Principles for Success

1. **Be present:** This is a much deeper idea than merely requiring that one’s body be in the same room with the mathematics four days a week. Practice awareness in all that you undertake by finding meaning in every action, no matter how big or small. Eschew the drone-filled world of recipes and thoughtless routine.

2. **Seek deep understanding:** Superficial understanding is a phantom, there one day and gone the next. Endeavor to delve deeply into each idea, evaluating how it relates to what you already know and how it pertains to questions yet unanswered. The beauty is not only in the finding, but in the seeking itself.

3. **Be forthright:** Each of us will struggle at some point. Recognizing the difficulty and addressing it head-on is the only path. If you have a question, ask. Kidding oneself about one’s own understanding leads nowhere. Be honest with yourself, your peers and your teacher. The shame is not in not knowing, but in pretending you do.

4. **Keep up:** It is wholly unreasonable to expect oneself to digest weeks of information in a span of days. Mathematics, like most subjects, is not a collection of isolated facts. The theory builds on itself, calls back to itself, and looks eagerly ahead. Deep understanding is a consistent meditation, not a sudden gorging.

5. **Be honorable:** This is a university. We are surrounded by people who have devoted their lives to the transmission and extension of knowledge. There is honor in playing one’s part, in giving of oneself so that one may receive. Regard your opportunity here with humility and respect.