

Consumer Math A and B

Syllabus

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Please go to your course and access the 'Course Home' for detailed instructor information.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding your assignments or course content. Course facilitators respond to emails within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. If you don't receive a response in that time, please reach out again just in case I did not get your message.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All learners must have computer and internet access. Participants in online classes must be comfortable with the basic functions of word-processing software, including GOOGLE DOCS.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide students with the ability to further their math skills by applying mathematics to real life applications such as budgeting money, calculating earnings, taxes, credit cards, loans, etc. Students will learn how to communicate ideas in a variety of settings, as well as employ problem solving skills effectively. They will demonstrate critical thinking skills to projects at hand and expand their mathematical skill set. Students have the benefit of project based assignments, virtual classroom time and regular practice with the skills they learn in this course.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All reading materials are available online, but will also be provided as links through the course website.

Other selected readings for nonfiction available within the course.

COURSE OUTLINE

Consumer Math A

Unit 1: Earning and Saving Money

As high school students begin working part-time jobs as well as preparing for jobs after graduation, it is important for them to be knowledgeable about applying for jobs and going through the interview process. It is also important for them to be knowledgeable of gross and net pay, and understand how gross pay can be determined. In addition to regular hourly rates of pay, students will learn about earning tips, overtime pay, piecework gross pay and commission. Knowing how to compute gross pay, deductions, and net pay will prepare students to set budgets and to make educated decisions when comparing job opportunities. Students learn material and complete assignments with the benefit of regular virtual classroom time, discussions and feedback from both their classmates and their instructor.

Block 1: Minimum wage vs living wage

Discussion: Living wage and minimum wage

Assignment: Calculating a living wage

Resources/Materials used: Articles and videos on labor markets, minimum wage and living wage

Block 2: Your Paycheck

Discussion: Payroll deductions

Assignment: Reading your paycheck

Materials/Resources used: Videos and articles on how to understand a paycheck, calculations behind FICA and information on social security.

Unit 2: Budgeting Money and Banking

This unit is comprised of three sub-units: creating a balanced budget, maintaining and reconciling a check register, and product comparisons. Students research the cost of living independently by investigating fixed and variable expenses, and determine the difference between necessities and desired purchases. Students learn what it takes to live within one's means and are challenged to create a balanced budget based on realistic income and expense information. In addition, students have the opportunity to work with authentic bank forms, write checks and maintain a check register and compute simple interest on a savings account. Sales tax, discounts, rebates, coupons and other factors, which may affect purchase price, are also discussed as students become more adept at making sound consumer decisions. Students learn material and complete assignments with the benefit of regular virtual classroom time, discussions and feedback from both their classmates and their instructor.

Block 3: Balancing your budget

Discussion: What's in a budget?

Assignment: Creating your budget

Resources/Materials used: Articles and videos on how to create a budget and follow it, best budgeting tools.

Block 4: Saving Money

Discussion: Save up!

Assignment: Evaluating savings accounts

Materials/resources used: Articles and videos on different types of savings accounts, and compound interest.

Block 5: Shopping smart for your budget

Discussion: Savings apps

Assignment: Food budget

Resources/Materials used: Videos and articles on money saving apps, shopping smart and budget templates.

Unit 3: Credit Cards and Loans

Credit card purchasing and finance charge calculations are emphasized in this unit, so that students fully understand the cost of buying on credit. Education and car loans, as well as mortgages and other large purchases made on credit, will be discussed and researched. Students will solve problems involving loans and solve for unknown values of principal, rate, and time. Students learn material and complete

assignments with the benefit of regular virtual classroom time, discussions and feedback from both their classmates and their instructor.

Block 6: Credit cards

Discussion: Money's no object?

Assignment: Understanding interest rates and the cost of borrowing

Resources/Materials used: Videos and articles on how credit cards work, how credit card companies target consumers and how to calculate interest and credit card payments.

Block 7: Loans

Discussion: Maxed out

Assignment: The loan application process

Resources/Materials used: Videos and articles on different types of loans, and how to calculate loan payments.

Block 8: Good debt vs bad debt

Discussion: Evaluating good debt vs bad debt

Assignment: Calculating net worth

Resources/materials used: Videos and articles on evaluating debt, calculating net worth and understanding good debt vs bad debt.

Unit 4: Consumer Spending

In this unit, students learn about the logic behind product pricing from a business perspective. They will investigate profit margins, competition in the marketplace, and manufacturing costs. Students will also investigate the purchase process from the consumer perspective. They will find the savings you could receive when purchasing items that are priced at a group rate rather than the unit price. They compare the differences between purchasing merchandise with cash and credit, online and/or in a store front. They calculate how credit card charges affect stores. They discuss cash and quantity discounts. They calculate the reduced price for discounts. They calculate the cost of an item based on a markup for a markdown in price. Students learn material and complete assignments with the benefit of regular virtual classroom time, discussions and feedback from both their classmates and their instructor.

Block 9: Shopping in bulk

Discussion: Saving money while you shop

Assignment: Comparing costs

Resources/Materials used: Articles and videos on Costco's financial highlights, the green factor of buying in bulk and the cons of buying in bulk

Block 10: Online shopping and your money

Discussion: Time is money

Assignment: How to buy smart Online

Resources/Materials used: Videos and articles on how you can save money online, understanding the math behind discounts and percents and shopping.

Unit 5: Housing and Transportation

In this unit learners will learn all about housing and transportation. They will research both topics and use what they know to make plans for their own financial future. We will cover the cost of leasing vs buying a car and rent in the current market.

Block 11: Getting Around Town

Discussion: Gas prices

Assignment: Trip costs

Resources/materials used: Videos and articles on fuel economy, calculating mpg and trip cost

Block 12: How much does a car really cost?

Discussion: To lease or buy a car?

Assignment: Car buying know how

Resources/Materials used: Articles and videos on buying vs leasing a car, car maintenance and car buying know how.

Block 13: A Roof over your head

Discussion: Rental prices in your area

Assignment: Reading the meter: Gas, electricity and water costs

Resources/materials used: Article on apartment rentals and guide for understanding electricity and gas costs.

Block 14-16: Culminating project

Consumer Math B

Unit 1: Savings and Investment

Learners study the basics behind investment, retirement accounts and emergency savings. We will think about what savings are for and how to plan well so that you can save for the things you want. Learners will also study different kinds of savings accounts and evaluate which ones are right for their goals. We will also dig into different types of retirement accounts and look at why saving early and regularly for retirement is important. Lastly, we'll look at stocks and bonds and how investments work.

Block 1: Your Money, Your Savings

Discussion: Making money decisions

Assignment: Play Money Metropolis

Resources/Materials Used: Videos and web resources that address the importance of savings, how to save effectively and how to make smart money decisions.

Block 2: Retirement Accounts

Discussion: Retire Early?

Assignment: The Road to Retirement

Resources/Materials Used: Videos and articles on the importance of saving for retirement and how to save enough for early retirement.

Block 3: Stocks and Bonds

Discussion: Investing Smart

Assignment: Calculating a Stock Using Beta

Resources/Materials used: Videos and articles on how to create a balanced portfolio, how to invest in the stock market and how to understand the differences between stocks and bonds.

Unit 2: The Homebuying Process

Learners study the homebuying process from beginning to end, including picking a house, saving for a downpayment, mortgages, closing costs and home maintenance costs. We will move through all the costs associated with buying a home, from saving for a down payment all the way through different types of loans and then into closing costs, mortgages and insurance.

Block 4: Getting Ready as a first time homebuyer

Discussion: Rent or Buy?

Assignment: Homebuyer's roadmap

Resources/Materials used: Articles and videos on the essential steps to homebuying and how to evaluate whether it's better to rent or buy.

Block 5: The Mortgage Process

Discussion: Mortgage Know How

Assignment: Home buying research

Resources/Materials used: Articles on types of mortgages, homebuyer tools and how to understand the mortgage process.

Block 6: Get the Keys! (Closing costs, insurance, etc.)

Discussion: Figuring out closing costs

Assignment: Making a home ownership plan

Resources/Materials used: Articles and videos on closing costs and how to calculate closing costs accurately.

Unit 3: Travel and Leisure

Learners study how to save for the luxuries in life and are challenged to think about whether those luxuries always have to be expensive. This unit is all about how to afford all things travel and leisure. We will learn about traveling on a budget and how to search for the best deals for all of the extras.

Block 7: Travel

Discussion: Champagne wishes and caviar dreams

Assignment: Planning a dream vacation

Resources/Materials used: Videos and articles on how airlines price flights, how to find the best deals on hotel rooms, how to plan and budget a vacation.

Block 8: Leisure

Discussion: Is it worth it?

Assignment: Research and present tips for luxury on a budget

Resources/Materials used: Videos and articles on how to find luxury within a budget and how to evaluate whether a luxury purchase is worth it.

Unit 4: Starting and Running a Business

This unit offers introductory entrepreneurial skills and challenges learners to think about what it means to conceive of, start and run a business. We will move through evaluating business ideas, through creating a business plan and into costs of owning a business. This is an excellent introduction to entrepreneurship and flows well into iLEAD Online's entrepreneurship course.

Block 9: Is my business idea feasible?

Discussion: Your business idea

Assignment: Writing a business feasibility plan

Resources/Materials used: Articles, videos and templates regarding business feasibility studies and breakeven analyses.

Block 10: Creating a business plan

Discussion: SWOT analysis

Assignment: Writing a business plan

Resources/Materials used: Business plan template and articles on breaking down the business plan step by step.

Block 11: Costs of owning a business

Discussion: Different business structures

Assignment: Costs of owning a business

Resources/Materials used: Articles and videos on the basics behind forming a business and the different types of businesses there are.

Block 12: Up and Running

Discussion: The best approach to growing a business

Assignment: Expansion report

Resources/Materials used: Growth models, videos and articles on how to grow a business.

Block 13: Profit margins and Balance sheets

Discussion: Ways to boost profits

Assignment: Balance sheet

Resources/Materials used: Videos on how to complete a balance sheet and how to understand profit margins and a template for creating your own balance sheet.

Blocks 14-16: Culminating Project

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

This is an online course, and while there is flexibility in how and when you do assignments, it is best to log in and complete work each day according to the posted pacing schedule. Due dates will be clearly stated for each assignment in the course calendar and the weekly schedule. It is highly recommended that learners follow the pacing schedule posted, but work may be submitted late. This course uses project based learning to encourage an authentic, developed appreciation of the topics covered. That means that while it may include quizzes and some traditional assessments, the bulk of the coursework focuses on projects that require learners to display their learning in a thorough and creative manner. If you are struggling to complete your work or you need some assistance with an alternate schedule or workload, please contact me as soon as possible. I am more than happy to help support your success in the class!

LEARNER EXPECTATIONS

The learner is expected to participate in the course via e-mail, discussion boards (or other communication) with the facilitator, by reading the assigned readings, submitting assignments and completing and submitting original work.

Learners are expected to check their course and email account every day and complete work on time as assigned with designated dates and time.

Learners are expected to communicate with their instructor and each other in a respectful manner. Please follow the guidelines below:

1. **Make sure identification is clear in all communications.** If you are emailing or messaging your instructor or each other, please be sure they know who you are and what class you're in. That really helps with clear communication.
2. **Review what you wrote and try to interpret it objectively.** When we speak face to face and are misunderstood, we have an on-the-spot opportunity to rephrase our words. In writing, we must strive twice as hard to be understood, as we do not have the benefit of modifying or elaborating in real time. All caps ("I'M SHOUTING") and exclamation points ("Give me a break!!!") can be misinterpreted as intense anger or humor without the appropriate context.
3. **If you wouldn't say it face to face, don't say it online.** When you're working online, you're safe behind a screen, but that's no excuse to be ill-mannered or say things you would never say in public.
4. **Use emoticons when appropriate.** In casual chatroom settings, emoticons can help convey feelings that may otherwise get lost in translation, including humor, exasperation, exhaustion and even confusion. These aren't the best choice for formal assignments or projects though.
5. **Respect others' voices and be kind.** We all come from different backgrounds and have our own stories. Assume the best of each other and always be kind in your communication.
6. **Remember, if it's on the internet, it's everywhere.** Don't share personal information about yourself in a public online forum, especially something that could put your safety or security at risk.
7. **Practice Patience:** All your facilitators are doing their best to grade work in a timely manner. We also want to give you meaningful feedback, which takes some time. If you feel like there has been an error or an assignment was missed, please reach out with your name and class and we will do our best to sort it out.

(UTEP Connect)

GRADING

Each assignment is given a specific number of points. The number of points earned by the student is determined and a percentage is calculated. The raw score is recorded in the grade book.

An overall grade in the course will be determined according to your school's grading scale.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

All work must be submitted to Brightspace, our learning management system. This is very important for record keeping and compliance. You have access to directions on how to do this in the 'Course Resources' folder of this class and in your Orientation class. If you need any help submitting work please reach out to your instructor and we will make time to ensure that you're able to turn in work to Brightspace.

HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic Integrity is essential to authentic learning. We want you to get the most out of your courses, and a BIG part of that is learning how to:

- Come up with your own ideas
- Use technology (like AI and other Online resources) to inform your original ideas
- Research in ways that help you develop your thoughts
- Give credit where credit is due
- Explore and use tools (like AI, citation generators, etc.) that help you grow as a person and a learner

Please review [THIS RESOURCE](#) for more information on plagiarism and [this guide for choosing, using and citing resources](#).

Our goal is to support you so that you can learn in a meaningful, authentic way. Any plagiarized work (this includes work generated solely by AI) will be given a zero and referred to your EF/COACH/GUIDE for review. From there we will work with you to support you as best we can.

PRIVACY POLICY

All work submitted is the property of the author and is not available to anyone not in the class. If work is to be submitted or viewed outside of this website, I will obtain permission from the author. [FERPA Info](#)