

## Welcome Letter – Spring 2021

This semester is going to be challenging. This is new territory for us all but we can work together to help each other succeed. Know that I am here to help you. Obviously, we are staying at home this semester to help control a virus whose infectiousness and virulence is unknown to us. But it does *not* mean that we cannot learn and work together.

I have attached your syllabus here. We will be using Zoom, an app that the college purchased to help us connect “face-to-face”. By no means is it perfect, but it will help us talk in real time. We will meet in Zoom once a week for about an hour. I will use my time to connect with you and to briefly explore the material. I do *not* intend to lecture because I do not think Zoom (coupled with our internet connections) is a good platform for that. My instruction will come in the form of separate videos and resources that I post on my Website [www.stlmath.com](http://www.stlmath.com). The Zoom meetings will be used for you to ask questions directly over the material and my videos. So, it is important that you watch them, and even attempt the MML homework, *before* each meeting. The MML homework is scheduled to be due a few days after these meetings so you have time to ask questions and then finish the homework.

You should familiarize yourself with my Website [www.stlmath.com](http://www.stlmath.com). Click on Courses on the left side to get started. I have lots of resources and you will be required to use them.

The publisher of our books, Pearson, provides us with the online homework and testing site MyMathLab (MML). Your course fees purchased MML so you do *not* need any more money. There are tons of resources available on MyMathLab. All homework assignments contain video(s). Each video within a homework assignment will count for one point but also gives you much-needed instruction. You must watch these videos through the Homework screens and not access them elsewhere (like under the Multimedia Library) or you will *not* get credit for watching them. You should take the time to watch them, taking notes on paper as you watch. Honestly, taking notes as you watch often makes them more palatable. Also in MML, you will find the Ask My Instructor option under Question Help. This allows you to write me a quick email about a specific problem if you get stuck. It is the most-useful but under-used tool in MML.

You need to be aware that I will be recording and posting these Zoom sessions for people who could not attend. To protect your privacy, you are *not* required to let Zoom use your camera (that shows your face and house) or even use your own name in Zoom calls. However, if you do use an alias, please tell me through a private chat or email so that I know who is attending. I am *not* taking formal attendance this semester but will keep an informal tally and I would still like to know to whom I am talking. These recordings will be password-protected so get the username and password from me; I will send a separate email.

The syllabus (and [www.stlmath.com](http://www.stlmath.com) for that matter) has the course ID and access code for MML to get you started. Feel free to get started on Jan. 15 but we officially start Tuesday, or

Wednesday depending on your class' section. (Monday, January 18 is Dr. King Day and there is no school.)

Lastly, I want to stress that I work for you. I am *not* the boss; *you are*. My job is to help you succeed. Ask questions early and often. I am friendly and eager to help. Good luck to you. Look for more emails coming from me.

Stefanie O'Leary-Johnson (Stef OJ)