

Calculus Written Work

Guidelines

- Each section of homework begins on a separate page with the student's name, section number, and point total from Edfinity at the top. Each additional page should contain at least the section number at the top.
- Each problem is clearly identified. Problems do not need to be in the order they were presented in Edfinity, but it should be clear which problem you're working. If you do not work your problems in consecutive order, then you may want to identify the problems you can find at the top of each page.
- For simple problems, the original problem is copied down. Students have a tendency to just write the answer and that provides no help to you when you go back later to look at your notes to study because you do not know what the problem was.
- For story problems, a brief description of the problem is sufficient (example, "minimize the distance") and then write down the key aspects of the problem. If pictures are helpful, then they should be included in your notes.
- Only write in a single column and write top to bottom. Do not snake a problem around trying to minimize the amount of paper used. Trying to cram all of the work onto a single page leads to disorganization and makes it difficult to follow. Problems that start on the left side, work down and then continue on the right side of the page are hard to follow as well.
- It should be obvious what your final answer is. It does not have to be circled or boxed, especially if it is the last thing written on the problem. If it isn't the last thing, then highlight, circle, or box it. If you do a check of your answer, then clearly identify that you are checking the work (writing "check:" in front of it is a good indicator). If your answer is in the middle of the work because your work is all over the place, then see the previous item about writing in a single column.
- Draw a line through any mistakes, do not erase them. If there is room (remember you're only using one column), make the correction there. If you begin a problem over from scratch, you may use an X through the original problem (do not scribble it out) but you should still identify what went wrong. Students think that their work needs to be perfect. When you erase your mistakes, you forget what it was that caused them in the first place. By drawing lines through mistakes and making a note about what the problem was (arithmetic, algebra, trigonometry), you can start to see recurring patterns and then be on the lookout for those mistakes in the future. If you erase the mistakes, all of that is lost; students think "I got 100% on the homework so I understand this" and forget about the having to use all four attempts in Edfinity to get it right. When students turn in homework with no mistakes and corrections, instructors suspect the student may just be copying work from an online homework site rather than doing the work themselves and that is bad for understanding.

- Indicate the eventual correctness of each problem with a checkmark or x-mark. For questions that you were unable to figure out, annotate what parts you are certain about, where your confidence wanes, where you are completely lost, etc. These are good questions to get help with and having an idea of where the problem lies can save the person helping you.
- When you encounter something tricky or new, or need an identity you don't have memorized, then write down an explanation. For example, if you use a half-angle identity for $\cos^2 x$ and didn't have it memorized, identify and write it down the formula (this is a good use for all that space you have available since you're only writing in one column). At some point, you will know it from memory and it won't be necessary to write it down anymore.
- When you have to get additional help in working a problem, identify where you got it from. Was it from the book? Was it from the instructor's notes in Canvas? Was it using OfficeHours or practicing a similar problem in Edfinity? Was it from Khan Academy or Delta Math? Did you use a homework resource site like Chegg or Slader? Was it a YouTube video? Getting help is not bad, but doing it for the majority of the problems can be an indication that you are not understanding the material or that you are lacking prerequisite skills. Listing when and where you struggle can help identify good resources and provide insight when additional help is needed.
- The work is original. Do not just copy solutions from manuals or websites. A major clue you've done this is when the work matches nothing we've done in class or in the book.

Grading

If you consider the guidelines above as the requirements, then each section of homework will be scored according to the following holistic rubric.

Rating	Score	Description
Awesome	105%	Exceptional job that really impresses the teacher
Good	90%	Beyond what was required
Okay	75%	Satisfactory completion of requirements
Fair	60%	Almost there, but needs some development
Poor	45%	Minimal attempt at meeting requirements
None	0%	Did not participate or submission nowhere close to expectations

Each of the sections for a unit (exam) will be combined into a single assignment in the gradebook. Each section will be worth 2 points, so that if there are five sections covered for the exam, then it will be a 10 point assignment. The assignment will be included with the Edfinity homework assignments for that unit.

One homework score per unit will be dropped, so if you choose not to do this, it will not directly

affect your grade. However, choosing to do this will indirectly lead to higher scores on the other homework assignments and on the exams.

Your written work for each section should be given to the instructor after you have completed the Edfinity work. You have up to 8 days after we finish a section to complete the homework in Edfinity, so the written homework will be accepted up to two (2) weeks after we finish a section. Please don't take that long, though, as the idea is that you will use the feedback to improve.

Absolutely no late work will be accepted after May 11.

Explanation / Rationale

Edfinity only accepts your final answer, it does not receive or consider any of the work that it took to get there. If you make a simple arithmetic or algebra mistake, Edfinity counts the problem wrong. If you have no clue what you are doing, but find the answer online or happen to guess lucky and get the right answer, you get full credit. Neither of these are the desired outcome for long term success.

The written work for your homework will be collected and examined by the instructor. The instructor will not be looking at the homework to change the score from Edfinity, but to provide suggestions on ways that you can improve your understanding. The instructor is looking at things such as organization, clarity, completeness, originality, corrections, and understanding.

These guidelines are to help you be successful. In college, we tend to focus on the content and expect that students already know how to be successful. What we're seeing more of is that students were never taught how to study or do homework. When they come to the instructor for help, they have no useful work to show.

At the beginning of the semester, these suggestions may seem like a lot of extra work because they are foreign to you, especially if you are used to having answers come naturally. I expect that as the semester progresses, this will become easier and easier for you and the benefits of doing homework well, as opposed to just doing homework, will start to show through. This will also help when it comes time for the exams and work will be part of your grade.