How will my math class be organized in Fall 2020? What is a precept? What are the expectations for work outside of class?

The 100 and 200 level classes will be a combination of prerecorded videos (~ 30 minutes/week) and the in-class component will be two 40-minute precept sessions that are held on a Monday/Wednesday schedule each week.

The recorded videos explain the topics and techniques we are covering along with additional worked-out examples. Students watch the videos and read the textbook to prepare for precepts.

The precept sessions will be organized in a workshop style. Each precept will be capped at 12 students and students will work through (or at least begin) problems prepared by the lead instructors to help students consolidate the ideas presented in the textbook and video components, and also to incorporate the new ideas of a given week into the material covered in previous weeks.

Precept attendance and participation is crucial to success on the exams. Only by engaging with challenging problems can students identify and clarify points of confusion. Watch the assigned videos before the precept.

The preceptor's role is to facilitate student interactions with each other, and with the course material. The preceptor may occasionally present an additional example, but their role is to ask questions, listen and provide some guidance and clarification as students work together to digest the week's material.

Office hours will be offered, most likely on a sign-up basis and limited to small groups. Students may attend any instructor's office hours, and are strongly encouraged to do so to make learning more efficient.

If you sign up for MAT in the 8:30 - 9:50 time slot for example, your precept group will meet either from 8:30 to 9:10 or from 9:10 to 9:50 on Mondays and Wednesdays. If you sign up for a class that is listed as MWF at 10AM on the schedule, then your precept will meet from 10 to 10:40 on Monday and Wednesday. The Friday time will be reserved for office hours, while attendance is optional.

The online format means we have to make more effort to connect and collaborate, but it can work well if we are determined.