

Instructor: Christensen, Jens

Course: Calculus II

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18 surveys / 26 enrolled in MATH 112 A (MWRF 0820)

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Student: 1

Reason: Major or minor requirementEffort: In addition to weekly homework assignments, I made an effort to find online lectures and other sources of information to reinforce what was taught in class. In preparation for quizzes/ tests, I would redo homework assignments and read relevant sections in the textbook.Understanding & Appreciation: This course helped me better understand concepts that I learned during calculus in high school. Additionally, it expanded on these concepts and allowed me acquire better critical thinking skills.Intellectual Growth: This course challenged me in ways that some of my other courses haven't, so it allowed me to grow as a student and reevaluate my own expectations so that I can be more prepared in the future.Quality: I believe that the quality of teaching in this class was very high. Professor Christensen thoughtfully and clearly answered any and all questions, and made himself completely available during office hours to clarify any confusion with in-class material. Also, his tests/ quizzes were dynamic in that he adjusted the length/ difficulty based on where the class was after each one, indicating that he was paying careful attention to the progress of the class at all times.

Student: 2

Reason: Major or minor requirementEffort: I put far less effort than I should have into this course. As a result, my grade isn't what I would have hoped it to be. I didn't do most of the homework on my own because it really wasn't a priority compared to other work I had.Understanding & Appreciation: I understand the material in the course. I still don't like calculus.Intellectual Growth: Having actually used all of this in my normal major classes, I see why I need to learn it, but I certainly don't enjoy solving math problems just because.Quality: The professor was okay. He was nice, but his lecturing was a bit tedious at times because there's only so much you can do when teaching this stuff. He was helpful, though, so at least I didn't feel too lost.

Student: 3

Reason: Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirementReason: Other requirementReason: Interest in the course materialAdditional Reason(s): Pre- med trackEffort: I completed every homework even assignment, even though all were optional. Besides homework, I did about two to three hours or studying for the tests.Understanding & Appreciation: I have a much greater appreciation for mathematicians. Endless ways to manipulate and solve equations and mathematical problems exist, and taking this course made me realize how much more constitutes mathematics than what I previously imagined.Intellectual Growth: Calculus probably improved my problem solving and critical thinking skills. Solving these difficult problems involves a high degree of critical thinking and experimentation of algebraic techniques.Quality: Professor Christensen does a great job of explaining anything and everything, not just the basic knowledge required for the Calculus 2 curriculum. He gives difficult questions as examples in class and for homework, allowing the most fulfilling understanding of the course material.

Student: 4

Reason: Exploration of possible major or minorEffort: I probably put in at least an hour a night, plus additional hours before tests and quizzes. I would read through the textbook and do homework problems in addition to his homework sets.Understanding & Appreciation: It made me less interested in math and not that excited about math.Intellectual Growth: It helped me become a more analytical thinker

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Quality: I think he comes well prepared to class everyday with a lesson plan, but i think his lesson plans aren't that effective. The majority of everything he does are examples, which really are not as helpful as just giving a definition and then an example or two. I think it would be helpful if at the end of every class, the last 10-15 min he had some problems that were on the topic we just did that we would do with a small group with 3-4 other peers. That way it would allow students to try using the skills he meant to teach us, and allow us to get immediate in class feedback about if we are understanding what we are doing. I also don't think he is the most clear when explaining things, and find it very annoying when he skips showing multiple steps on the board saying "we should know how to do it". If you're doing an example, do the whole example and make it worthwhile. If half the steps are skipped it makes it harder for those of us who might not have perfectly understood some material we previously covered, even if we have technically learned it by now. I also see a great degree of variance between difficulty on the quizzes, tests, and homework, so its hard to prepare and know what to expect. One week a quiz is very very easy and the average is a 95%, the next week its very hard and the average is a 65%. It would just help a lot to have more consistency so when studying you can know what to expect.

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Student: 5

Reason: Major or minor requirement

Effort: Weekly, I spend a number of hours outside of class in Professor Christensens office, with a tutor and doing the homework.

Understanding & Appreciation: I learned a lot of new calculus, and learned new ways that mathematics can be applied to the world and other subjects here at Colgate.

Intellectual Growth: I learned a few things about calculus. While I will probably soon forget the particulars of the problems we fed, there were a few wonderful moments in this class when I felt we were learning some philosophically elevated subjects. New math I hadn't previously experienced.

Quality: Prof. Christensen is a wonderful professor. He is well liked by students, is clear and always strives to be reasonable. Above all, he is available to his students. I truly feel as though he cares about my success.

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Student: 6

Reason: Exploration of possible major or minor

Reason: Interest in the course material

Effort: I found that my class notes did not help me very much and had to spend a great deal of time finding the topics we learned in the class textbook and self-teaching. I also found that youtube videos of other professors from different schools teaching the same material was more helpful to my understanding of the materials than the actual lectures because Professor Christensen would, quite often, jump steps in the arithmetic and move foreword without making sure that the class was able to follow along.

Understanding & Appreciation: I gained little understanding of the topic for this course. The class actually made me want to stop pursuing mathematics courses at Colgate. Although there is no doubt that Professor Christensen loved the subject he was teaching his style of teaching did not help me understand what I was doing. He liked to go into brief lectures on why we were doing the mathematics we were doing when during that time he could have helped to solidify the correct ways of integrating the problems which would have been more helpful for the class.

Intellectual Growth: I had to learn self-study habits that helped me in other classes as well.

Quality: I did not like the style of teaching but I believe the thursday classes reviewing the homework were to most helpful classes because they were driven by the students. But, other than that I did not enjoy the course.

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Student: 7

Reason: Major or minor requirement

Reason: Exploration of possible major or minor

Effort: I've put a mass amount of effort into learning the material and understanding the concepts. It was highly challenging for me but through many hours of studying, I grasped the concepts and did better on tests and quizzes

Understanding & Appreciation: It has made me enjoy doing math more now that I understand on a different level. I now don't dread doing math.

Intellectual Growth: It really contributed to my appreciation for calculus and other higher level math classes.

Quality: The teaching in this course was well organized and clear, though sometimes details were passed over and unexplained and that resulted in general class confusion. He was highly engaging which is what made class fun and definitely cares about his students.

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Student: 8

Reason: Exploration of possible major or minor

Reason: Core or Areas of Inquiry (distribution) requirement

Reason: Interest in the course material

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Effort: I put in unbelievable amounts of time into doing well in this class. My roommates even tell me so, and say that I'm "always doing math" and "never see me doing anything else for my other courses." I would go to office hours, sometimes schedule individual appointments with Professor Christensen, redo all the homework problems in prep for quizzes and tests, read through the textbook chapters, and would also watch a lot of youtube videos and tutorials on various subject matter to get clearer explanations

Understanding & Appreciation: Because I worked so hard I was able to understand the work that it takes to succeed in this math class and level of difficulty. Even spending so much time with the material, it still came uneasily to me, and I definitely have a new appreciation for those who find it comes more easily to them.

Intellectual Growth: This class taught me that even when you've studied hours on hours and have redone all the homework problems, you've only just gotten started. It taught me to think conceptually in ways I never had to in high school, and think critically about the subject matter.

Quality: Overall, Professor Christensen is a good teacher. Office hours were great and time with him alone was awesome in terms of getting the attention I need. He is also such a nice and welcoming person so I felt really comfortable with asking the questions I needed to. In class, though, sometimes he was unclear in his examples and would skip steps to the point that a lot of us were confused. I would have also liked him to do answers to the homework himself because sometimes students' work is messy or incorrect, and to also post the answers not the day before a quiz, but maybe a few days before a quiz to give those who need more time to dedicate to the subject enough time to feel like they grasp the homework.

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Student: 9

Reason: Exploration of possible major or minor

Reason: Interest in the course material

Effort: Took office hours and work on my own to keep up but most was learned in class

Understanding & Appreciation: Challenged me a ton. Gave us the hardest problem sets making us really have to think.

Intellectual Growth: Kept me engaged. Always had to be on top of the topic at hand.

Quality: Very nice professor who is always looking to help out and answer questions. Skips many steps when solving problems, but those are usually small algebra steps that would otherwise take up too much time.

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Student: 10

Reason: Elective within major or minor

Effort: I tried to understand the concepts on my own, and if I didn't I talked to the professor. I worked through multiple extra problems in hopes of gaining a better understanding.

Understanding & Appreciation: I have taken this course before, but I learned more in this course about why we actually perform problems the way we do.

Intellectual Growth: It helped me to try multiple ways to solve a problem, and that I have multiple resources stored up from all my education.

Quality: When the teaching was concise, it was very helpful. However, a lot of times we went over multiple examples without out being told before hand what we were doing. There would be class days that I didn't feel like I learned very much at all, and I think this was partially because if you don't follow from the start of a concept, then it is hard to catch up.

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Student: 11

Reason: Major or minor requirement

Effort: 8/10

Understanding & Appreciation: I learned it all pretty well

Intellectual Growth: Helped me understand my physics work better

Quality: Professor Christensen was very knowledgeable and led effective classes. The only potential weakness would be that explanations of how he did problems were not always perfectly clear but that was minor

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Student: 12

Reason: Exploration of possible major or minor

Effort: I put a lot of effort into this course and I studied a lot for the tests. Unfortunately, I felt that for some problems on the test, no matter how hard you studied, they were incredibly difficult (almost impossible) to solve.

Understanding & Appreciation: I definitely understand concepts in the subject area better. I wanted to take this class because I liked math in high school but I'm not sure I am going to pursue it.

Intellectual Growth: I learned that time management is important and that you must start studying days in advance to perform well on the exams.

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Quality: The professor was very kind and always available for extra help but I think his teaching methods were a bit confusing. He would solve and complete various problems before giving the class the general formula or law that was needed to solve the problems. I think I would have been able to learn and understand the material better if the general formula was given first and then could be used to solve related questions. In addition, occasional questions on exams/quizzes were not solved by the majority of the class clearly showing that the class did not have an understanding of a certain concept.

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Student: 13

Reason: Exploration of possible major or minorReason: Reputation of the instructorEffort: I put a modest amount of effort into the course. It is hard to equally balance the effort that I put into each class and I ranked this one as not requiring as much effort as some others. That being said I didn't slack off at all in this course, I still tried very hard.Understanding & Appreciation: This course greatly increased my understanding and appreciation of calculus.Intellectual Growth: This course didn't contribute to my intellectual growth much but that's very hard to do with a calculus class.Quality: I thought Professor Christensen was great. He is very helpful and understanding. He is flexible with his schedule. He clearly wants what is best for his students. His teaching was clear. He was never condescending. Overall I greatly enjoyed class with Professor Christensen.

Student: 14

Reason: Major or minor requirementEffort: I studied whenever possible for this course, especially before quizzes and exams.Understanding & Appreciation: Doing many problems both in and out of class allowed me to rigorously practice fundamental calculus skills.Intellectual Growth: As great emphasis was put on making sure that the final answer was well supported by rigorous reasoning, the course helped me develop logic skills.Quality: The professor solves numerous examples on board and is always ready for a question. Class discussions are usually not present but this is hardly surprising considering the nature of a math class and the amount of topic that needs to be covered.

Student: 15

Reason: Major or minor requirementReason: Exploration of possible major or minorReason: Interest in the course materialEffort: I put in a significant amount of effort into this course. The beginning of the course was hard for me because I was not dedicating enough time to it. After the first few weeks I have been doing work all work instead of the night before and getting help from others. I have also been studying days in advance to bring my grade back up to where I want it to be.Understanding & Appreciation: The main thing that contributed to my understanding of the course subject was the use of life applications. Usually math feels like there is no application or use in life, but we constantly applied our math to physics, engineering, biology, economics and many others. This was a great way for me to learn more about the course material because I could see the use for it.Intellectual Growth: This course taught me to not only be proactive with my work but to take make sure that I start off well. I cannot afford to have my first grade of a course to be low like I had it for this course. This course also taught me to budget my time more efficiently as well as doing homework that is not required to actually learn the material better.Quality: I thought the teaching was done well for this course. Despite the small language barrier where he did not know some of the terms we used, he was still able to give me a great understanding of everything we did in class. Even when I did not understand something, the amount of effort he put into making everything clear made it so much easier for me to understand and do well. He does do some algebra steps in his head, which is hard to follow, but I know he only does that so we learn how to do it ourselves. I think the teaching was great in this class.

Student: 16

Reason: Major or minor requirementIntellectual Growth: improved problem solving skills

Student: 17

Reason: Exploration of possible major or minorAdditional Reason(s): thought it would be easyEffort: super wrong about (arrow pointing to first question)Understanding & Appreciation: taught me calculus

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Intellectual Growth: helped in other situations where I may need integrals or derivatives

Quality: damn good

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Student: 18

Reason: Major or minor requirement

Reason: Interest in the course material

Effort: went to lectures & took notes, read corresponding chapters in book, came to class with HW completed, reviewed book, notes and did practice exercises, and HWs for quizzes and tests

Understanding & Appreciation: As a result of this course, I don't really appreciate the subject more but I do understand more about integrals and all the different types.

Intellectual Growth: It made me find several different ways of preparing myself for quizzes & tests in order to do better.

Quality: Strengths: talking through each problem, using real-life examples, encouraging students to show solutions to problems, posting homework solutions online, answering questions completely & with examples.

Weaknesses: skipping steps in working problems, only doing the math one way in explanations/disallowing any deviation from the taught way in class on quizzes/tests, unclear problem solving writing on tests. overall quality: good.

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