

Dear Dusty's students,

Hello everyone, my name is Rafael Pineda or Rafi for short and I am majoring in Electrical Engineering. This is my third and final year at highline and plan to transfer to Central Washington University. I did my first two years of highline during high school because of running start and I am just finishing up my A.S this year. This is my second time having Dusty as my instructor and I think he is an amazing instructor. He is one of the best instructors that I have ever had.

Because of COVID we have to take courses online which have their benefits and challenges. One challenge that I had this quarter as a student was staying on task and not being distracted. I would get distracted quite easily because there is other stuff that I could be doing other than the schoolwork that is in front of me. Sometimes assignments would take longer than it should just because I would get distracted and ignore the assignment. It is so much easier to just click YouTube and start watching videos instead of doing the homework.

The way I made it through this challenge was literally just doing it and finish the assignment before I do anything. I just persevered through the assignment no matter how long it took. If ever it took a while I would take periodic breaks to make sure I don't get burnt out or frustrated. I often found playing music while doing homework would make me focus more on the assignment, but this is different for everyone. I think finding something that will make you focus on the course will help you immensely and that could be anything.

A piece of advice I have for future students for this type of class and in general any class is to make sure you have some plan or schedule on what you are going to do on what day. I would just write down the assignments I have to do on the given week and right next to it put what day I would do the assignment done. I chose dates that seemed reasonable for each assignment and made sure that I still had time for anything that might come up later on during the week or stuff that took longer than I expected. Doing this made me feel a lot more organized, calm, and not feel overwhelmed since I knew what I was going to do what day and have everything done on time.

Another piece of advice that I have is to do the assignments based on the lecture right after the lecture is over. I think this is very helpful since the material is very fresh on your mind and helps to not procrastinate and do the assignment last minute. Always look back on your notes when doing your homework and assessments. Dusty also has videos on each section whenever you perhaps forgot something or maybe need to look at more examples.

One last piece of advice I have is to remember to always have questions whenever you need help. Dusty and other students in the class would be willing to help you to understand what you are confused on. More often than not, students will have the same questions as you but are afraid of not asking so asking for them would help them out as well.

Always remember to never give up and persevere through all this hard work. These are tough times we are living through, so we all need to strong mindsets and not let these times hold you or anyone back. If you are well organized with your time and ask many questions I am sure that you

will succeed in Dusty's course. Don't procrastinate and do any work you can as soon as you can. Good luck in this course and other courses you are taking as well!

Sincerely,

Rafael Pineda

Participation 11

Nathan Ganzhorn

Calculus IV

12/9/2020

Hello, I'm Nathan; I am studying aerospace engineering. I was born and raised up on the Olympic Peninsula near Freshwater Bay, just west of Port Angeles. I like mountain biking, hiking, and... Legos, because, of course.

One of the challenges I faced this quarter was finding time to do the take home assessments for Calculus IV. They aren't particularly difficult if you complete plenty of practice problems, but much of my time I'm also spending on other classes (Statics + Differential Equations). If Linear Algebra has a similar rigor to Calculus IV, which would seem likely, I wouldn't really recommend three engineering courses at the same time. It is entirely possible, but performance in one or two classes may suffer.

However, after I've spent sufficient time working through practice problems and the take home assessments, I've been able to regularly get 90%+ on those assessments. This of course requires full grasp of each of the problems, so that you are prepared to present on any one of them. Presentation is a significant determining factor on exam grade, as one would expect, and this makes proper preparation important. I will also be taking Linear Algebra this winter quarter; as with Calculus IV I expect it to involve a lot of abstract math, where, if you do not understand the type of reasoning behind techniques and methods, you can easily fall behind. I went nearly a year without doing any calculus, so Calculus IV was a bit of a jump.

One way to maximize efficiency when working on take home assessments without spending excessive time on any one problem is to make sure to study soon after each lecture. This is important because, then, Dusty's explanation and classwork is fresh in the mind. I find this especially helpful for advancing topics, because, as with many engineering courses, by the time you are done with the course you will likely find the early material the easiest. If work is put in before and after each class period, this helps understanding of the material build rather than waiting until exams to study.

If I were to summarize how to succeed in Dusty's classes, I would say to strike a proper balance between courses while making sure to have the time to spread out work on assessments and assignments over at least a couple of days rather than doing entire assessments in one sitting.

In addition to this, while studying material, try to group by topic instead of the chronological order in which it was presented. Often this isn't a problem because Dusty flows topics together pretty smoothly, but sometimes this is unavoidable while moving among radically different topics.

Something I have found tantalizing about Calculus IV at least is the progression from Calc I-III topics. This I would liken to drinking from a firehose since I was out of practice with my Calculus, but in the long run it was quite enjoyable. In Linear Algebra, I expect a similar situation; jumping from method to method to tackle progressively more and more abstract and complex problems. The rewarding thing about this is to see how seemingly unrelated topics intertwine with early concepts from as far back as precalculus and algebra in order to solve problems that have their roots in real life phenomena whose understanding harkens back to people and discoveries throughout history. Speaking of which, beware of the puns.

Participation 11.0

Dear future students of MATH 220 – Linear Algebra,

My name is Felix Vu. I currently pursue an Associate Degree (majoring in Computer Science) and I'm also tutoring Physics, and probably Mathematics. I will be completing the degree in Fall 2020 and I'm in the process of transferring to Seattle University. Because I also have a Bachelor of Science (Pharmacology), I'll be applying for the Certificate to Master's Degree (Computer Science) at Seattle University.

For the quarter Fall 2020, as well as two previous quarters, most of my classes are virtual, due to the COVID-19 crisis. I also had a few online classes, which I rarely met up with the instructors. One of the challenges that I faced was that I tended to think that online classes meant less workload. However, this is not the case. The amount of workload remains the same, whether it's face-to-face, virtual or online. Because I didn't meet up with the instructor on Zoom regularly, I sometimes forgot about some of the assignments. Moreover, I spent less time studying for this particular class, as compared to my other classes, in which I met up with instructor often.

As a result, I was struggling with the class materials quite a bit, and the assignments seemed to be harder than it was supposed to be. Fortunately, I've realized that earlier in the quarter and I've decided to come up with a strategies to cope with my lack of understandings. Every day, I've allocated specific amount of time to read, study and practice for each particular classes. I, then developed a habit to study daily for all of my classes. I began to understand the materials more thoroughly, and I could complete the assignments in a less stressful manner, as compared to the beginning of the quarter.

One of the class I took in Fall 2020 was MATH 264 – Calculus 4, taught by Dusty Wilson. Despite the virtual nature of class due to COVID-19, I enjoyed this class quite a lot. Everyone in the class was offered the chance to do an Honor projects, in which we created 10 videos explaining the steps for particular homework problems. I took the opportunity to complete the Honor project (second one after PHYS 203), and it was not stressful at all. The benefit from these Honor projects is that I get to learn much more efficiently when I explain my thought process to others. If you ever have a chance to do these Honor projects, take it! It's a win-win opportunity.

Additionally, I like the style Dusty taught Calculus 4 a lot. For those of you who doesn't know, his assessments mainly test your understanding of the material (NOT in a time-constraint manner). In other classes, you would be required to take the quizzes or exams during a specific amount time. Chances are that you might not be able to complete the whole paper and lose points accordingly. Without time pressure, you can carefully work on the assessment and fully demonstrate your understanding of the material during the presentation with the instructor. If you learn and absorb the knowledge thoroughly, you will be able to perform well in the presentations. Keep in mind that, the work is only easy to explain, if it's your own work. Copying someone else's work will definitely make you struggled, when you try to explain it.

Finally, just a piece of encouragement. I understand that we are currently suffering from the COVID-19, in one way or another, but we're still trying our best to pursue our education and future career. You have reached this far in your journey of learning, so you should be proud of yourselves. You are smarter than a lot of people because of the amount of knowledge you've obtained so far. Believe in yourself and your future, you will be able to achieve anything you're trying to work for.

Reflection

Jasleen Garewal

My name's Jasleen Garewal, from the name you could probably guess it's not American. I was born and raised in Mumbai, India for a majority of my life. I've decided to get my Associates in Science with a focus on physics at Highline College. Astrophysics and particle physics has always been fascinating to me, I think that my education at Highline will lead me in the right direction for a career in these fields. I understand that to be good at physics I will need a strong foundation in mathematics. Ever since I was young math has always been fun to me, it feels like a game with numbers at times and sometimes it seems like the hardest riddle to solve. But even in the most challenging moments in math I always feel engaged and determined to solve it. My dad went to college to become an engineer so since childhood he has made me see the mechanics behind things which has influenced my interest in the sciences. In my free time I enjoy watching a million youtube videos about outer space and particle accelerators and reading current articles to expand my knowledge on the subjects. I hope to one day contribute to science and help expand humanity's knowledge of the unknown.

I have done three quarters of remote learning and the end of winter quarter 2019. All this time has made me comfortable and able to make a routine for myself that makes it easier during these bizarre times. I find the biggest challenge for me is when I'm having an off day it's very easy to shut my laptop and curl up in my bed right next to me. This makes me miss physically going to school because that would require me getting ready, also being in a classroom would make me feel more energetic on my off days. I had tried many ways to get my energy up, listening to my favorite music on the highest volume, eating my favorite breakfast or reorganizing my whole room and sometimes these things would work. But I accepted that it's ok to have the off days sometimes and I'm trying to not be so hard on myself.

Having made it to the end of calculus four I can say this has been the least stressful calculus class I have taken and this is hugely thanks to Dusty. The class is set up in a way that the focus is more on understanding concepts so that you are able to explain them to others. The presentations that we would do on the assessments allowed me to focus on understanding the reasoning behind the methods so I can explain them. I appreciated this part of the class because for me one of the challenging parts of calculus is visualizing the concept and having to present the problems I knew I needed to fully understand the concept so it would force me to spend more time on concepts instead of scrunching the problems. My advice for being successful in Dusty's class is to engage during class time so that it's easier to comprehend the lectures and appreciate the professor's thought process. I found that participating in class also made it more enjoyable for me and put me in a zone where I was able to push myself to think outside of the box.

As a student I would encourage others to create an environment that is used primarily for studying and listening to lectures. Having this designated area ensures a student to stay in a focused zone. I would recommend students to set aside a reasonable amount of time each day dedicated to studying. It's important to practice smart studying habits where you are studying the big ideas versus understanding things that apply only to one problem. In studying the big ideas it's simple to solve a large variety of problems. I encourage others to take these ideas into consideration and interpret them in a way that fits them. I think that anyone taking mathematics in college should be proud of themselves because it is a very complex little world.

11 December 2020

Dear Linear Algebra Student,

Hello! I hope this letter finds you well, you are starting a new math class, which can either be good or bad, depending on who you are. My name is Lillian (Lily) Tran, and I am currently Running Start, majoring in Physics here at Highline, hopefully to transfer to a 4-year university for a degree in Astronomy or Astrophysics. If you couldn't tell from my name, or just didn't want to assume, I come from a Vietnamese background. I am also of the female variety, so that's a double minority, haha.

I took Calc IV with Dusty this Fall quarter, and some of it was quite challenging. My biggest challenge was probably motivation. Here in Washington, as the seasons change, skies start to get gloomy. This led to the end of the quarter being stressful because I always felt a bit depressed, compared to the beginning of quarter happy jives. If you ever find yourself in this same situation, just remember what you are doing this for. Maybe you're an engineer, in which case imagine yourself taking a picture with a grand creation of yours (or stacks of money, if you're into that). Maybe you're a physicist, imagine yourself

giving the best lecture of the year, relaying information in a way that makes you seem like modern Einstein. Maybe you're like me, imagining yourself meeting aliens for the first time.

If you still feel down, try doing something new! I baked a few times this quarter, something I never do, and it gave me a "whole" feeling, which got my energy up and helped me keep going. I had to remember that I am still a teen and should partake in hobbies because hobbies are fun!

Dusty is one of the best faculty at Highline, and will never hesitate to help you succeed. It might be scary or you might be lazy, but take some time (at least once or twice this quarter) to talk to him outside of class. He might tell you about some cool concept that inspires you, or might give you a chuckle with a good old dad joke. All in all, take time for self care, and remember who you are as a person. Remember that you are a person, and you are taking this class because something down the line is something you are passionate about.

Happy COVID class,

- Lily Tran

1.) Introduces yourself, what you are majoring in, and a bit about your background.

My name is Nathan. I'm a second-year college student, and I plan on majoring in computer science/engineering (?). I'm a programmer. Most of my free time is spent working on software-related projects. This is my second time taking Calc IV—I had really unrealistic expectations of my productivity at the beginning of the lockdown, and decided to take twenty credits (big mistake!). I've since eased off and am taking only two math classes and another statistics one that has a pretty light workload.

2.) What were some of the challenges you faced this quarter (personally or as a student) and how did you make it through?

I found it really difficult to stay motivated to keep up with lectures and homework. Personally, most of my interest comes from being able to interact with others in class and talking about the topics we're learning in class. Obviously, this is a bit more difficult given our current situation. I didn't really take advantage of the course Slack or any of the Canvas message boards, since they're a bit of a pain to get working, but this could have been a possible remedy for the communication/interaction problem.

3.) What advice do you have for being successful in a COVID class taught by Dusty?

This is my third quarter with Dusty, so we're familiar enough where the following isn't an issue, but what most of my friends suffer from in their classes is that their professors are essentially strangers. The benefit of smaller classes is that there are more opportunities to get to know your professor as a person, and this is much more difficult when there's less time for the banter that makes taking the class fun. Here's some advice related to this: office hours are a hack for your college education! If your professor knows your name and a little about you, they're much more likely to be willing to give you a little extra help. Try and turn the stranger on Zoom that never stops talking into a person that you can relate to in some way and have conversations with. Same with your classmates. More friends makes life more joyous!

4.) Please end your letter with something to encourage the reader.

What I've found is this: most people at Highline taking classes like Calc IV don't actually need them for their degrees—it's mostly beyond the math requirement for Engineering degrees. (I think Calc IV @ UW is Math ~309, where I think 126 is the minimum for CS/ME/etc). Regardless of whether this is true or not, what I'm trying to say is most people are probably taking this class for fun, and probably so are you! It makes doing work much easier when you remember that you actually *like* the work, and you *want* to be here! Math is fun and awesome and exciting, and obviously since you're here you already know that, but try really hard to remember that when Zoom crashes, or you're feeling isolated because you haven't seen anyone other than your parents in three weeks. I wish you the best of luck.

Dear Future Students of Linear Algebra in Dusty Wilson's Class

I am Kevin Engelskjen. I am majoring in Mechanical Engineering I took Running Start and now transferring to WSU to continue my learning. I learned Calculus 4 - Multi-variable Calculus with Dusty Wilson.

A huge challenge is to get used to online learning and to stay healthy during this hard time. Another challenge for me was to stay on task because when you're at home it's easy to get distracted and procrastinate. I got over it by changing my whole setup and the way I live at home. I do isolate myself for certain times to make sure I get stuff done. Online is a lot different than in-person so you have to be a lot more responsible in what you learn which isn't bad but a change in studying habits. Now I am not in many situations that you may be in with Covid or Financially and etc. But Online learning takes up a lot of time. I have made alarms on every hour or so to either to take mind breaks or to work on other topics. With Online learning you are on the laptop or computer a lot of the time so make sure you take good breaks every hour or half hour to give your eyes a break once in a while. Stay Organized because you can get cluttered but also remember you can use the internet for more examples but most likely unneeded.

I do have some tips for you when you are in Dusty Wilson's Class. If he has a packet for you to use to follow along to in his lectures. Use Them! They help you out a ton! It keeps you organized and you have something to follow.

Another tip is to start your home work early! You don't have to finish it but definitely work on it because if you do questions early is extra credit! Who doesn't love that? It takes stress off of your time, if you start early not on just homework but take home assessments as well, is always useful.

Another thing is to just participate in class. Get a photo or turn on your camera. Talk in class, ask questions, just be active. It helps learning become easier if you approach the Professor and your classmates as old friends. It takes off the anxiety of asking something or bringing up something in class.

Last tip is to have Fun!

Before I used to say Have Fun and just work in class but that's so common and normal. So now I say Tempus Fugit, Carpe Diem! It means Time Flies, Sizzle the Day. In life that is what we must realize is that time does not wait for you. So Sizzle the Day and do what you enjoy in Life!

Dear Linear Algebra Students,

My name is Romeo Yang, and at the time that I am writing this, I am almost done with calculus 4. For a little bit of backstory, I am taking calculus 4 to get one step closer to my major in civil engineering and a bit for self satisfaction. Although linear algebra and calculus 4 are two different classes here at highline, I am certain that some of my experiences in calculus 4 can translate to the experience in linear algebra.

During my time here in calculus 4, I had challenges with understanding the topics that were being taught using zoom. In the past before the pandemic started, just attending class was good enough to prepare me for the homework and assessments due that week, but after remote learning was adopted, it became harder for me to do the homework and assessments without a lot of studying on the side. Of course, the classes I took before remote learning was adopted were less challenging compared to the classes taken after remote learning was adopted, so this connection is probably correlation rather than causation, but either way, my advice for being successful in class is the same. Study the content you are being taught seriously outside of class and engage with it using the homework.

I'm not recommending that you endlessly search the internet or library for other sources of information to study the topics that you are supposed to learn from the class, but that you look to the examples and notes the teacher provides for insight as to how the topic is more intuitive than how it is taught. When someone tries to teach someone else a new topic, it is taught in a way that is understood by the teacher, not the way that the recipient understands it. The only way I have found to counteract this is to take baby steps outside of class and make sense of the topics on your own. Although this method works, its biggest downside is that it takes a lot of time outside of class to make sense of the topics on your own. I'm talking about 1 hour of work for the easier topics and 3 hours of work for the harder topics. Couple this with the homework and you are looking at 2-6 hours of work total. This time can probably be spread throughout the week and shortened by using more efficient methods of study, but so far, I haven't found a good way to do so.

As for advice specific to a class taught by Dusty during this pandemic, I suggest taking notes during the zoom meetings or taking notes using the edited notes that he provides online. Not every teacher does this, but Dusty does and it can really help when the way he understands a problem is very similar to the way you understand the problem. When your understanding isn't similar to his, then you at least have the step by step solutions he provides that you can puzzle out to try to understand how he came up with his

answers. If all else fails, he is very friendly and willing to re-explain everything during office hours or using slack to help you understand the topic.

Although math isn't really easy to do at this level, I'm certain that everyone in linear algebra can pass as long as the dedication is there. If the dedication isn't there, then either find it, or reconsider what you really want in life. If anyone can pass without dedication, then they are a genius.

Sincerely,
Romeo Yang

12/11 Reflection

Denis Krokhmal

Calc IV

Hello, my name is Denis Krokhmal. Right now, I am getting my prerequisites done so that I can transfer to a four-year university and start getting a degree in electrical engineering. I come from a Christian Slavic family that moved to America on August 14, 2008, so I've basically been living in the US for twelve and a half years. I wrestled for five years throughout middle and high school but recently started getting into volleyball with my church youth, that I really enjoy. I like music and play a couple of instruments.

To be honest, this quarter I told myself that I have to get a high GPA no matter what. So even before the quarter started, I tried finishing things before the day that it was actually due. But once the quarter started, the hardest part was probably getting acquainted with how the classes will be going forth with this whole COVID thing going on. It was tough at first, but a week or two later you have no choice but to get the hang of it, as long as you're paying attention. And then seventh or eighth week of the quarter, COVID hit my family, including me. I was bed ridden through most of the week. It hurt to talk, my head hurt constantly, fever would spike up out of nowhere and then the weirdest part hit, losing sense of smell and taste. The whole thing just sucked, and I couldn't do anything. Obviously, as a student who's been going to college, I knew that I need to tell my professors right away. They understood everything and were very kind about it, especially Dusty. They told me to take my time and get better, and to not push it too hard. That gave me some room to breathe. And then once I started feeling better, even though it was not easy, I started catching up with the work that I missed.

My biggest advice to give to someone who wants to be successful in Dusty's class is to just talk to Dusty when you run into a problem. And when I say problem, I mean any problem. Dusty is probably one of the most understanding professors I've ever had. When I got the virus, Dusty checked up on me and my family, which made me feel really good. Another thing that I would advise to do is whenever you're solving a problem, try to explain how you're solving it in your head. Don't just use formulas to solve it, try to understand why you're using that formula and how you're getting the answer. That will help a lot on your take home assessments. Honestly, treat COVID classes the same way you would treat an in-person class, but know that you always have more resources at hand, if you have a stable Wi-Fi connection.

I just want to say that no matter the consequence, no matter where you are, there's always a light at the end of the tunnel. COVID classes might be a bit tougher because they're online, but I know you can get through it. Just pay attention and treat it as a regular class.

Hello Linear Algebra Student,

My name is Vanny Thavixay (tah-VEE-sai), and I am majoring in chemical engineering. I am a first generation Laotian-American as well as the first member in my family to go to college. I struggled in my beginning of courses, because I didn't have any direction for being a successful student or navigating college. I wasn't even aware of all of the resources that were available to me. I didn't know there was such a thing as a successful student. It wasn't until four years into college, that I realized I wasn't doing enough to see my dream of being an engineer become a reality. That is when I changed my attitude about academics, and started taking my grades and involvement with my education more critically. I started engaging with other students through study groups and reached out to advisors and my professors frequently for help and guidance.

One subject I consistently struggled with was math. In my time of attending the whole calculus series, I earned no higher than a 2.5 GPA in each course. Now, taking Calculus IV for the second time, I realize I wasn't applying myself enough before. The struggles I had earlier weren't struggles with the material, but struggles with my understanding of how to learn, study, collaborate with peers and ask questions. I overcame those struggles and am on track of earning the highest math grade I have ever had, even while we suffer through the current pandemic. This quarter, my biggest challenge in math was keeping up with homework, which would have allowed me to complete assessments in less time than the many many hours I was taking to complete them. I was finishing homework the same weekend the assessments were given, and had a hard time confidently expressing the new knowledge on paper to present. It truly takes time to absorb and practice what is being learned for it to "stick." After three sleepless weekends, I finally prioritized finishing homework on-time, and studying daily to make it through the quarter. I paced my coursework, practiced a little bit each day, and watched the lecture videos for review. Consequently, I also lessened the pressure on myself of having to finish an assignment on the days I could not study, and afforded myself time to shift focus onto other priorities as needed.

As we continue to learn in the middle of the pandemic and engage in distant learning of subjects that are traditionally taught in person, it is important to maintain focus and establish a schedule or routine for coursework, and to work with classmates to practice understanding of the material. My recommendation for success in a COVID class being taught by Dusty is to attend class as regularly as possible, ask questions during lecture, and participate in a study group. It's difficult to use our typical resources like going to the tutoring center, but there is a lot of new technology available to effectively connect with other students to work on homework together and dialogue the process aloud to each other. If clarification is needed, reach out to Dusty on Slack, email, or in person during office hours. Do not stress trying to understand something new on your own.

You're in luck, Dusty's class is one of the best distance learning classes that you can take. He has structured the class in a way that encourages learning and understanding of what you should know. He is great at engaging and connecting with students, and will bring out the best in you

for succeeding in the class. You have a lot of support in your corner, don't be shy to use it; take charge of your learning and grade, because you have complete control over it. Good luck!

Questions for 12/11: This week you have a chance to reflect, direct, and encourage a future student. Please write a 1+ page letter to my linear algebra students next quarter that:

- 1.) Introduces yourself, what you are majoring in, and a bit about your background.
- 2.) What were some of the challenges you faced this quarter (personally or as a student) and how did you make it through?
- 3.) What advice do you have for being successful in a COVID class taught by Dusty?
- 4.) Please end your letter with something to encourage the reader.

Hi there, Welcome to Linear Algebra,

My name is Jei (pronounced as the letter 'J') Pedro. I am majoring in Civil Engineering, I'm currently working on my Bachelor's and expecting to graduate by 2021. A little bit about me is that I work at Amazon part time and a full time student.

There were a couple of challenges I faced throughout this quarter. As a student, I like my teaching to be in person and more interactive. But due to a global pandemic, everyone has been forced to off-site teaching. For me, the fact that we were in a global pandemic didn't hit me until everything started closing and my loved ones started conversing about how worse Covid-19 is affecting the human race. Especially in the beginning, it was scary for me due to daily watching numbers of death increasing exponentially. I work at Amazon Warehouse where most of the job assignments required the associates to work closely. Big Corporation was still working with the CDC when the outbreak happened, which meant all the Covid-19 regulations we have in place now were not in place. With being an active college student heading into finals, this affected my studies greatly. I had no time to acclimate myself to the changes. A recent challenge I encountered this quarter was towards the end of the quarter, before Thanksgiving. I was exposed to a close friend who had Covid but thankfully, I didn't get Covid. While I didn't get COVID-19, it was very scary for me to go through such an expression due to having a little one at my household and the thought of putting my nephew at risk scared me and took all of my attention off my class work and work. Amazon was very understanding about hardship, and required me to quarantine myself for 2 weeks. This allowed me to focus on my health and take care of my family, especially with a little one in the family.

I enjoy going to school but online classes aren't my preferred type of learning. I prefer face to face teaching, but with COVID, it's hybrid, I learned to work around it, I did my best in

class and always attended zoom class. I have passion for math but with this new opportunity due to world-wide pandemic, getting used to online classes and learning the content virtually has allowed me to learn the content at my own speed with having a schedule to follow. With how Dusty has set up the class for our Fall Quarter, this quarter was very smooth for me due to having a consistent schedule and the dusty being affectionate towards his students for them going through these tough times.

Anyone who is interested or is taking any classes with dusty, my recommendation would be YES, take a class with this professor because the professor was able to teach us in these stressful times with understanding where the students might be coming from or what situations they might be in. Most of our students are under the impression math classes are better in person due to face-face interaction and in Dusty's class I felt the same with optimal help from my peers and the professor.

Thank You for a Great Quarter

Jeï Pedro

Hello, my name is Juan Hernandez and I'm planning on majoring in civil engineering. At the moment I am looking into finishing my AS in engineering at highline and transferring to either UW Seattle or WSU. A little bit about is that I like to play football and soccer in my free time, if I'm not on the field you can find me sleeping in some random place.

This was my 2nd quarter that has been fully online. This quarter has been extra challenging for me and it all had to do with how the flow of the class went. For example, in my Calc 4 class, everything went on really smoothly and no hip-ups, unlike my Statics class where the class was faced with many challenges. The quarter started off bumpy but with a lot of extra studying I might just be able to pull it off. Sometimes if the class isn't going well, but you need the credits, you will just have to sit down and buckle up for the extra studying hours. Also, not to add the fact that it's 2020 and in everyone's personal life we all are facing the fact that we have to stay healthy and safe. I have also found it difficult to get up from bed and be able to function during lecture, one method that I have found out to be effective is to get up an hour or so two early, eat breakfast, get ready, put on some street clothes, and be mentally prepared for class.

The 2 biggest and most important advice I can give, is to make sure that you are tracking your important dates and to study, study, study. Why is this 2 pieces of advice really important? Well, it's really easy to lose track on what day of the week you are in since we don't leave the house at all or are in a face-to-face class. Trust me, I have had moments where it's the end of the week, it's 8:00 am and I'm in my own little world where I'm thinking it's thursday morning, but somehow or some way I come to find out that it's actually Friday and there is an assignment that it's due at 9:00 am, and now you are panicking and running all over the house trying to gather your things and are in a rush to finish an assessment or a reflection paper. Dusty makes it easy to understand the material that will be covered in class, he will also post videos, the class notes, and not to mention that he will go the extra mile to send you the workalongs.

To conclude, If you are taking linear algebra with Dusty, make sure to take note of the important dates (homework, assessments, discussions). Also, when studying, take note of the meaning behind the math and make sure that your math is correctly written. Studying is also key if you want to be successful, not just in math but in life in general. Math can be a really complex subject with a lot of meanings to learn and work to be done, but once you understand the material, everything into place and you will be a happy camper, knowing that you can solve a challenging math

problem. If you ever fall behind, just talk to your professor and tell them what part of the material, you as a student are struggling with and they will happily help you with it.

Hello, my name is Eddi Arenas, I'm 18 years old and it's my first year out of high school. I've taken differential equations, linear algebra, and I'm finishing calc 4 right now. I'm majoring in electrical engineering and after this year I plan to transfer somewhere I'm not 100% on where yet. Generally I do pretty well in my classes as I have few distractions and a strong motivation to succeed, or some might say a strong fear of failure.

The hardest part for me in COVID school is finding a good rhythm to follow. I kinda just had to feel it out as the quarter went on, but what I found worked the best is just the obvious answer. Do everything as early as possible and maybe even peek ahead a little bit. You can follow along with the calendar except ignore the homework due date. Finish the homework the day the lecture is finished or the day before. Bonus for doing it a day before is that the lecture becomes review. The only downside of doing your stuff early is that by the time the assessment comes by you might forget how to do things because sometimes a whole week will go by without using what you learned in an assessment. This might be a good time to mention that I don't take notes. (sorry dusty!). That might be why I'm able to 'forget' how to do things, because I don't even save my homework work, because I do it all on a white board. What really helped me remember how to do things is the honors videos I made, because it was like having my past-self teach me how to do problems the way I do them. I might consider making these videos for myself in the future because they were really that helpful. It was like what I assume it's like for people to look back at their notes except in video form. I got sidetracked there a little but in summary, do your work early and create some way of teaching your future-self math. Aka notes. Or video tutorials.

In terms of challenges outside of class, to keep my mental health up I exercise and do yoga. I normally run outside but it started getting harder because it's getting colder so now I lift a weight in my room and run less often. I also try to drink a lot of water, the exercise helps with that. It also helps to stay curious about things. I like learning new things whether factual or some type of skill, it's all fun and keeps my mood up.

Advice for Dusty's class? Like everything in life, 90% of the battle is your mentality when approaching something. I've found that if you approach math with the idea that it's super cool, and you actually pay attention to the material rather than focus on your grade, everything becomes easier. Not only is it more bearable but your grades actually go up too. And lucky for you Dusty doesn't have to try to think math is dope because he just knows it is. And he's always trying to show you why he thinks it's cool. If you're curious about math and try to learn about it, you'll do much better than if you're just going for a grade. So my advice is take advantage of Dusty's love for math and try to let it rub off on you. You don't have to take math, you get to! That change in mindset makes life easy.

If you're reading this it means you've made it really far in math! And it means you're also capable of continuing. If you can pass calc 1 then you can pass calc 2. Following this logic, you can definitely pass this class. Good luck even though I'm sure you don't need it.

Also, (dusty cut this out if you don't like it/find it to be not helpful) Calc 1 and 2 for me were by far the hardest math classes up to this point for me. I'm not sure if it's because I've gotten better or if everything else is actually easier but yeah that's been my experience.

(Also feel free to edit this thing however you like to make it more useful)

(also also, I initially wrote this in the regular format of answering questions directly and just erased the questions after so it flows a little weird sorry about that.)

My name is Addishiwot Taffesse, I am majoring in Engineering. I have been in management and supervisory positions in my previous jobs and I loved it, but I was also interested in engineering as well. so, I have decided to leave my job and pursue my engineering degree, but the good thing is that I can have both the engineering and management fields that I equally love combined in Industrial Engineering, so I am planning to transfer to a four-year degree college to pursue Industrial Engineering. But my journey had its ups and downs from the start.

Starting school can be daunting, it requires a great deal of time and effort, even for those who are already in school and just starting new quarter it could be a bit scary. New teachers, new material to learn and new experience to be had. It could be overwhelming for anybody. But its extra scary for a person like me who got a family of their own who needs their constant attention. My name is Addishiwot Taffesse I have been in and out of school for couple of years, for not having enough time to spend on my education. But now I have been going for full time for over a year and it has been going well. In the past I have struggled with not having enough time to study or do homework because I had a demanding job and family expectation. So, I either drop out or gotten a very bad grade which gave me a very low self-esteem after a while.

So, I started comparing myself with other students who seem to have it all together. This made me lose my confidence, and at time of exam I started to stress out and make mistakes on the simplest equations, at the end my grade suffer, and I ended up with much regret and bad feelings. Now I have started to focus on my self and not comparing myself with others because everybody has their own struggles. Might not be the same as me but I know everybody have their limitations, but that is not the important point. The main point is that I need to focus on myself, so I set a goal for myself.

I started with a very basic Goal like not to drop out for the first quarter then to get to class on time and pay attention so on and so forth. Now I am continuing to set my simple goals for each quarter. In 2020 my goals changed because of COVID, the first one was to be great full no matter what and to acknowledge that everybody is in this together and to work as much as I could in these conditions. But throughout everything I kept setting my goals to make sure that I stay focused on my progress instead of what was going on around me. Yes, plans and goals change but having one is essential.

This quarter I added one other goal, that is to stay in contact with my instructors for all I need because in the beginning of this quarter I got dropped because of a problem with my financial Aid and ended up

getting the much-needed advice from a couple of instructors and I was able to stay in school. Since things change in a daily basis sometimes and it is hard to keep up, so it's important to seek help from instructors. And get the right guidance in how to handle the different situations that could arise. Taking Dusty's class also helped me to stay focused on my knowledge instead of just getting the grade. Its very difficult to focus on once knowledge while studying for a timed exam. Because the focus is on getting the right material for the exam. Even when teachers are doing review it is easy to see that the focus is on what is going to be in the exam instead of what the takeaway from the class is. But when doing assessments even if student did it to just get the grade the presentation time would help students to study to get the knowledge instead of study for a test. In other words, they can focus on their knowledge of the material instead of the quick and easy way to solve a question. And this helps students in their bigger goal.

The bigger plan is to finish school successfully but to do that it is important to set small basic goals which could be used as a road map to lead to the destination. Believe you will get there and follow the simple road plan and you will get there if I can do it you can do it.

Dear Linear Algebra Student,

I would like to keep my name private, but I am majoring in Engineering....at least I think I am. I am 10 years out of high school and pursuing higher education. I'm nearing the end of my Associates Degree and I couldn't be happier. It's great seeing a sort of major checkpoint. There has been a lot of challenging times throughout my two years at Highline but somehow, I've always seemed to make it through. I didn't know how at the time, but I just worked with what I had. Those other quarters seem like so long ago. This quarter has been probably one of the more interesting and challenging quarters though. I work full-time and was going to be taking some challenging classes. I want to say I made it a month before I dropped a class. It was a tough decision to make but at the end of the day I have my physical and mental health to worry about. I think that's one of the most important things we can do, especially now, to take care of ourselves and honestly be gentle. I didn't realize how much this whole pandemic has really impacted me. In the last few weeks, it's gotten a bit more personal and my household and myself included were exposed to the coronavirus. Unfortunately, I was also struggling to complete some of my homework and assessments. Thankfully I communicated my issues to my professors, and they were able to adjust things. Communication is key in just about every aspect of your life. You may just want to hide and not say anything, but people care and are willing to work with you to get the job done. Advice that I have for being successful in a COVID class taught by Dusty is simple. You just need to attend the lectures. Dusty makes things super simple to follow and answers any questions any student has at any time. The notes that he offers have been tantamount to my success this quarter. I don't have a printer at home and have found it difficult to write notes in my other classes that don't supply these preprinted

notes. It just really gives you a place to refer to rather than some lined paper. In the end, just take care of yourself and the people around you, communicate, and be willing to accept help from others. I think if you follow those three things, you'll be fine this quarter and through the rest of this pandemic.

Take Care,

Anonymous

Reflection 12/13/2020

Hi everyone, my name is Thien Phu Nguyen. I have been to the US for 3 years and currently, I am a sophomore at Highline College, my major is Computer Science. I am an immigrant from Vietnam, and I came here with my parents. My first destination when I came to the US was Boston and after 6 months when I did not want to depend on my parents anymore, I moved to Seattle. I usually came back to Boston to visit them, but I still prefer to live here.

I think this quarter is a hard time for every people not only me due to the Covid-19, but I also lose my job and all the classes changed to online. In my opinion, the in-person class still helps me understand the lesson better. As a full-time student, I had to spend a lot of time in my study and had to find a new job so I could balance my finance. Besides, I applied for a scholarship for the next quarter and I must work harder to achieve it. For the challenge of this class, I find it difficult to understand everything and must explain it in the presentation of the assessment.

English is my second language, sometimes I understand it but I do not know how to explain it in English fluently so it takes time for me to practice my English.

You must put more effort to be successful in this class, also attendance plays an important role in grading. Mr. Dusty is an enthusiastic teacher in teaching but sometimes he is a little strict in grading assignments. Make sure to complete all the assignments if you want to get a full grade and if you have anything that misunderstood, ask Dusty immediately, he will be happy to explain it to you. Always checking the assessment again before submitting it, he will check it very carefully and will point out what you need to make it better. Watch honor video every week and connect with classmates when doing your homework.

I think if you put enough effort into this class, practice more homework and communicate with Dusty, this class is not very hard. As I explain in the last paragraph, Dusty is an enthusiastic teacher so it would be a good decision if you want to take Calculus IV.