

## Graphing Calculator for MATH 115

This course requires students to have a graphing calculator. You may use any type of graphing calculator that you wish (I discuss one exception in the last paragraph), but I will teach using a TI-83/84 graphing calculator. They are superb calculators, and in this country they are the most commonly used models of graphing calculator. In all likelihood, a TI-83/84 is the only calculator that you will need for any class that you take or for any practical, real-world application. Actually, you probably already own one.

There are five levels of the TI-83/84 graphing calculator, which I enumerate here:

- TI-83 Plus
- TI-84 Plus
- TI-84 Plus Silver Edition
- TI-84 Plus C Silver Edition
- TI-84 Plus CE

The least expensive is the TI-83 Plus. With this excellent calculator, you will be able to do all the calculator work for the course.

Several years ago, Texas Instruments introduced a TI-84 Plus and a TI-84 Plus Silver Edition. These are souped-up versions of the TI-83 Plus. They do everything that the TI-83 Plus does, and probably more quickly. Even more recently Texas Instruments began selling the TI-84 Plus C Silver Edition and the TI-84 Plus CE, which graph in color.

If you do not already have one of these calculators, and if you are willing to spend more money, then I recommend that you purchase either the TI-84 Plus or the TI-84 Plus CE.

Like the TI-84 Plus Silver Edition, the TI-84 Plus has a somewhat brighter and clearer display than does the TI-83 Plus. The TI-84 Plus has fewer additional built-in programs than the TI-84 Plus Silver Edition does. It does have many such programs, however, and in any event we will not be using them in MATH 115. Also, the TI-84 Plus costs a little bit less than does the TI-84 Plus Silver Edition. But it does cost more than the TI-83 Plus.

My favorite model is the TI-84 Plus CE. It has a beautiful color display, as does the TI-84 Plus C Silver Edition. But the TI-84 Plus CE is lighter and thinner, and most importantly it graphs more quickly than the TI-84 Plus C Silver Edition does. Again, however, it does cost more than the TI-83 Plus.

**To be clear, the least expensive model is the TI-83 Plus. It is a fine calculator, and you will be able to do all the work for the course with this model. But if you do need to purchase a graphing calculator, and if you are willing to spend more money, then I recommend the TI-84 Plus or especially the TI-84 Plus CE.**

*Calculators not allowed:* I am going to teach using the TI-83/84, but I will allow any graphing calculator provided that it is not a CAS (which stands for computer algebra system) calculator. A CAS calculator can manipulate algebraic variables, so using such a calculator defeats the purpose of teaching algebra and pre-calculus and gives an unfair advantage to students who do not have such a calculator. Common examples of CAS calculators are the TI-89, TI-89 Titanium Edition, and TI-Nspire CAS (the regular TI-Nspire is fine). If you have any questions at all regarding your calculator, please ask me.