

Dear potential advanced calc student,

I am a rising sophomore majoring in mechanical engineering, French, and mathematics. This past year, I took MATH 2141Q (Advanced Calc I) and MATH 2142Q (Advanced Calc II), the first two classes in the Advanced Calculus Track. These two courses have been the among the most challenging classes I've experienced while at UConn, but they're also easily the most rewarding classes.

Advanced Calculus (hereafter referred to as AC) really teaches you to think logically. You learn to work with given information from which you have to construct new conclusions (AKA, you learn to write proofs). This process was extremely daunting to me at first, but as you gain confidence, it becomes easier and is a valuable skill. You become more creative as you learn to question and challenge.

And AC really has given me more confidence. I came into college, unsure if I had what it takes to become an engineer. I doubted my ability to handle math problems thrown at me, with the fear of sitting down for an exam and blanking. AC allowed me to face those fears. I emerged from MATH 2142Q a better student and a braver person, knowing if I can conquer epsilon-delta proofs, I am capable of anything UConn can throw at me (with the one exception of puppetry).

You will forge bonds with your fellow peers in the track. One of my classmates told me about an older friend who went to UConn and took the AC track; this was before the relatively recent technological advancements. Their class would get together and huddle around a landline, phoning their professor for exam reviews or homework help. In modern day, we convened in Buckley South Lounge to do homework and would send delegates to Professor Hall's office hours. We really were (and still are) a team. We have a group chat and everything.

If the *only* thing holding you back is that you're unsure whether you have the math skills – take the class. I was in your shoes. I obsessively Googled, trying to find past students and see if I should drop out because I'm definitely not the best math student. In my last class, I was at the bottom of the curve in terms of exam scores. But from what I've seen, math talent (while helpful) is not a strong indicator of whether you will succeed. It's more how hard you're willing to work.

(And **don't panic** if you find yourself at the bottom of the curve. All the kids taking this class are unusually brilliant.)

Here is the downside to the truth: a lot of people do drop out after and during MATH 2141Q. The track is definitely a lot of work (but it gets better as you go on).

I declared a math major because of this track. One of my classmates, who, at the beginning of the year, was undecided about what he wanted to major in, declared a math major because of the experience he had in this track.

If you enjoy logic, puzzles, and are ambitious, this track is for you. If you're just looking to get your math requirements done and just want to know the formulas and plug them in (and there is nothing wrong with that – really, I mean that), this track is not for you.

When in doubt, squeeze theorem.

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(Feel free to ask me any questions you have about the track or college in general by email or summon me by burying your last sheet of written math notes in the Monteith courtyard at midnight beneath the light of a full moon. Make sure to make a copy of the sheet before you bury it though; you'll need those notes. Welcome to UConn!)