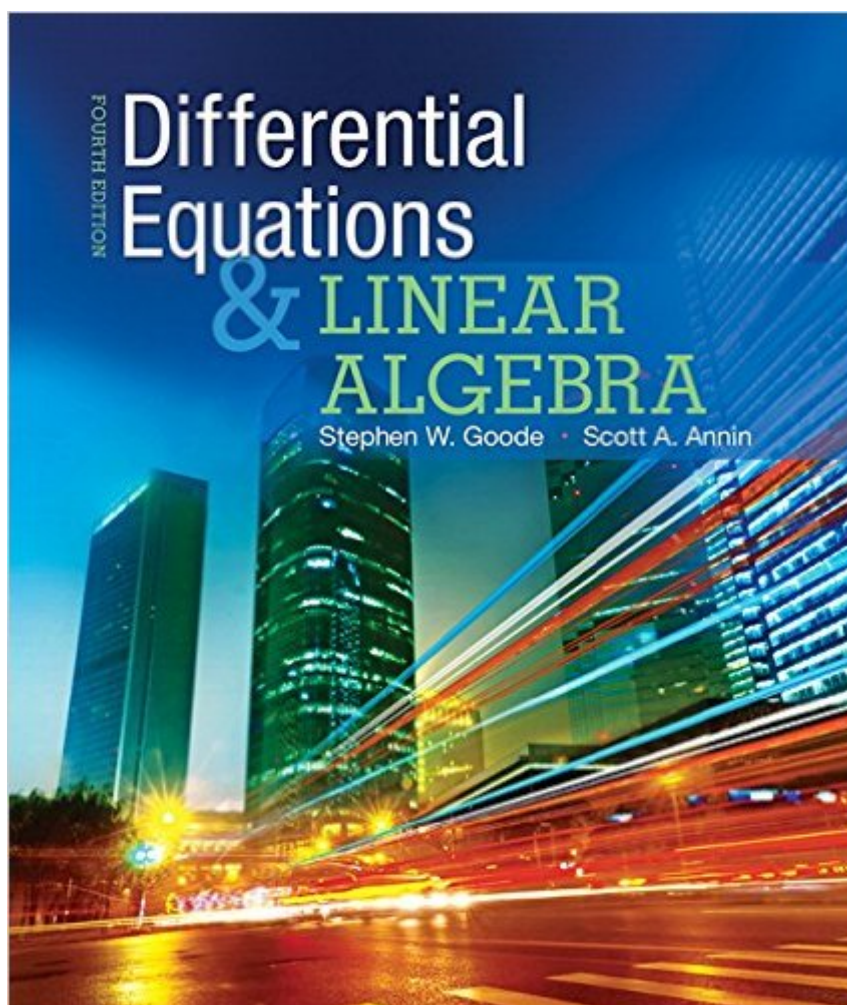


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Differential Equations And Linear Algebra (4th Edition)



Synopsis

Differential Equations and Linear Algebra is designed for use in combined differential equations and linear algebra courses. It is best suited for students who have successfully completed three semesters of calculus. $\hat{A}$ Differential Equations and Linear Algebra presents a carefully balanced and sound integration of both differential equations and linear algebra. It promotes in-depth understanding rather than rote memorization, enabling readers to fully comprehend abstract concepts and leave the course with a solid foundation in key areas. Flexible in format, it explains concepts clearly and logically with an abundance of examples and illustrations, without sacrificing level or rigor. The Fourth Edition includes many updated problems to support the material, with varying difficulty levels from which students/instructors can choose.

Book Information

Hardcover: 864 pages

Publisher: Pearson; 4 edition (December 27, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0321964675

ISBN-13: 978-0321964670

Product Dimensions: 8.1 x 1.2 x 9.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars $\hat{A}$ $\hat{A}$ See all reviews $\hat{A}$ (37 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I hope you like that sentence because hooboy are you gonna see it often. This is hands down one of the worst math textbooks I have ever used. To call the authors' explanations "terse" is to call the Sun "bright". Like other bad math textbooks it has "softball problems", where it uses basic plug-and-chug examples for each chapter's equations. The actual chapter's problems are considerably more difficult, and I found them requiring rather unituitive techniques to solve problems. Linear Algebra becomes somewhat theoretical and requires a certain mindset before approaching its problems, and imagining graphs quickly becomes impractical. The book does these concepts no favors. I leave it as an exercise to the reader to imagine how bad it gets because there

is no good reason for getting the book. Yes I am a bit bitter at how much effort it took to understand relatively simple concepts. Why do you ask? But even intuitive ideas, like Gaussian Elimination, the book uses a very strange notation that I have never seen, even though all it's doing is essentially algebra except for matrices. Why complicate things? Neither my prof nor anyone in my class used it. "Oh but I'll buy it for the problems!" you say. Well first, hope you know this stuff in advance. Second DO NOT buy the solution manual. It cuts off solutions for problems halfway through. Incidentally, that's the part of the book where it connects the linear algebra concepts back to differential equations. So you know, simple stuff that everyone can do. Past that point the solution manual only gives answers to true/false questions. Hope you got a Chegg account handy. I leave my conclusion as an exercise to the reader.

Another commenter talked about how good this book was because it 'thoroughly explains the material.' This is a lie. I am a strong math student and have muddled my way through so far (still early in the course) by utilizing outside sources where necessary. One of the reasons I have to use outside sources is that the text makes leaps in logic. It's correct (so far), but it doesn't explain. It routinely combines multiple mathematical steps, like integrating and then taking the natural logarithm of the integrand, without explanation. If you're good in math or think like the author, you can follow, but otherwise it's confusing. Bizarrely, it seems to spell out every time it redefines a (meaningless) constant to eliminate chaff in the equation. See Example 1.4.5. This is my fourth college mathematics text (up to Cal III) and is, only a few weeks in, clearly the worst by a large margin. Two stars because it hasn't lied to me yet, but this book's job is to instruct and make new mathematical concepts clear. It fails.

The typesetting in this book is really bad, making the logic hard to follow. The equations are buried inside of paragraphs instead of being given their own line, so proofs are hard to read. The examples are not clearly offset, and the end of a sub-section is marked with a small square at the very right instead of a line, so things begin to blend into each other. The author also references other parts of the argument that he hasn't discussed yet, which makes the logic hard to follow.

Given the content, the textbook really ought to have had more thorough explanations about the linear algebra concepts. This was the first ever introduction I had to matrices, and I found that there was a distinct lack of explanation for the more elaborate concepts later on in the book. I understand that there's a lot of repetition in process, but there are definite conceptual hurdles that I felt the book

did not address adequately. It works, I guess, but barely- there has to be a better textbook out there.

This book simplified an intimidating book title into material which is easily digested. Each time a new concept was introduced it built upon previously discussed topics and each section provided several examples of varying difficulty to understand how to solve problems. Sometimes the author will introduce theorems but not supply the proofs. This does not detract from understanding of any topic -- I think it effectively cuts down on unnecessary bloat. You gain the understanding of the theorem without glazing over the proofs that mathematicians are concerned about. The problems in each section are moderately difficult with a few problems meant to be challenging. A future improvement for the authors of this text might be to include ~10 more problems in each section of greater difficulty. I could see how some people may find this book "lacking" or "difficult" because differential equations/linear algebra is the type of course where if you are weak in a particular section then future material will not be painless whatsoever. Also, this course requires analytical reasoning which may unsettle people who rely on memorization to solve problems. The material covered in this book will undoubtedly help in problem solving for upper-level engineering classes. Overall, I would recommend this book to anyone wishing to seriously study differential equations/linear algebra since it thoroughly explains the material and strengthens mathematical prowess.

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