Have you ever done this before? Yes! This is the sixth consecutive semester we have offered Math E-15 with an online option. We have had students taking the course on six continents (and on a research vessel off the coast of Antarctica) in countries including Afghanistan, Australia, the Bahamas, Canada, China, England, Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, United Arab Emirates, and Thailand, as well as many states in the U.S. We were excited to be able to provide the course to so many students who previously would not have been able to take it. And the feedback we received from distance students on the course evaluations was overwhelmingly positive; they reported that it was convenient to watch the videos and easy to ask questions and get answers in the online discussion forum.

What is special about offering the course in an online-only format? This is the second time we are offering Math E-15 in this format. When it was an online option course, we simply recorded the three-hour classes that were taught on campus and posted these videos online. But when Harvard asked us to consider creating a new version of the course aimed specifically at online students, we realized this would give us the chance to do some things that were not possible in the old format. Instead of having one three-hour video each week, we created many shorter video segments and also created various activities (about sixty exploratory applets and many “Check Your Understanding” exercises) for you to do after each video segment in an attempt to make the online learning experience more active. We hope that these applets will give you the chance to explore various mathematical ideas on your own before watching the next video, in which the results of the applet will be discussed. And the “Check Your Understanding” exercises (which are not graded) will allow you to get some practice with each topic immediately after you watch the video rather than waiting until you do the homework.

How do I submit homework? Please see the Homework Policies page on our course website.

How do I take exams? Please see the Exam Policies page on our course website.

How will I get feedback on my work? Within one week (but usually sooner) of when you submit each homework assignment, the assignment will be returned to you with a score and comments in Canvas. Graded exams will also usually be returned to you in Canvas within a week; note that if your proctor is late in sending Harvard your exam, you might not receive your graded exam at the same time as the other students. Solutions to each homework assignment and exam will also be posted in Canvas.

What if I have questions on course material? We welcome questions posted in the online discussion forum within Canvas and questions sent by email. When writing these questions, please try to be as specific as possible. For example, during the first lecture we will spend 20 or 30 minutes discussing inverse functions. A question such as “I don’t understand inverse functions. Can you please explain them to me?” is too general, and the only response we can give to such a question is to ask you to rewatch that section of the video and then write again with a more specific question. On the other hand, a question such as “When you were doing the example about drawing the graph of an inverse function, I don’t understand why if (2,8) is on the graph of $f$ then (8,2) is on the graph of the inverse of $f$. Could you explain that?” is very specific and will be much easier for us to answer.

What if I have technical questions about viewing the videos? Harvard’s webpage at http://www.extension.harvard.edu/academics/courses/types-courses/video-course-guidelines answers many such questions and tells you how to get additional help.