

January 24, 2012

Hello!

I hope you are ready for the challenge of taking **Beginning Algebra (Math 261) Online** this Spring 2012! I say challenge because students often under-estimate the amount of time and dedication it takes to successfully complete an online math class. You should plan to spend at least 12 hours per week on this class and you will be required to come to campus for exams. I am looking forward to helping you conquer this challenge and also meeting you at the orientation on **Saturday, January 28 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM in the Sam Karas Room (near the entrance to the MPC library)**.

Please visit my faculty website at http://www.mpcfaculty.net/tracie_catania for more information about this class. The course calendar is posted and includes on-campus exam dates.

To succeed in the course, you must:

- Have access to a **computer** that is ready to use for the entire semester. Figure out all of your computer issues ASAP and have a back-up plan. Computers are available on campus in the Math Learning Center (in BC103) and in the library.
- Have a current **valid email account**. This should be your own email account—not one that is shared with someone else. You may use your MPC student e-mail account or another account that you plan to check daily.
- Register at the course website: **www.coursecompass.com**. You'll set up an account there – be sure to keep track of your login and password! To register you'll need our **course code (catania67958)** and the **access code** that you'll purchase at the bookstore or online (see course materials below). ***You must register on the course website by Friday February 3 or you will be dropped from the course.*** If you want to register at the course site prior to orientation and start learning how to navigate the site, you're welcome to do so... just be sure to pay attention to the warning about non-refundable materials!

Required Course Materials: You need to purchase a MyMathLab access code for *Introductory Algebra for College Students*, 5th edition, by Robert Blitzer. There are several ways to obtain this code:

- You may purchase an access code online using a major credit card at www.coursecompass.com for about \$80. This is the least expensive option.
- You may purchase the stand-alone version of the MyMathLab packet at the MPC bookstore for about \$90.

- You may purchase a new softcover version of the textbook bundled with MyMathLab (also available at the bookstore) for about \$125. *The printed text is recommended, but not required.*

If you are unable to purchase the materials immediately or **if you're not sure this is the right course for you and you want to try out the course materials before purchasing**, you can gain temporary access for free for 17 days. After the 17 day period ends, you will need to purchase access in order to stay enrolled at the course website.

Please be absolutely certain that you want to take this online class before purchasing an access code online or opening a MyMathLab packet purchased at the bookstore - there are no returns, refunds, or exchanges! Your access code will be valid for 12 months, so if you do not pass the course or if you drop the course, you will be able to re-take without buying a new access code.

Please e-mail me to let me know that you have received this letter and that you plan to attend the mandatory orientation on Saturday, January 28 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM in the Sam Karas Room.

If you have any questions about the course, please contact me at tcatania@mpc.edu. I am looking forward to seeing you at orientation and working with you this semester!

Tracie Catania