Math 102: Mathematics for Liberal Arts Students

Texts:
- For All Practical Purposes, Eighth Edition.

Catalog Description:
For students whose primary interest is neither engineering nor science; promotes the understanding of mathematical thinking in a variety of topics, including common real-world problems; uses puzzles and experiments to motivate the material. Topics include probability, statistics, and/or other topics chosen by the instructor.
Prerequisite: MTH 020 or score of at least 27 on Part I and 35 on Part II of the CUNY COMPASS proficiency/placement exam.

How to ace this course:
This is a challenging course. Most students enrolling in Math 102 have experienced math primarily as a collection of formulas and rules. In Math 102 you will experience a different sort of math, driven more by models than formulas, with progress measured by ideas rather than rules. No longer is “just tell us how to get the answer” a reasonable request! Up to this point, you have been learning how to mix paints and how to hold a brush, now it is time to learn how to make art.

The upside is that this course will be far more interesting than any math course you've taken. The downside is that you must be more attentive to learning the material. Ideally, you should skim the text before class (the day before or 10 minutes before, it doesn't matter). Don't sweat over the details, just get a general idea about what your instructor will be talking about. After class, you should work the “Skills check” exercises for that lecture. The exercises are each fairly short if you remember the lecture, which is why you should start them as soon as possible after the lecture. Later, open the study guide and work those exercises. The study guide contains more (and better) examples than the text, as well as a list of definitions and sample quizzes. If you find someone to work with, that will help tremendously. Be generous: when someone helps you solve a problem, give them credit.

Whether you are an ace or not, essentially all of this course will be new for you. If you apply yourself to the course steadily, a small bit every day, you will find yourself enjoying Math 102. And acing it.

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