



David Fox <david.marshall.fox@gmail.com>

Request, Math Boot Camp

David Fox <david.marshall.fox@gmail.com>
To: "Patrick K. Asea" <pasea@auaf.edu.af>

Thu, Aug 7, 2014 at 4:00 PM

Dear Prof. Asea,

I am just trying to provide some constructive points on the 'boot camp' so that all the students can benefit from it as much as possible.

I took BC Calculus as a junior in high school, as I was considered a bit of a math 'whiz kid' at that time. That was my last math class, and it was 13 years ago. With that being said, I still remember that the pace of learning allowed for the students to understand each concept before moving on to the next.

Now a point on the nature of this 'boot camp' - you made clear in your introductory remarks that the goal of this book camp was *not* attrition, but rather learning the content. This would actually make this course very much like Marine Corps Basic Training, where the goal is not to get recruits to drop out, but rather to make it nearly impossible for them to drop out through the use of constant drilling and exercises.

What I am humbly requesting is that we be given the resource to properly drill ourselves in our own time. I have located the teacher manual for our textbook online, and I will use it to prepare for our upcoming exam. Obviously if I was planning on using it to commit acts of academic dishonesty, I would not formally announce my possession of it.

The other students may not have the official answer key or were confused in note-taking, and do not even have their graded homework assignments as a feedback mechanism to reflect on their errors.

Moreover, some of the PowerPoint practice equations do not include the solutions for those of us who have printed them out and are currently reviewing them.

I have no doubt I will pass the exam on Saturday. I need time to digest the material and drill practice equations, but I have budgeted that time and thus I am not concerned.

There are students, though, that won't pass, and what I am asking you to consider is whether they have been given all the resources they could be given to have a successful math boot camp experience.

Sincerely,

David

On Thursday, August 7, 2014 at 3:29 PM, Patrick K. Asea wrote:

I understand your concern. However, as a former military person you should know that its not possible to tell the drill sergeant..."I cant run the 10km this morning its just too tough. I want to walk it instead". That why we call it "Maths Boot Camp". Its an MBA tradition. All over the world. It is intended to be grueling and rigorous. The objective is Tt drum in to the students the fundamentals of mathematics as used in management science. At AUAF I ask students to pick up the text book a month BEFORE Boot Camp and to read and do the problems in the book. Most don't. I ask students to take leave from work so that they can give the boot camp their undivided attention. Most don't. I provide a graduate tutor to work with the students. Most don't attend his sessions. The result is they struggle and fall behind and have to kicked out of the program. With respect to the solutions being on the internet. I am aware of that. You correctly note that it is not helpful to the student to simply copy answers off the internet. Perhaps more importantly, it is a gross violation of the honor code to cheat by copying answers off the internet. It is also an obvious and flagrant case of academic dishonesty. The AUAF-MBA program has a zero tolerance for academic dishonesty and if discovered the penalty is up to and including expulsion from the university.
Patrick

On Wed, Aug 6, 2014 at 9:52 PM, David Fox <david.marshall.fox@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Prof. Asea,

I wanted to take a moment to make a request regarding the math boot camp.

Personally, I find this content to be very difficult, and we are obviously moving through the material at an expedited pace.

With that being the case, I think it would be very helpful to have worksheets of problems for each process, with a provided answer sheet going through the steps.

I know that there are sample problems and answers in the PowerPoints, but it is not enough to attain that mental 'muscle memory' of completing numerous steps of a process to obtain the desired result.

I know that I am already behind, and I have spent this afternoon (and will spend the remainder of this evening) reviewing the PPTs and trying to catch up. As a result I will not be submitting the homework tomorrow,

I have the official PDF file of all the answers from our textbook (the internet giveth freely), but copying down answers without understanding the content would not benefit anyone.

Best,

David