

An introduction for Teaching assistants and others.

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Outline.

- This document is intended to give a brief introduction to WHS (Web Homework System) implemented by the Department of Mathematics.
- It is mainly written for teachers and teaching assistants who may be new to the system.
There are many instructions meant for the students using WHS to earn credit in Mathematics courses. It is expected that the teachers and the teaching assistants will pass this information along to the students.
- Once you get into the WHS web pages, there is a menu called "tutorials" which gives a more detailed information about the use of WHS. The students should be encouraged to view those sections as needed.
Everyone is encouraged to use these as often as needed.

What is WHS?

- WHS (Web Homework System) is implemented on Mathclass (<https://www.mathclass.org>). You will see detailed log in instructions at its front page.
- A student registered in a WHS based course is required to register into the system at the beginning of the semester. The procedure to do this is explained in the following pages.
- The teachers and teaching assistants are also required to do this, unless they have a valid active account already.
- WHS does permit signing up for any class as a browser, but the course credit is available only for those who are properly registered and enrolled by the system into the course. In order to get the course credit, the students must work in the classes which naturally appear in their Web Homework menu.

How to log in to WHS?

- Connect to <http://www.mathclass.org>
- Click on the link labeled [Login to WHS](#). Login using your campus active directory account with the user name typed as "ad\UserName" and the usual password for the "UserName" account.
- If WHS decides that you need to set up a new Math Class account, then you will get a form entitled [Register for an Account](#). Fill in the fields and submit the form.
- We describe the details of the Registration form. Once you are registered for a class, this may not come up again.

Registration Form.

- **Email:** Provide an e-mail where you will receive all further communication from WHS. Remember it well! In the future, you should log into WHS using this email as your user name.
- **Password:** Set the password to be used for your WHS account. It must be at least 7 characters long and include a character which is neither a letter nor a digit.
- **Security Question and Security Answer:** If you forget your password, you can have it reset by using the "Forgot your password" link on the login page and giving the Security Answer in response to the Security Question. The Security Answer is case sensitive.
- **First and Last Name:** These should be the same as what you use for University records as your instructor will need to match these with the name on the class roll and grading sheets.

More about the Registration Form.

- **Affiliation:** Select College or University and another pull-down will appear. From it, select University of Kentucky. A text field labeled UK or AS Account will appear. Put in your active directory login name in the form ad UserName (just like you did to login).
- **Finally,** To create the account, click on the **Create User** button, then click on the **Continue** button.
- Your WHS account should work normally. For students who have added the class within last few hours, there may be a delay of up to 24 hours for the new account to be active.
- **For any further assistance, go to Mathskeller.** (063 CB, basement of the Classroom Building).

Your Computer and WHS.

- **Software Requirements:** Use an Internet browser, such as Internet Explorer 8.0 (or later version) or Firefox 3.1(or later version)(**RECOMMENDED!**) . **Safari will not work correctly.**
- A special setup is needed **only if** you use Internet Explorer for a mathematics class. Even this may be unnecessary for any Windows PC in any SCS Lab or the Mathskeller.
- You may need special plug ins and may have to set up special trusted sites.
- All the details can be read from the "tutorials" menu in the Mathclass.
- If you have problems with this procedure, temporarily use any SCS lab or the Mathskeller. (Search the University site www.uky.edu for such labs.) **Some computers in the Library may not be part of an SCS lab.**

To do and not to do!

- Students should not attempt to make an independent account through Mathclass. The system permits it, but you will have a hard time getting into an organized class where you already would have a preset account!
- Students should not go searching for classes and trying to register for them, unless specifically instructed to do so. Generally, self enrollment is not permitted for classes where homework grade is counted.
- If there are questions about specific homework problems, be sure to use the feedback mechanism to seek help. The questions (or comments) can be about the meaning of the question, help with the solution process or your disagreement with the system's grading.
All problems are easiest to solve when raised early!

The Instructors' Role.

- The instructors should regularly view the feedback requests from students in various sections. These are reported as email from WHS but **should not be answered by an email reply!**
- The response to a feedback question must be given through a menu in the Web homework page. As you follow the menu, you will see the question, the correct answer and the student submission as well as the question or the comment by the student.
- There is a response window where formatted answer can be given using precise mathematical syntax. This is easy to use and there is a tutorial link. The syntax is similar to TeX, but the mathematical expression is enclosed between two grav symbols ("") rather than two "\$" symbols.

Reporting and Viewing grades.

- The students are encouraged to view their homework grades as well as exam grades and attendance through WHS.
- The homework grades are visible automatically, but the other grades need prompt input by the instructors. The policies vary from course to course and the course coordinators or Professors in charge should be consulted for this.
- It is possible to look up the list of registered students in a class through WHS and send emails to individual students by selecting some (or all) from the list. This can generate a lot of traffic and should be used only when needed.
- You can post messages in the Web homework page. Keep them short and put date of posting for clarity. The students should be urged to read them.

How to work with the homework?

- The homework system can display a common version or a personal version or a specific version of a homework.
- To receive credit a student **must use the personal version**. The instructors should typically do problems from the common version where the system announces the correct answer after any answer is submitted.
- The instructor can also open any desired version. This is useful if you wish to see all the problems in that specific version. Depending on the privileges set, an instructor can also open a **student's personal version** and do the problems to award credit to the student.
This should be used **only in emergencies!**

Advice to the students.

- Always use the "printer friendly" menu choice to print the homework problems. Work them by hand and then submit. **Math course related printing is free in the Mathskeller!**
- Do not wait till the last day to submit problems. There is **no penalty for repeated submission**.
Ideally, the homework problems should be attempted as soon as they are discussed in class (or even earlier, when possible).
- There is **no way of extending the "due date"** for an individual student. If there is a widespread problem, the course coordinator may be able to change the due dates for all sections at once. Naturally, this is a rare event!

Continued Advice.

- WHS is designed for collaborative learning! **Do discuss** the problems with your friends, instructors, other people in places like Mathskeller or Study.
Do not, however get someone else to give you just the answers. Do not put in an answer just because the system accepts it; understand why!
- The answers are submitted using what is termed the "calculator syntax". It is really the "Maple syntax" and all courses give detailed instructions on the way of entering the answers. Be sure to learn these early.
- There are also shortcuts to entering some answers. Learn these too!
- WHS is picky about the accuracy of answers. If your idea is correct, but is rejected by WHS, consult someone about how to improve the accuracy of your calculations.

Further Advice.

- When you answer a question, an "OK" might appear on your screen. This does not mean that your answer is correct, it only says that the syntax is correct! The correctness of the answer can only be checked by submitting the answer(s).
- The answers which are correctly submitted are marked with green. Once this happens, the system will credit the student with the grade even though the student submits a wrong answer to the same question afterwards!
- All comments and queries about a problem can be entered in a response window right after the problem. This window lets you type the mathematical symbols precisely. Do take a little time to follow the tutorial link for this ASCII-math and learn its syntax. It will be very useful in the future!

Final comments.

- Urge the students to check the feedback messages often.
- If you have any doubt or difficulty, it is best to ask! You may use the WHS help message system or personally talk to your Professor or others who have used the system before. I will be happy to respond to your queries any time.
- WHS has been developed by collaborative efforts and input from the faculty at U.K. Its continued growth and improvement depends on you.
- **Thank you!**
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