

FAQs

1. Where is the MaLL located?

Go to

<http://www.math.unm.edu/~svasan01/Info/Directions%20to%20the%20Math%20Learning%20Lab.pdf>

2. What are the hours of operation?

Go to <http://www.math.unm.edu/~svasan01/>

3. How are Intermediate Algebra classes (MATH 101, 102 and 103 courses) taught at the MaLL?

MATH 101-103 classes as well as select MATH 121 classes are taught at the MaLL using a software known as ALEKS. The student starts at the 101 level and works on topics laid out in the form of a pie. The pie has various segments corresponding roughly to different chapters. Once the student has mastered all the topics, they need to take an exam at our Testing Center located in the MaLL. Once the student passes the test with 75% or better, their pie can be moved to the next higher level class, say MATH 102 by the instructor. Again, they go through mastering the different topics in MATH 102 and take the test at the end. Then they proceed with MATH 103 if their chosen program of study requires them to complete MATH 103. ALEKS' emphasis is on periodic knowledge checks (assessments) of the topics until 100% mastery of all topics is accomplished for each course.

Each of the courses, MATH101, 102 and 103 are 1 credit and lasts half a semester (8 weeks in Spring or Fall and 4 weeks during Summer). Typically a student starts MATH 101 during the first half term, completes all the topics and takes the test (final exam) to pass and then move on over to MATH 102 for the second half term of the same semester. This makes the most sense as it keeps the momentum of math learning going for the student. It also makes accessing ALEKS more affordable (see #5 below for access charges).

As in other classes, the student is required to work additional hours in ALEKS so that they are able to keep pace with the requirements. If you have a high speed Internet connection you will be able to access your ALEKS account and work on your topics from anywhere in the world.

4. When I register for ALEKS does it mean that I am automatically registered in UNM?

No. Signing up for a course in ALEKS and signing up for the same course in UNM are two very different things and the two systems do not talk to each other. Therefore it is important that you sign up in UNM for the correct class when you meet with your advisor. Then make sure that you attend the class where your instructor will help you register in ALEKS and start the course on the first day of class.

5. Is access to the ALEKS program free?

No. You have to pay to get access to the ALEKS program and then work on your course topics. The instructor may give you a code to temporarily access ALEKS for two weeks (i.e., a loaner) but in order to have continued access to complete all your topics you need to purchase access either

at the bookstore or online. If you are receiving financial aid through the Bursar's office, the bookstore can charge your ALEKS access code purchase to that account. You can also purchase ALEKS on line after the initial loaner period has expired following these directions:

http://www.math.unm.edu/~svasan01/Info/Renewing_Access_to_your_ALEKS_Class.pdf

When you pay for ALEKS access, you buy time, for example 18 weeks' worth of access or 6 weeks' worth. ALEKS does not care how many courses you can use their access for within the purchased time frame. Therefore, it behooves the student to buy enough time in ALEKS so that they can sequentially finish the course that they need during the semester.

Please be aware that entering a Course Code for the current class in an effort to renew ALEKS access may result in your losing topics. Always consult a tutor or instructor if you are in doubt regarding renewal or changing classes.

The temporary access code that your instructor may have provided for two weeks of ALEKS access is just that; it is temporary. When you buy, say an 18-week code at the end of your 2-week "temporary access" period, ALEKS will subtract the two weeks and extend your expiration date by another 16 weeks. The same is true for other durations, i.e., 2 weeks of access is automatically subtracted from the duration of the subscription that you are purchasing.

6. What does it involve when I have to take an exam at the MaLL Testing Center?

The Testing Center hours of operation are the same as the hours for the MaLL except that you must come 2 hours before closing time (2.5 hours for MATH 103) so that you have enough time to complete the test. The test need not be taken only during the class time. You must bring a photo ID such as Lobo Card or Driver's License. See also additional rules for the Testing Center: <http://www.math.unm.edu/~svasan01/Info/Math%20Learning%20Lab%20Testing%20Center%20Rules%20rev%20F15.pdf>

7. What happens if I have not finished my topics or passed the test by the time the term is over?

- (a) If you are registered for a first half-term class and if you have not finished your topics and/or passed the test with 75% or better, you will be awarded an Incomplete ("I"). If you receive an "I" you must continue working to complete the topics and pass the test. You have until the Friday of the Finals Week to address the Incomplete; otherwise the "I" will be converted to an "NC" (No Credit).
- (b) If you are registered for a second half-term class and if you have not finished your topics and/or passed the test with 75% or better, you will be awarded an Incomplete ("I") at the end of the Friday of the Finals Week. If you receive an "I" you must continue working to complete the topics and pass the test. You have until the Friday of the week before classes start for the next term (the next term immediately following can be Fall, Spring or Summer) to address the Incomplete; otherwise the "I" will be converted to an "NC."

8. What helps me ensure that I am on track with respect to completing the topics on time?

You are provided a Progress Benchmark schedule at the beginning of the term. This schedule helps you stay on target every week. There are a few benchmark dates considered mandatory. If you do not meet the mandatory benchmark number of topics, you will be required to come in

an additional minimum 2 hours per week to catch up. Make sure that you log in your name on a separate sign in sheet which you should ask for at the MaLL front counter.

9. What do I need if I need extra help or get stuck on some topics?

We have Open Lab hours when classes are not in session. Also, if classes are in session, if you can find an unoccupied computer, you are welcome to work on your ALEKS topics. Any time the lab is open tutors are available to help. For schedule of operating hours refer to <http://www.math.unm.edu/~svasan01>

If you are not meeting benchmarks and do not put in additional hours to catch up your instructor may drop you from the class. Also consult the Resources page for the class; this may contain other helpful information including links to useful YouTube video clips that we created here at the MaLL.

Remember that while in Learning Mode ALEKS provides an “Explain” button for each question. If you look at the problem and realize that you do not know how to proceed you can always click the “Explain” button first. ALEKS will provide a step-by-step procedure to solve the problem. There is no penalty for clicking the Explain button upfront as many times as you want. However, if you attempt the problem and get it wrong, you can still click the “Explain” button but you may have to do an additional problem in the same topic. Thus, you can use the Explain button as many times as you need until you feel comfortable and then attempt the problems in the topics. This way you are maximizing the chances of getting the problems done correctly. Maintaining a well-organized note book as you would in any other lecture-based classes is the key to doing well in these courses. If the explanation from ALEKS is not clear you can get help from the tutors or the instructor.

Additionally, we have created YouTube video clips on select topics and they are linked in ALEKS; a separate list is also available. A QR code has been created for easy access from mobile devices. We also hold exam review workshops to assist those who need extra help with exam preparation.

10. What happens if I receive an NC grade in my course?

An NC awarded for 101, 102 or 103 course is equivalent to an “F” grade normally awarded in other classes. Receiving an “NC” can have negative consequences such as (i) lowering your GPA, and (ii) loss of financial aid.

11. How do I communicate with my instructor?

Your instructor may send you useful information through Lobo Mail or ALEKS’ email. They may also post important documents such as syllabus, benchmarks, etc. in the Resources page (tab) in ALEKS. It is your responsibility to check your email regularly and also avail yourself of the Resources provided. You may also contact your instructor during class or during the posted office hours.

12. I tried registering on LoboWeb during the second week of Spring/Fall semester classes but it would not let me. Why?

These courses are 8-weeks long during Spring/Fall semester. Therefore, they allow only one week during which you can register through LoboWeb. Starting the second week, you need to contact the instructor and have a late registration form filled out; this must be taken over to Registration's One Stop located in Mesa Vista Hall. There is no late fee for registering during the semester.

ALEKS' method of instruction is based entirely upon periodic knowledge checks (assessments) in order to achieve 100% mastery of all the topics in the course. Therefore, approximately every 5 hours or about 20 topics of working in the Learning Mode, ALEKS gives you knowledge checks (assessments) which are about 25 questions long. This is ALEKS' way of determining how much of the information that you learned you are able to retain/recall. Please take the knowledge checks (assessments) seriously. Consult your notes and have the tutor check your final answer before submitting a question that you are not sure of. Tutors cannot assist you step-by-step with the knowledge check (assessment) questions but they can help you understand the question better.

13. Why do I keep getting knowledge checks (assessments) in ALEKS which is slowing down my progress?

If you are frustrated during a knowledge check (assessment) and keep pressing "I don't know" button often, ALEKS would determine that you really don't know the topics and will add those topics back to the pie. In other words, you will have more work to do at the end of the knowledge checks (assessments) compared to the beginning. If you see a question that has not been covered before and if you answer it correctly you will receive a bonus point moving you forward. If you answer the question incorrectly, there is no penalty. However if you answer a question incorrectly that you are supposed to have learned then ALEKS penalizes you and adds that topic back to your pie even though you had mastered it originally.