

## Guidelines for Math Placement for First Year Students

It is beneficial to find the most appropriate math course in which to start, given your **goals; aptitude and motivation; and background**. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to discuss your individual situation with a math faculty member.

**Step 1 (Goals):** What are your goals in taking a math course at Gettysburg College?

| <u>Goals</u>  | <u>Starting course</u>  |
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| Pursue further study in math, computer science, economics, or the sciences.   | <p><b>Introduction to Research in Mathematics (Math 201; no pre-requisites), or</b></p> <p><b>Calculus (Math 105, 111, 111H, 112, 112H, or 211; see placement chart on back) , or</b></p> <p><b>Linear Algebra (Math 212; see placement chart on back), or</b></p> <p><b>Abstract Mathematics I (Math 215; see placement chart on back), or</b></p> <p><b>Differential Equations (Math 225 see placement chart on back)</b></p> |
| <p>Fulfill the Quantitative, inductive and deductive reasoning (QIDR) requirement.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Gettysburg College does not have a math requirement.</p> | <p><b>Mathematical Ideas (Math 103; no pre-requisites), or</b></p> <p><b>Introduction to Research in Mathematics (Math 201; no pre-requisites), or</b></p> <p><b>Cryptography (FYS 146-2; no pre-requisites), or</b></p> <p><b>Courses in other departments</b> (such as certain courses in CS, Econ., HES, Philosophy, Political Science, etc.) <b>See Registrar's website for eligible courses.</b></p>                       |

**Step 2 (Aptitude and Motivation):**

These are *only guidelines* to help you decide where it is best for you to start; you may want to keep the following points in mind:

1. **Your motivation (drive and determination) is a very important factor in your success no matter which course you select.** Many students are more motivated to work (and will attain higher grades) in a course where the material is new to them as opposed to a course where they have already seen most of the material.
2. **Good study habits and the ability to handle challenges go a long way toward filling occasional gaps in background.** If you are unsure about the strength of your background, you should consider your study habits and whether you are diligent in seeking out help.
3. **It is easier to move down than it is to move up.** When choosing between two courses, the department's general recommendation is to take the higher course, because you will have the opportunity to move down to a lower level course through the fifth week of classes. If you start in a lower course, you will not be able to move up to a higher course after the second week of classes.

**Step 3 (Background):** On the chart that follows, find the highest level background course completed in high school in which you did well (**grade of B or better**). For example, if in high school you had an A in Algebra II, a B in Precalculus, and a C in Calculus, then your highest level background with B or better is Precalculus.

