

Math 397-01: Mathematical Sciences Capstone (2 cr.)

Syllabus and Course Policies

Dordt University

Spring 2026

Instructors: Dr. Marissa Chesser, Assistant Professor of Mathematics; Dr. Michael Janssen, Professor of Mathematics

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Classroom/Office: SB 1609/1612

Class time: Tuesdays, 2:00–2:50PM

Student Hours: By appointment/drop-in.

Prerequisite: one from Mathematics 303, 304, 311; or permission of instructor.

Required for: Mathematics, Secondary Education-Mathematics, and Statistics majors.

Catalog Course Description: A survey of the modern landscape of the mathematical sciences and their place in culture, with a focus on independent research and vocation-specific professional development.

Class Liturgies

There are two main goals of this class: to conduct independent research on a topic of interest; and consider modern trends in the mathematical sciences and potential Christian responses.

First, you will undertake a significant independent research project on a topic of your choosing. You will gather relevant primary and secondary sources, develop a thesis statement, and explore it. We will discuss your progress in regular meetings, and prepare updates of varying degrees of formality. A formal public presentation at IdeaFest on May 4 will conclude your research.

Second, we all contribute an article on a topic of interest in the mathematical sciences. Each week an article will be assigned to read, and the person who contributed the article will prepare discussion questions and lead the discussion.

Grading

The assessed work will be:

Work	Weight
Research Paper	50%
Article and discussion questions	30%
Attendance and Participation	20%

Schedule

We will meet first on January 13. Thereafter, weekly meetings will involve discussing an article of interest and checking in on the research project. Topics should be solidified and sources identified by early February to leave sufficient time for reading and

writing. A rough draft of the paper should be submitted by April 14. Feedback will be given and should be taken into account by April 28, when we will rehearse the IdeaFest presentation.

Dordt University Student's Right To Accommodations Policy

Dordt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who needs access to accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the Coordinator for Service for Students with Disabilities, Academic Enrichment Center, 712-722-6490, Email: CSSD@dordt.edu.

Dordt University Academic Integrity Policy

Dordt University is committed to developing a community of Christian scholars where all members accept the responsibility of practicing personal and academic integrity in obedience to biblical teaching. For students, this means not lying, cheating, or stealing others' work to gain academic advantage; it also means opposing academic dishonesty.

Students found to be academically dishonest will receive academic sanctions from their professor (from a failing grade on the particular academic task to a failing grade in the course) and will be reported to the Student Life Committee for possible institutional sanctions (from a warning to dismissal from the university). Appeals in such matters will be handled by the student disciplinary process. For more information, see the Student Handbook section concerning Academic Integrity.

Dordt University Attendance Policy

Class attendance policies and procedures as outlined in the Student Handbook are in place. To paraphrase the Student Handbook, you are expected to be present for every class and laboratory period. Penalties for absence from class are left to the instructor. No designated number of skips is permitted. Students are responsible for notifying each professor concerning the reason for all absences, whether unexcused or excused. Students are responsible for contacting instructors to make arrangements for missed work.