

## MATH 205 WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

There are two written assignments, the first due February 27 and the second April 5. The first is a short essay about the Canadian mathematician Donald Coxeter (3-6 pages), counts as Quiz 3, and weighted the same as a quiz. The second is a medium length essay (8-15 pages) on a topic of your own choosing. It is weighted 15% of the course grade. Many suggestions for topics have already been given in the lectures; you are free to choose from these or to find your own topic. Make sure to clear it with the instructor via email or a written note. Essays in English or French will be acceptable, typed or neatly handwritten. They can also be typed with any mathematical formulae or tables done by hand, if that is more convenient.

The essays will be evaluated in several ways. Obvious ones are presentation - there must be a cover page with title and author and course name/number. The essay should be stapled or bound in a folder. Spelling and grammar will also be taken into account, as well as clarity of expression. Proper bibliographies and referencing must be present. Proper names must be spelled correctly, including accents and other diacritical marks (this also applies to quotes in foreign languages). Both essays should include many passages in the first person, e.g. "I find Coxeter's influence on the development of Canadian mathematics particularly interesting because \_\_\_\_", "Niels Henrik Abel is my favourite mathematician because \_\_\_\_\_", etc. In addition to obvious reference sources such as the library, newspapers, the Internet, there is also a considerable expertise right in the University of Calgary on many topics.

The essay may be mainly non-technical, but it can also include up to a page or two of mathematics. The evaluation will also be based on the essay's interest, ideas, and argumentation. Your own ideas and opinions will also be welcome, e.g. "I believe the recent film 'A Beautiful Mind' based on the life of John Nash was a great (terrible) portrayal of this mathematician's actual life." Direct quotes from references are fine, but these should always be clearly indicated and not comprise more than 25% of the essay.

The short essay should include biographical material about Coxeter. It can also discuss and explain something about his mathematical contributions, or his work/influence in music, art, architecture, and the development of mathematics in Canada.

In the long essay you have considerable freedom to write about any portions of your topic that are of interest to you. It will be graded somewhat more strictly than the first essay.

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