

# Pre-Core Mathematics Program

Course Grade & Notebook  
“Pop-Up Assessments”

MOTTO: Let's Do The Math!

Class #6 in the Pre-Core Mathematics Program

Today, we'll talk about the course grade which involves keeping a notebook and what I like to call “pop-up” assessments. That's when you just finish a topic and an assessment starts. We'll talk about why this happens and how to read the results of them.



**To earn a passing grade in a Pre-Core Mathematics course, you must**

- Have a satisfactory notebook
- Complete and demonstrate mastery of at least three modules

**Course Grade – Two Criteria**

Let's begin with the course grade in a Pre-Core Math class. According to the syllabus, your course grade is based on two criteria. The notebook you build for yourself throughout the semester and the number of modules you complete and demonstrate mastery of by the end of the semester.

So, what does it mean to have a 'satisfactory' notebook.

## Three-ring binder

- ❖ Syllabus & Section Specific Handout
- ❖ Blank Progress Report
- ❖ Calendar with Module Goals
- ❖ Weekly Progress Reports
- ❖ Topic Explanations YOU compile
- ❖ Problems YOU work

## Notebook

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During the first day of class (and in an email before the first day of class), you were told that one of the materials you needed for the class is a three-ring binder. This was specified because it's the most ideal notebook to keep the papers you receive during class and as you work through your course material, you can easily re-arrange your pages to suit the current need. In your binder, you should have your syllabus and section specific handout from the first day of class. Do you?

You should also have placed the other handouts you have received so far too: blank progress report, calendar for module goal setting, and a few weekly progress reports. The weekly progress reports will be a nice reference to see how far you've come at the end of the semester.

There may be a few other things that you will receive throughout the semester, but the majority of your notebook will be topic explanations YOU compile for yourself and the problems YOU work. So, let's talk about the "look" you might have for the rest of your notebook BEYOND the handouts from class.

Solving a linear inequality: PT 3

Note Title 5/10/2012

**Question** Solve the inequality for  $w$ .  
 $-2w + 14 \leq 24$   
 Simplify your answer as much as possible.

**Solution**

$$-2w + 14 \leq 24$$

Subtract 14 from both sides of the inequality

$$-2w + 14 - 14 \leq 24 - 14$$

$$-2w \leq 10$$

Divide both sides by -2 ... note, the inequality flips b/c we divided by a negative number

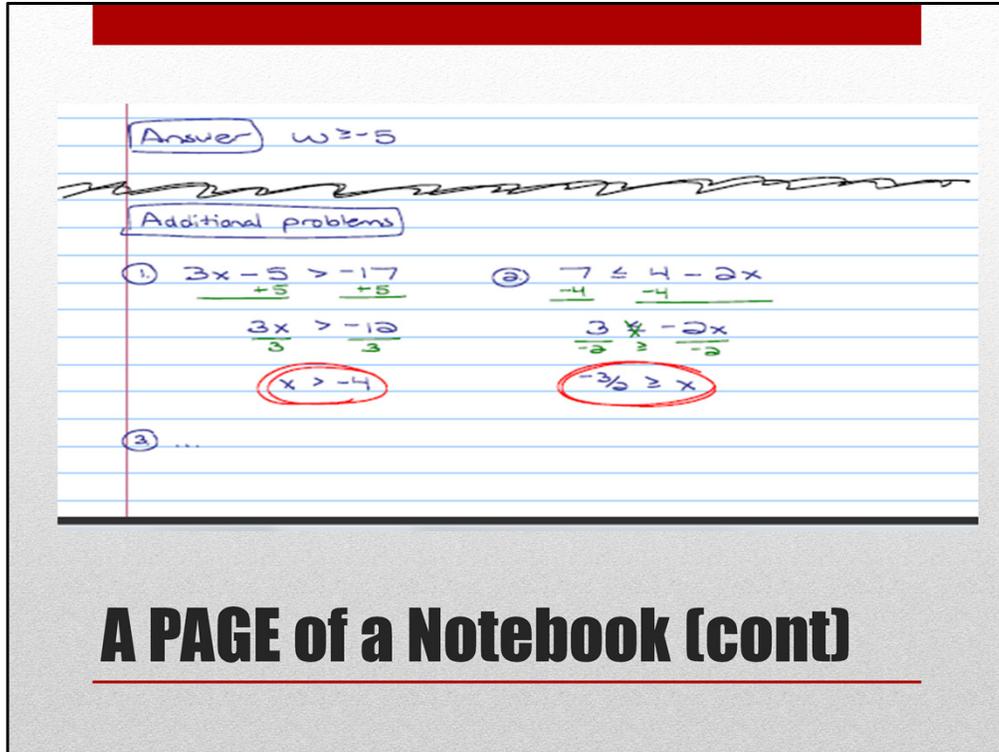
$$\frac{-2w}{-2} \geq \frac{10}{-2}$$

$$w \geq -5$$

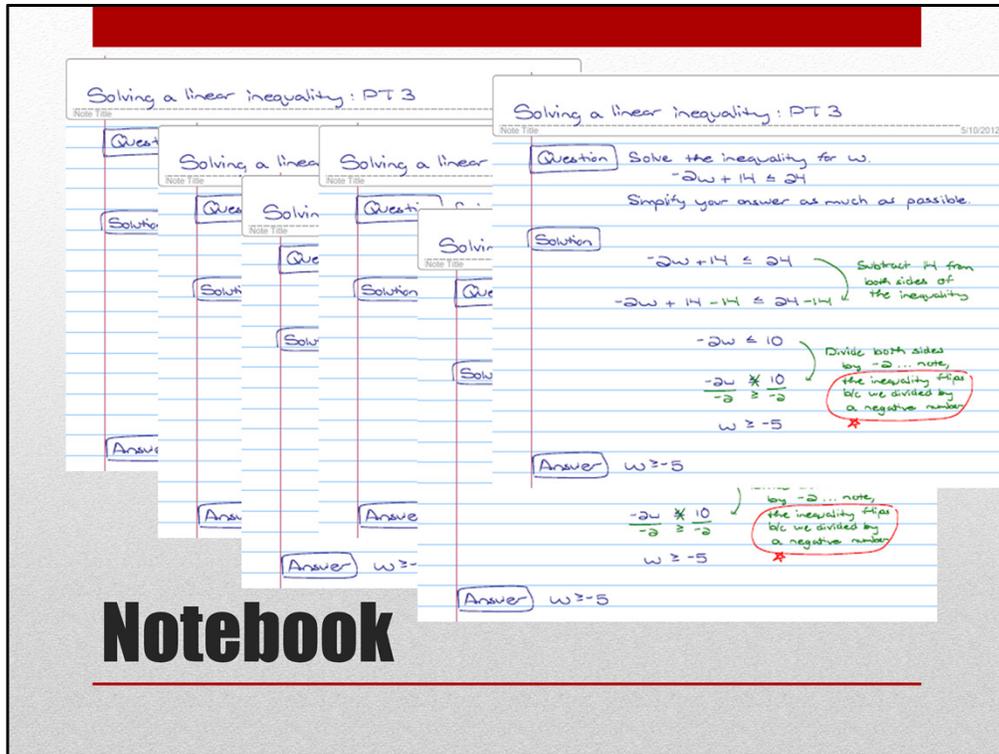
**Answer**  $w \geq -5$

## A PAGE of a Notebook

Everyone should figure out what works best for them...BUT we all need some organization. The goal of the notebook is to provide you with a valuable study tool. So, here's a sample page from my notebook. When I start a topic, I write the title at the top of a clean sheet of paper. Then follow it with a sample problem AND it's explanation. Notice I use colors to help myself see the different steps...highlighters are handy too. AND I starred a step that I think is very important....or one that I think I'll tend to forget. This may come after I've worked a few problems too. Take note, the topic title is clearly labeled, the question is clearly labeled, the solution is clearly labeled, and the answer is clearly labeled.



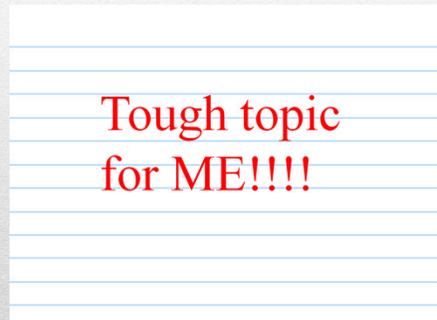
Then I begin working problems in ALEKS on that topic, writing the problems as I go, working the steps out, and circling the answer. DON'T work problems in your head! This can lead to wrong answer too easily, and it's worth taking the time to work your problems out on paper. As you go along, you may get some problems wrong. Be sure to make notes to yourself about YOUR common mistakes...then maybe include these notes in the top part of the topic page too. The advantage of keeping all the same problem types together is that you will have an idea of how many problems it took you to learn a topic. Then before taking an assessment, you can be sure to study those topics that were difficult for you to learn.



When I start a new topic, I start a clean sheet of paper...and do the same thing: title, question, solution, answer and stars of areas to watch! Imagine a notebook of these pages. This will be so valuable when I'm ready for a proctored assessment of a module because I will begin my studying by looking through these pages...noticing the STARS and hopefully, remembering why I marked it as important. But that's only the beginning of my study...I then would go to the REVIEW and practice those problems that "were hard" when I first tried them...including them in the notebook in the appropriate location.

## INDEX CARDS

– wonderful study tool!



### Tracy's Study Tip

As you are working topics, you may think... *"Oh, this is a tough one. It's going to take some studying for this one!"* We know that eventually you will get it, but it's not going to be easy. I call this a "Tough Topic for ME!" And even though I really don't want to see it again after I've added it to MyPie, I know it will show up on an assessment. So, I want to be sure this is one I study special. These "Tough Topic for ME" problems will get written on an index card. I use 3x5 index cards. On the front, I write the problem...not the title...just the problem because the title doesn't show on an assessment. On the back, I write the solution and special notes to myself about the problem.

Eventually, I have a small stack of these...and I'll look at them every chance I get...so much so that I'm not scared of those problems any more. Well, that's my study tip for the "Tough Topic for ME" problems.



**To earn a passing grade in a Pre-Core Mathematics course, you must**

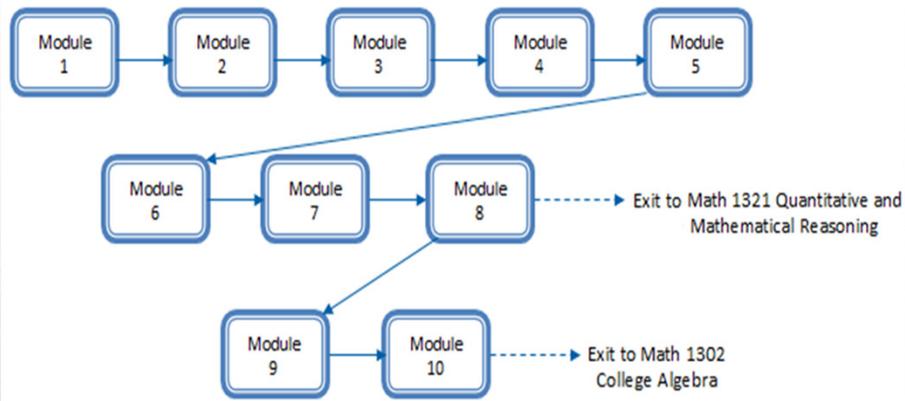
- Have a satisfactory notebook
- Complete and demonstrate mastery of at least three modules

**Course Grade – Two Criteria**

Remember, we started this notebook discussion because it was a grading criteria. At the middle of the semester and end of the semester, your classroom facilitator will determine if the notebook you create is satisfactory or not. They will answer the question, *“Is your notebook a good study tool for you?”* If you are worried, just ask them one day to look at your notebook...maybe they will have suggestions to help it become a STUDY TOOL!

Now, let’s move to the second criteria of your course grade, modules...

## Pre-Core Mathematics Program



**Modules 1-8** .... Math 1321 Quantitative and Mathematical Reasoning

**Modules 1-10** .... Math 1302 College Algebra

The Pre-Core Mathematics Program has a total of 10 Modules. 1 through 8 prepare you for the Quantitative and Mathematical Reasoning course. Modules 1 through 10 prepare you for College Algebra. YOU need to know what course you will be taking after completing the program...it depends on your major. So, my best advice is to talk to your advisor.

### Module Grading Criteria

Complete and demonstrate mastery of 3 → C

Complete and demonstrate mastery of 4 → B

Complete and demonstrate mastery of  $\geq 5$  → A

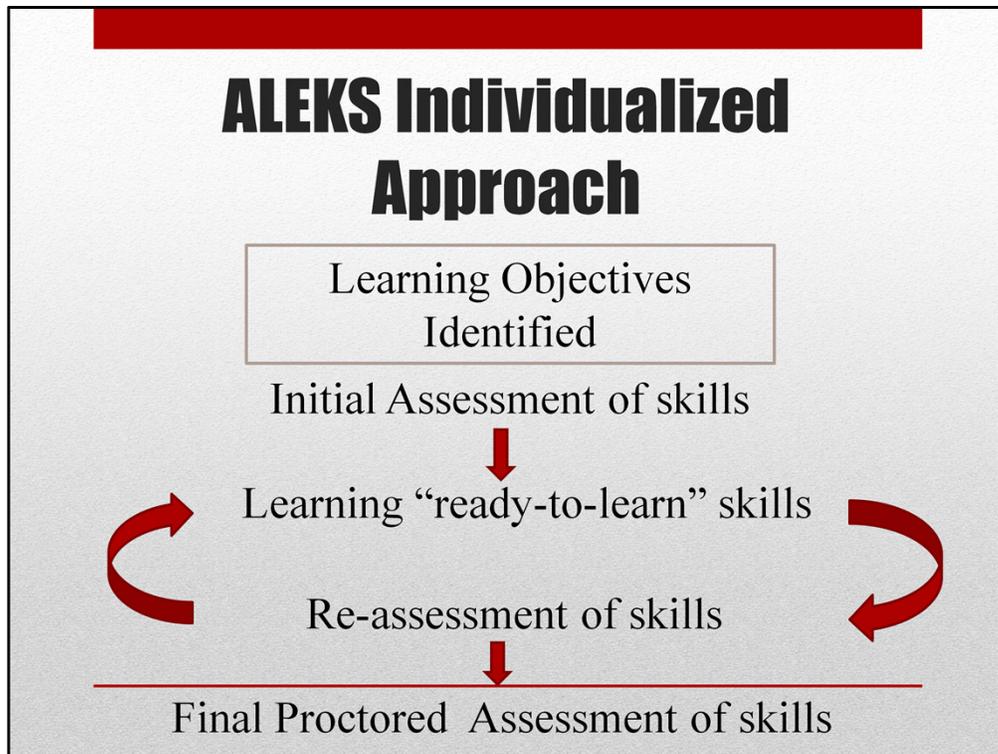
### Course Sequence:

Math 0321 → 0322 → 0323 → 0324

## Which is for you? 1-8 or 1-10

After you know how many modules you need to complete, then you can make your plan about how many semesters it will take to finish the Pre-Core Mathematics Program. (And you should have already developed a plan.) The grading scheme allows you to be successful in the COURSE by completing and demonstrating mastery of 3 modules...but the completion of the PROGRAM requires you to complete Module 8 or 10. Everyone does have the opportunity to complete the program in one semester, but it would probably require more than the 6 hours each week to move through the modules quickly enough. It's up to you!

If at the end of the semester you haven't reached Module 8 or 10, then you will need to sign up for the next course in the Pre-Core Math Program sequence. But if you finish YOUR required module, then you can move to your 1000 level math course.



Now, let's move onto those “pop-up” assessments. Remember the learning-assessment-learning cycle is how you complete a module. These re-assessments of your skills are the “pop-up” assessments before you complete a module. But WHY does this happen?

## **ALEKS is checking your learning!!!**

### **Triggers:**

- **20 topics learned AND at least 5 hours**
- **10 hours of login time**
- **60 days without assessment**

## **Reasons for “Pop-Up” Assessments**

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Because ALEKS wants to re-check your learning before moving forward.

In a typical lecture-based class, there are quizzes and tests scheduled throughout the semester to re-check your learning. Well, the “pop-up” assessments are the ALEKS version of this. It is automatically triggered based on the work you’ve done. There are three main triggers...but only two will pertain to us. A ‘pop-up’ assessment called a progress assessment will happen after you have completed 20 topics and spent at least 5 hours working in ALEKS. A ‘pop-up’ assessment called a login time assessment will happen after you’ve spent 10 hours working in ALEKS. The last one doesn’t pertain to us during a semester...if you haven’t assessed within 60 days. You will be working enough to not have this happen to you in the class.

There is one other type of assessment (besides the initial assessment you did at the beginning of the semester) that I can’t categorize as ‘pop-up’....

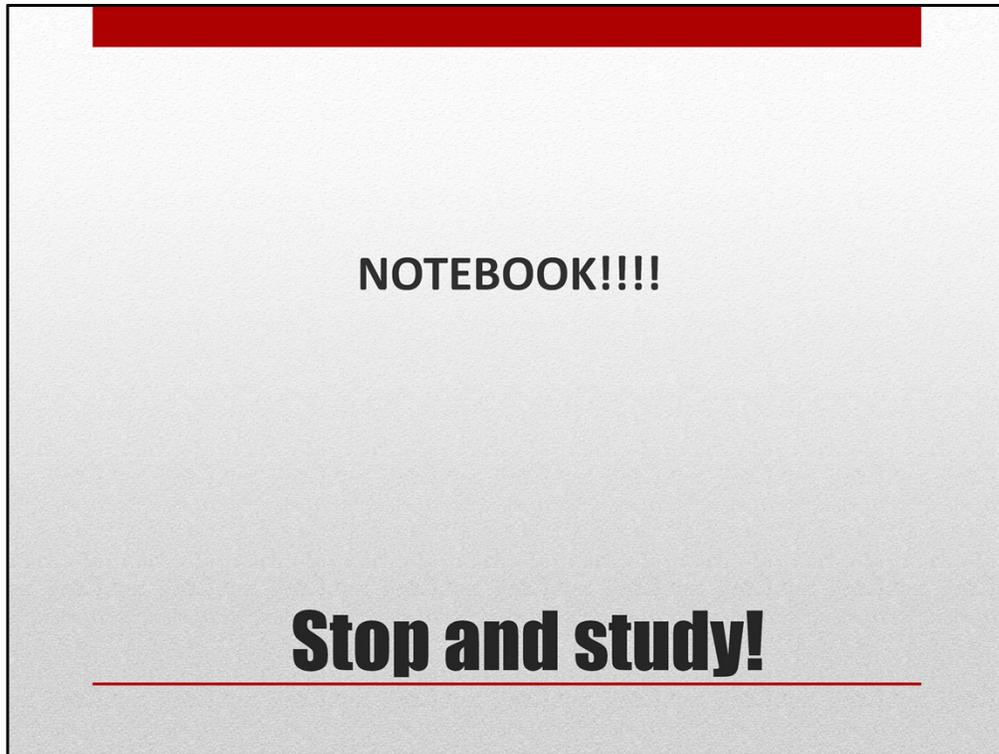


**ALEKS is checking your learning!!!**

**Finishing an even module....entire MyPie.**

## **Goal Completion Assessment**

It's a goal completion assessment. This happens when you complete an even module....which means you have finished your current MyPie. All of these assessments are designed to improve your learning of the material.



When it happens, take a few moments to stop and study from your notebook before taking it. Just like a quiz in a lecture class, this is what you would do...so do it here. THEN...

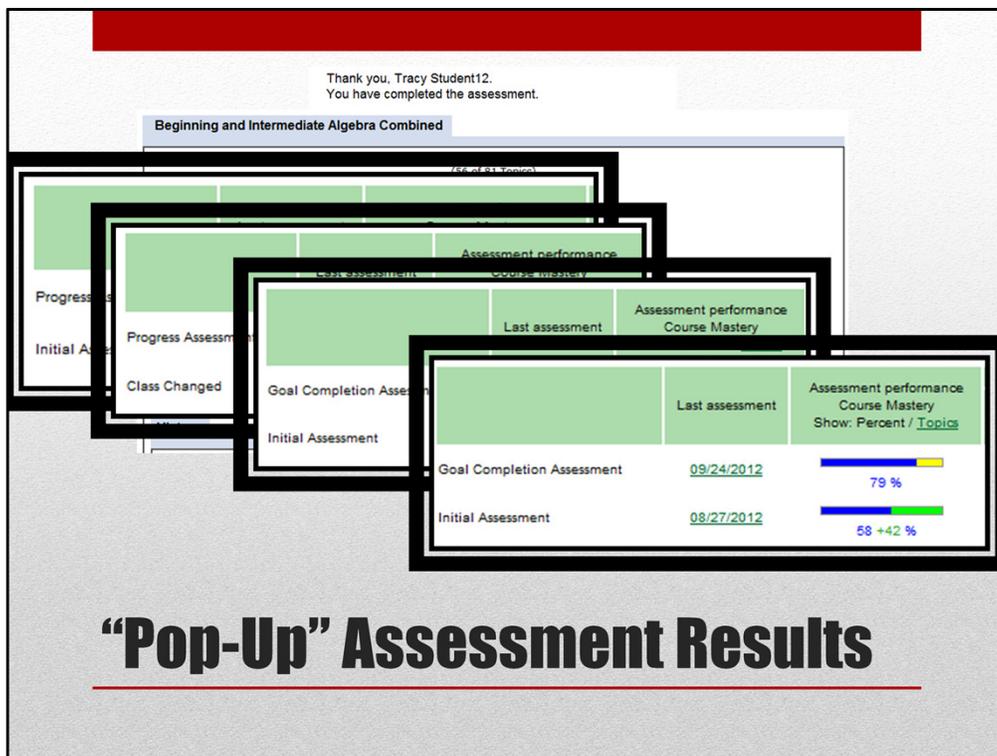
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- ~~1. Picture ID is required.~~
  2. ALEKS Calculator only .
  - ~~3. All belongs (except writing utensil) must be placed away from your testing area.~~
  4. No notes or help of any kind.
    - If students are caught attempting to get help in any way, the assessment will be cancelled and the university dishonesty procedure will be followed.

**Take it like a test!**

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Take it like a test. Don't get help on a single question. You need to show ALEKS what YOU know. You may even be given questions that you haven't learned yet...ALEKS is trying to push your knowledge. If you really just don't know....hit the I Don't Know button. That's what it's there for....telling ALEKS that you really just don't know how to do that problem.

When you are finished....



ALEKS will reconfigure your MyPie to reflect your current learning. But you should look at your bar graphs to see how you did in comparison to the last assessment. Here are a few examples. The blue numbers went from 19% to 62%...GREAT! AND this student actually completed the odd module before the progress assessment...and proved to themselves they will pass an odd module proctored assessment because the score is significantly higher than 44%. This student should take the proctored assessment ASAP!

Here's another student ready for the odd module proctored assessment based on the results of the progress assessment. BUT since the 46% is close to 44%...I'd suggest working in the MyPie more to give some 'buffer' on the proctored assessment.

This student completed the even module...took a progress assessment...going from 58% to 90% is awesome improved...AND is ready for the even module proctored assessment.

Finally, this student did complete the even module and the progress assessments shows improvement (58% to 79%)...but a 79% doesn't pass an even module. So the recommendation is to work back up again in the MyPie before taking the proctored module assessment.

Of course, every possibility can't be shown here....but the BIG PICTURE is an increase in the BLUE numbers....this means your knowledge has increased. That's what we need in this class.



**If you have any questions, then ask!**

**Let's Do The MATH!!!!**

Now, it's time to get to work and ... Do the Math!