4 How to Become a Math Major at WSU

4.1 Getting Started

In the following pages you will find the information you need to start and work through your program as a mathematics major. You should complete Math 171, 172 (or 182) and 220 (or 230) as soon as possible. Note that Math 182 and 230 are the honors versions of Math 172 and 220, respectively. The honors classes give students enrichment opportunities and smaller class sizes. Your advisor or the course instructor can give you permission to enter these classes. After completing Math 171, 172 (or 182) and 220 (or 230), you can apply to certify as a math major. The instructions for doing this follow in this section. Your advisor will help you plan your program so that you complete both your general requirements and the specific requirements for one of the several mathematics major options.

Students entering college should take a minimum of three math courses their first year, to include Math 171, 172, and 220, which is two semesters of calculus and a semester of linear algebra. A student may use AP or Running Start credit to get a head start on these requirements. Please see the AP credit chart at http://admission.wsu.edu/requirements/ap-credit.html for more information.

For transfer students who arrive at WSU with an AA or AS, we recommend having the calculus series, linear algebra, differential equations, and physics with a lab completed so one has the best possible chance of completing a bachelor’s degree in two years (in addition to the AA or AS). To ensure your courses will transfer to WSU appropriately, please use WSU’s transfer equivalency tables at https://wsu.edu/psportal/pages/transfercoursesearch.html. If your college or university offers courses that are not in the tables, but you think is equivalent to a WSU mathematics course, please send a request to have the course(s) evaluated to info@math.wsu.edu.

As a mathematics major, you will be required to select and follow one of the options listed in the next section, because modern mathematics is an expansive field. It will increase the likelihood of getting a job or being accepted into graduate school if you do some specializing during your undergraduate career. The types of things you can do with each option are described in the pages that follow. Notice especially that some faculty members who can give you more information are listed for each option, and you can get their contact information at http://www.math.wsu.edu/faculty/. Information on the “core” courses common to all math majors and all of the options is given in Section 5 of this guide.

If you have chosen an option from section 5 and have completed Math 171, Math 172, and Math 220, then you are eligible to certify as a Math major. The benefits of doing so include, but are not limited to, increased eligibility for scholarships and internships and knowing that your requirements for graduation will not change. Requirements for a specific option may change over time, but once you have certified you can feel secure that your individual requirements will not change. Full information on certification is listed on the next page.