Welcome to Math 234! Here are a few comments on how the course will run. Check the course web site, http://www.math.wisc.edu/~wilson/Courses/Math234/234fal08/index.htm, for the latest information.

- **Background:** You are assumed to know what is supposed to be covered in Math 221 and 222. If you feel your classes did not cover what they were supposed to, or if you are worried about what you may have forgotten, please talk with me. We will start with calculus applied to paths in the plane in space. We will be using vector arithmetic in two and three dimensions, which we will just barely review. Throughout the semester we will assume you can take derivatives, evaluate integrals, work with transcendental functions, and solve simple differential equations.

- **Grading:** There will be two midterm exams and a final exam. You will also have a grade from your discussion section, based on quizzes or homework, etc.: Your TA and I will have discussed how this will be produced. I won’t be requiring all TAs to go the same route, but we will make sure the discussion grades at the end of the semester are normalized so that you will be treated fairly. The result of all this, 100 possible points from each midterm exam, 100 from discussion, and 200 from the final exam, will give you a total score between 0 and 500. We will produce a curve for letter grades based on your total. (We will also give an ABCDF curve for the midterm exams, just so you can see how you are doing. The final A-AB-B-BC-C-D-F curve won’t be determined by adding those together.)

- **Exams:** Midterm exams will take place in the evenings, so you can have more time and more room than in the regular class. Since you know the exam schedule now you should try to clear these times well in advance rather than waiting until the last minute! Midterm exams are scheduled for 5:30-7:00 PM on October 9 and November 20. Rooms for those exams (and for the final) have not yet been assigned. The final exam time, 7:25 PM, Friday, December 19, is the time given in the UW timetable: There should be no conflicts with that time. Requests for alternate final exam times will not be normally granted and, in keeping with UW policy, will never be granted for times earlier than the official time. **Note that this final exam is at the end of exam week, make sure neither you nor anybody else plans for you to be away at that time!**

- **On a separate page you can find the course schedule. The reading assignments should be read before we reach that point in class. The problems suggested are intended to let you test your own understanding of what you learned from each section. They are not going to be taken up for grading: As the saying goes, “Mathematics is not a spectator sport.” You only learn it by doing it. If a day does not have an assignment shown that does not mean we have no class!**

- **You are not required to have a calculator for this course. A scientific calculator might be helpful, if you are used to using it:** Some of the assigned problems require you to do a significant amount of arithmetic. On quizzes and exams you will be allowed to use calculators, but the questions will be designed to be fair to those not using calculators. Similarly, you are not required to use any mathematical computer software. But if you are going into a mathematics-using field, as is likely for a student in 234, you may want to learn to use such systems since they have become very much the standard way to carry out mathematical calculations. I will be using the Maple system in class fairly frequently. I am registering this course with the Maple Adoption Program which will entitle you to get a student version of Maple at a reduced price and to get online instruction in its use.

- **The text for this course is Thomas’ Calculus, 11th edition, by Thomas, et. al., ISBN 0-321-49069-X. This is probably the same text you used for Math 221 and 222. Some students buy copies of the solutions book showing worked out answers to odd-numbered problems: This is an unnecessary expense and is dangerous. You won’t have that book during a quiz or exam, so getting used to referring to it to see how to do a problem equips you badly for success. If you do use it, work all the way through a problem and then go back and check: Never use the solution manual to figure out what to do next! This course will include both theory and practice. You will learn to solve problems, but you also need to understand how the solution methods work so as to use them correctly. Don’t try just to mimic worked examples from class or the text, without understanding the theory behind the practices.**

- **I will post general announcements, sample problems, etc. at the course web site, http://www.math.wisc.edu/~wilson/Courses/Math234/234fal08/index.htm. In addition I will send email messages to the class: Make sure your email address is correctly entered through MY-UW. The university maintains the email list based on your email address on record with the registrar, I cannot change it!**
My schedule, including office hours, is posted at my web site, http://www.math.wisc.edu/~wilson. My office is 411 Van Vleck Hall, where the telephone is (608) 263-5944. My email address is wilson@math.wisc.edu.