



Math 154 - Elementary Algebra
Fall 2009 – room 711
MW 12:40 – 3:05 pm

Instructor : Laurie Shipley

Phone: 477-3700 extension 1698

Textbook : Introductory Algebra for College Students 5th Edition, by Robert Blitzer

Office Hours: 12:20 – 12:40 pm and 3:05-3:35 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:40-1:30 pm on Thursdays – find me in room 710.

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All the contact information is available at the Cabrillo website. Simply locate the “A-Z Index” on the homepage, click on “S” and then click on the name “Laurie Shipley.”

Course Content: This class is a basic algebra class required for degree coursework, prerequisites, and essential understanding of many branches of mathematics and sciences. You will learn about polynomials, linear equations, systems of linear equations, quadratic equations, and exponents. Within each concept, students will learn of their applications through exercises using these techniques.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, your success will be demonstrated by the following skills:

1. Apply general mathematical concepts and principles to perform arithmetic computations on algebraic expressions.
2. Choose appropriate methods and then solve equations, inequalities and systems of equations.
3. Create, use, and analyze analytical and graphical representations of mathematical models.

Prerequisite: Math 254, Math 254A and 254B, or equivalent through assessment.

Class format: This class has a lecture-based format. There will be times the instructor will ask for you to practice on problems related to the new material. Therefore, come prepared to ask questions, take notes, and attempt some problems. All material presented should be written down by you the student for studying before homework, quizzes and exams. At the end of class, time will be given to students with questions from the homework. This is the opportunity to bring up any areas which may seem unclear in the homework assignment. If you have no questions, then you will be free to leave.

Homework: At the end of each class lecture, a homework assignment will be given. It will either be the beginning or continuation of a previously started assignment. Each consists of approximately 2 weeks worth of lessons. For example, homework # 3 may be made up of problems assigned from September 23rd through October 5th. There will be 7 assignments in all.

For your convenience, an assignment sheet will be handed out listing the problem sets for each homework assignment. Keep these with you until the homework is due as a reference, and turn it in with the assignment when it is collected.

It is the student's responsibility to correct his/her own work. The odd answers are all listed in the back of the book. Should you find yourself not understanding the answer, do not simply write it down. This hinders your ability to advance in the course immensely. The concepts build upon each other, and thorough understanding is required before one can move forward. Your understanding of the assignments will be determined through a series of quizzes made up entirely of questions from the homework.

Each student will be given a homework score between 0 and 10, dependent upon the work shown. All work must be done in pencil on college ruled **non-spiralbound** notebook paper unless the assignment requires graph paper. The writing must be legible, the steps used clearly displayed, and final answers indicated by boxing in, underlining, or circling them. Any applications (word problems) must include a correct, accurate labeling of the variables used in its set up and a conclusive statement following the problem solving. (For example, "The southbound car was traveling at 45 mph, and the northbound was traveling at 35 mph," is acceptable. However, "45 mph" is insufficient clarity.)

Homework not turned in by the due date will not be accepted. Should you miss one assignment you may drop that ONE score. (**Assignment #7 may not be dropped due to its length, and it is worth 20 points instead of 10**) A second missed assignment will result in a grade of "0". A third missed assignment requires a conference with the instructor to determine whether you should continue in the class. Should you turn in all 7 assignments, the top 6 scores will be counted. Homework will include some even problems used to check your understanding.

Attendance: Because attendance is necessary for a successful understanding of the material, roll will be taken consistently. A late arrival ("tardy") may be recorded as an absence, so make every effort to arrive on time for class. The student may be withdrawn from the course when there are 4 recorded absences. However, *do not assume* that you will be dropped from the class if you stop attending the.

If you plan on withdrawing from the course, be sure to take the proper steps outlined in the Cabrillo Fall 2009 Schedule, page 6. You may go online to WebAdvisor at www.cabrillo.edu, or call HawkTalk at (831) 470- 4295. If you do not follow the directions, you may end up with an "F" for the course.

Evaluation: The day homework is due, a quiz will be given covering the assignment. *All questions on the quiz are taken directly from the homework, so it is very important that you understand and study your homework well.* There are no make up quizzes. Should you miss one, you may drop that one. A second missed quiz results in a score of “0”. Each is worth 20 points. If you take all 7 quizzes, the top 6 scores will be counted

Three midterm exams will be given throughout the semester. Each is worth 100 points, and covers material covered during class and homework. Should there be an unforeseen circumstance preventing you from attending the day of the exam, you must contact the instructor by phone, email, or in person within **24 hours** of the exam to arrange for a proctored exam. Should the student neglect to do so, the score of the exam will be “0”. Should the student be discovered cheating through any method whatsoever, the grade received for the exam will be a “0”. A second such incident will result in an automatic withdrawal or a grade of “F” for the course.

A final exam will be given at the end of the semester. It will be worth 200 points, and will cover material throughout the semester. The final exam must be attended in order to pass the course.

Etiquette: The student is expected to exercise common courtesy during class toward the instructor and fellow students. Interruptions such as unnecessary talking, moving around the room in a distracting manner, or cell phone use are all considered unacceptable. Please carefully consider how your behavior may be affecting those around you.

Supplies: College ruled notebook paper, binder for keeping handouts and notes, graph paper, scientific calculator, textbook, ruler, and preferably a mechanical pencil and hardy eraser.

Helpful Hints: This class is a fast paced course requiring a commitment from you the student to attend regularly, participate in class activities, and diligently work outside of class in order to succeed. On the other hand, you will discover, perhaps for the first time, just how satisfying it can be to wrestle and later understand a problem previously seen as overwhelming. Try to stay current with the material by reviewing notes immediately after class, working daily on the assignment whenever possible, and reading the textbook ahead of time. By reading the material expected to be covered beforehand, you pave the way for the new information to be more easily assimilated.

My Office Hours are a great opportunity for you to receive the help you need. This is your chance to ask about a “toughie” homework problem, learn some study strategies, and ask about anything you did not feel like bringing up in class. Come on by!

Also, try to find a study partner. You can bounce ideas off each other and somewhat “lighten” the work. Additionally, whenever one discusses aloud concepts to another person, those concepts usually adhere in the mind a little more.

Finally, try to have some fun. Look at math not only as a valuable tool for future classes and applications in daily living, but as a terrific puzzle exercising the mind to think logically and sharpening your problem solving skills.

Course grades: There are a total or 690 points possible in this class. Below, you can find out what your grade will be at the end of the semester based on the point breakdown.

Points accumulated	Course grade
621 - 690	A
552 - 620	B
483 - 551	C
414 - 482	D
below 414	F

How can I keep track of my grades? To self-check your progress in the class, you can complete the following chart throughout the course. Ask me if you have any questions.

Remember, if all homework assignments and all quizzes are taken, you may *drop the lowest score*-except homework #7.

Assign/test (points possible)	Your score	Total of all your points (A)	Total possible points. (B)	Average score A÷B
Hk#1 (10)			10	
Quiz #1 (20)			30	
Hk#2 (10)			40	
Quiz #2 (20)			60	
Exam #1(100)			160	
Hk#3 (10)			170	
Quiz #3 (20)			190	
Hk #4 (10)			200	
Quiz #4 (20)			220	
Exam #2(100)			320	
Hk#5 (10)			330	
Quiz #5 (20)			350	
Hk #6 (10)			360	
Quiz # 6 (20)			380	
Exam #3(100)			480	
Hk#7 (20)			500	
Quiz #7 (20)			520	
Final Exam (200)			720	