you can always click on these to get back. This one will take me all the way out to the Courses list, this one will get me to our main course page. Let's go there.

On this page you'll see that MyMathLab has some built-in calendars that are helpful – this one shows you the week-at-a-glance and also has icons for when you complete an assignment or when I post an announcement. This “Coming Soon...” pane tracks which assignments will be due next. You'll need to refer to the course calendar to keep track of all assignments for the course.

The next blue button is called “Math Helps”. Here I've tried to collect a lot of resources for helping you succeed in this class. You'll look at these more when you do part 2 of the Orientation Assignment

Next you'll see buttons for the major course content. This class has been divided into 7 learning modules, roughly following the chapters in our textbook. Each module has its own button, and there is also one for each of the three major exams (the two midterms and the final exam). I'll show you inside a module in a minute – let's keep looking down the options.

The “Communications” button has the Discussion Board and Send Email options. You can email back and forth to your instructor or to other students in the course. Whatever email address you use when you register for CourseCompass is the one that will be used. You don't have to use your SLCC email address, and you can set up your SLCC email address to automatically forward to another email. When you register for Course Compass /*MyMathLab*, please use an email address that you will check regularly

The discussion board is where you will post for some participation assignments (remember that participation is 5% of your grade!) and where you can work with your instructor and your classmates to resolve questions you may have.

If you look here at the discussion board, the first forum is for Introductions. As part of your orientation assignment you will post a short introduction to your classmates and instructor. To use the discussion board, click on the hyperlink for this forum, then click on Add New Thread, then you can type in your name and then respond to the prompts.

The next forum is for any questions, issues, or comments you might have about the course. This is also generally the forum where I post helpful hints and general class information that doesn't show up in an announcement or email.

There are also discussion forums that will serve as participation assignments for many of the modules in the course.

The next one is called “Wimba Classroom”. Wimba is a virtual classroom program that your instructor may use to meet online. Wimba is GREAT! Your instructor will give you more information about Wimba sessions during the semester.

The final button is titled "GRADEBOOK" and is just what it says. Click here at any time this semester to see your up-to-date percentage in the class. You can view your overall score as well as scores on individual assignments. You can also review your homework or online tests here by using this button.

Okay, let's click on Module 1 and see what you'll do to actually begin the course work. You can see that Module 1 will consist of sections 1.3 and sections 2.1 through 2.5. You will also complete create your SLCC General Education ePortfolio and you'll have a discussion board assignment for this module. There is also a link for the module test that we'll look at in a moment.

The sections and assignments are listed in the order in which you should access and work on them. So let's start with section 1.3. I'll click on it and I'll first see the objectives that I'll be mastering in this section.

Next you'll see a link to textbook reading assignments. If you click on that folder, you'll see that there's a video lecture covering that section of material and a link to the multimedia textbook section. That has the whole textbook online with some added features. Of course you can also read your hard copy of the textbook (and most of my previous students recommend having one). The orientation assignment will introduce you to some of the extra features in the multimedia textbook.

After that there are various additional resources for helping you learn

Then we see the links to "complete the section homework" and "complete the section quiz". Now because of the way the program is set up, this link will show you all homework for that chapter in the textbook, but make sure you only work the section you've just learned about. For every assigned section there is a homework assignment and also a quiz to complete. You'll need a math notebook for this class and every time you are working on online homework or online quiz or online module tests, write down the section number, the problem number, the problem, and write out all your steps and work. This will help you stay organized and practice for presenting your solutions on projects and the big exams, it will help you learn and retain the material as you write it down in an organized way, and it will be a resource for reviewing for exams. Also, if you miss a problem on a module test and have all your work written down in your notebook, you may be able to get partial credit on a problem. If you miss a problem on an online module test, it will give you a zero for that problem. However, if when you review your work in your notebook you feel that your answer merits some partial credit, you can email your instructor and explain what went wrong on the problem and you may be eligible for partial credit on that problem. Keep a notebook and keep organized – it will really help you succeed in this course!

Let's look at the assignment for 1.3 This screen shows the Homework overview – green checks mean I have already completed a problem and got it correct, the red x means I

missed that one. These little icons to the side mean that there is a video clip or some animation that goes with that problem – so some help features that you’ll be able to access inside of a particular problem.

I missed question 3 – let’s go look at it. A nice thing about your online homework is that if you are willing to figure out your mistakes and learn to do the problems correctly, you can always get 100% on your homework assignments – and as they count for 10% of your overall grade that is really helpful, and this type of learning, where we get instant feedback and immediately correct ourselves – is much better than having to wait a week for someone to grade your work – this way you can choose to not move on until you understand the material.

Okay, so on problem 3, the red x means I missed it and the correct answer is shown, but there is a red triangle in the corner. The red triangle means I missed it and if I mouse – over it will show me what answer I put it – I answered ___ and the correct answer was _____. When you get a problem wrong, this “Similar Exercise” button at the bottom shows up. If you click on this you won’t leave number 3 but you’ll get another one like it. So you can also use this button even if you got a problem right, but you feel like you need another one to practice. I recommend that if you’ve used any of the help buttons on the right hand side that you always do another Similar Exercise without any helps before moving on. So whenever you see the Similar Exercise button, don’t click on it unless you want to re-do the problem. If you’ve got it right and you’re ready to move on, you need to click the next problem number at the top. You don’t have to do them in order – you just click on the number of the one you’d like to look at.

So for this one that I got wrong, let’s do a similar exercise.

Now I’m going to click on Check answer and watch what happens with the red x up above – it will change into a green check – yay! So any problems that you miss you CAN go back and you can fix them.

Let’s look at another problem – it says ... Let’s put in that the answer is 1 (it’s not 1, but I want to show you what happens when you get one wrong.) Many times when you miss one, the computer will prompt you with a hint that will help you try again – we can change our answer and try again – check answer – one more time! After the 3rd try it tells you the correct answer and you get a red x. That is when you can try a Similar Exercise to replace this one! It would be a great idea to use the help buttons on the side or look at some of the other resources or your notes from reading or watching the video lectures to review before trying your Similar Exercise. Questions on your MML Orientation Assignment will introduce you to the help buttons on the right and to the Math palette here on the left of the screen.

Do notice the Print button at the bottom here – see that we have the option to just print one problem (say I want to take it with me to the Math Lab to get some help on this

one) or to print the whole assignment. This is a great way to work on your homework other places than in front of your computer – while commuting, lunch breaks, whatever, when you have time but no internet access. You can print out your homework and work on it, and then when you get to a computer you can enter your answers and check them, and then use the help buttons to figure out any that you missed.

To move between problems, click on the problem number at the top, and notice these two arrows – the single one moves you ahead one problem and the double one will show all the rest. When you are done working on the assignment (pausing in the middle or all the way completed) click on the Save button at the bottom. Every time you click “Check Answer” MML is saving your work, so even if a computer or internet connection crashes it won’t lose any work that you have submitted. Save takes you back to the overview screen.

After completing the online homework, then do the quiz for each section. The quiz is very similar to the homework, but without the help options available. It serves as your “check” to see if you really understand the material. Notice that you get 5 tries on each quiz (up until the due date).

Let’s go back out to the Module – notice the ePortfolio assignment and the discussion board assignment are posted here where you need to work on it. Pay attention to our Course Calendar for the assignment due dates.

Okay, next thing to look at here is the information about the Module Test. When you click on the link you’ll see that two tests are listed here – The Module 1 Test is what you will take.

This list at the bottom has the publisher-provided sample tests. These are in no way created by your instructor, but still would be a great option in your preparation for the “real thing”.

Notice that you can change which chapter you’re seeing so that you can see sample tests from chapters 1 and 2. Scores on the sample tests don’t count towards your grade at all but are tracked for your information.

For your real module test, remember that you have only 90 minutes to take it. Time starts as soon as you access the test. Be sure that you have studied and prepared before opening the test and that you have adequate uninterrupted time. You will very likely NOT need all 90 minutes for these, but as you are working with the computer we want you to not feel stressed for time. Some of the module tests are longer than others, but all have this same time limit. All online tests will be closed book, closed notes, no helps. Failure to take the tests under these conditions is CHEATING and will also cheat you out of preparation for the mid-terms and final given under the same

conditions.

Notice that after completing Module 3 is the first midterm exam, after Module 5 you will take the second midterm exam, and after completing Module 7 is when you will take the final exam for the course. Refer to your syllabus for dates for taking these exams. Clicking on the appropriate button will give you information about the structure of each of these tests as well as helps for your preparation and review.