

Math 9171A Course Outline

1. Course Information

Course Information

Math 9171A, Mathematical Computation, Fall 2025.

Time and location in version on OWL.

[Course web page.](#)

List of Prerequisites

It is aimed at MSc and PhD students in Mathematics, and will assume standard undergraduate mathematical background, such as familiarity with linear algebra, groups and rings. No programming background is required, but an interest in learning about computers is a necessity. There are no formal prerequisites, but permission of the instructor is required if you do not have the background described above.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from the Department of Mathematics to enroll in it, you may be removed and withdrawn from this course in accordance with university policy. This may be done after the add/drop deadline of the academic term, and the course will be marked as withdrawn (WDN) on your academic record. This decision may not be appealed.

2. Instructor Information

Instructors	Email	Office	Phone	Office Hours
Dan Christensen	jdc@uwo.ca	MC130	x86530	TBA

3. Course Syllabus, Schedule, Delivery Mode

This course will cover the interplay between mathematics and computation. This includes the use of computers to study problems in mathematics, as well as the use of mathematics to better understand computation.

Here are the topics that may be covered. Additional topics will be covered in presentations.

- Basic ideas of programming, using python 3.
- Calculus and plotting.
- Group theory.
- Linear algebra and homology computations.
- Various rings and fields, and floating point arithmetic.
- Galois theory (to be decided).
- Computability, Turing machines, lambda calculus.
- Complexity theory, P vs NP.
- The Rocq proof assistant.
- An introduction to version control with git.
- Software that will be used: Sage, python, Rocq, git and more.
- Software development topics: efficiency, data structures, numerical stability, common pitfalls, version control.

Class begins: September 5, 2025

Fall Reading Week: November 3 – 9, 2025

Class ends: December 8, 2025

4. Course Materials

There is no textbook for the course. During the second part, I will base some material on: Michael Sipser, Introduction to the Theory of Computation, 3rd ed. But this book is not required.

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. Students should also consult the [course web page](#).

If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Technical Requirements

Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that can be used to complete the assessments described below.

5. Methods of Evaluation

Grading Scheme and Assessment Dates

The overall course grade will be calculated as listed below:

Assignments (roughly 6)	60%
Presentation	40%

Assignments will be due roughly every 2 weeks, and will often involve software. Doing problems and talking about the material are both essential for learning the material in this course, so you are encouraged to discuss the problems with classmates and with me. But you must write up the solutions on your own and must not look at other students' written solutions nor should you attempt to find solutions to problems online or in textbooks. You should not use an AI assistant in any way for this course. Your solutions should be clear and carefully written and you should give credit to those who helped you and to any references you used. Assignments will be graded based on both correctness and clarity. Late assignments will not be accepted unless arranged in advance for a good reason.

In the second half of the semester, each student will give a 50 minute **presentation** on a topic related to the course. A list of topics is provided on the [course web page](#).

Use of Generative AI Tools

Not permitted. See below for more details.

General information about missed coursework

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs*, posted on the Academic Calendar:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf,

This policy does not apply to requests for Academic Consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person.

The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All Academic Consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:

- Presentation. (Designated by the instructor as the one assessment that always requires documentation when requesting Academic Consideration)

When a student *mistakenly* submits their one allowed Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** for the assessments listed above or those in the **Coursework with Assessment Flexibility** section below, the request cannot be recalled and reapplied. This privilege is forfeited.

Evaluation Scheme for Missed Assessments

When a student misses an assignment and is granted academic consideration, they will be given an extension of up to one week. If their academic consideration extends through that period, their mark will be reweighted to the rest of the course.

6. Additional Statements

6.1 Religious Accommodation

When conflicts arise with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request an accommodation for their absence in writing to the course instructor and/or the Academic Advising office of their Faculty of Registration. This notice should be made as early as possible, but not later than two weeks prior to the writing of the examination (or one week prior to the writing of the test).

Please visit the Diversity Calendars posted on our university's EDID website for the recognized religious holidays - <https://www.edi.uwo.ca>

6.2 Academic Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf.

6.3 General Academic Policies

The website for Registrar Services is <https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>.

Use of @uwo.ca email: In accordance with policy, https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf, the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university email address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that emails received from the University at their official university address are attended to in a timely manner.

Requests for Relief (formally known as "appeals")

Policy on Request for Relief from Academic Decision:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/requests_for_relief_from_academic_decisions.pdf

Procedures on Request for Relief from Academic Decision (Undergraduate):

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/undergrad_requests_for_relief_procedure.pdf

Procedures on Request for Relief from Academic Decision (Graduate):

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/graduate_requests_for_relief_procedure.pdf

6.4 Scholastic Offences

Policy on Scholastic Offences:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

Procedures on Scholastic Offences:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/undergrad_scholastic_offence_procedure.pdf

Use of Generative AI Tools

Unless otherwise stated, the use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, or similar platforms) is **not permitted** in the completion of any course assessments, including but not limited to: assignments, lab reports, presentations, tests, and final examinations.

Using such tools for content generation, code writing, problem solving, translation, or summarization—when not explicitly allowed—will be treated as a **scholastic offence**.

If the use of generative AI is permitted for a particular assessment, the conditions of use will be specified by the instructor in advance. If no such permission is granted, students must assume that use is prohibited. It is your responsibility to seek clarification before using any AI tools in academic work.

6.5 Support Services

Please visit the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Advising webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, requests for relief, exam conflicts, and many other academic-related matters: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at

https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html.

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. If you have any questions regarding accommodations, you may also wish to contact Accessible Education at

http://academicssupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

Learning-skills counsellors at Learning Development and Success (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.