

Math Help FAQ

I am having trouble in my math class. What should I do?

First check the basics:

- Reading the text before class?
- Going to class?
- Spending 2 or 3 hours studying math between class sessions?
- Handing in assignments?
- Reading and thinking through the grader's comments?
- Find a study buddy or a small study group among your classmates?

I'm doing these things, but maybe I just need to do them better. Could someone help me with that?

Absolutely! The Study Skills Center (SSC) has students on duty essentially every day to work with you in developing more effective and efficient study habits. SSC hours are listed at <http://www.stolaf.edu/services/asc/ssc.html> and you are welcome to just drop in to get one-to-one help if the Academic Assistants are not already scheduled with appointments. If you want to make an appointment, call x3288 (during regular business hours) to set one up.

I'm doing all those things, but I think the problem is with the math, not the study habits I have. What if I still need help with the math?

Go to see your professor! Most professors at St. Olaf have office hours and expect students with questions or concerns (or who just want to talk about the ideas in the class) to stop in during those times. Most are also willing to set up an appointment outside of those hours if they don't work for you.

OK, I tried that too. Are there any other options?

If your class is either first or second semester calculus you should check out the Math Clinics. They run 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday evenings, and there are afternoon times too. Clinics are staffed by advanced mathematics students who are hired to help with questions about the ideas, problems and calculations that come up in a calculus class. These are 'drop-in' sessions, so you don't need an appointment or anything. The Math Clinic schedule may be found at <http://www.stolaf.edu/services/asc/math.html>

I'm still not doing as well as I think I can in this class. What about a tutor?

If you've tried all the options above, your next stop is the Academic Support Center (ASC), located in the Old Main Annex Room 1. Call x3288 or stop in at the ASC to make an appointment with one of the professional staff who will help you put together a plan to assess and improve your performance in class. There are many possible components for your plan, and if tutoring is one of them the ASC will find a mathematics tutor to meet with you three times per week. This tutoring would be in addition to (not instead of) the other steps mentioned above.