Dear Student:

Welcome to the web-based Math 101, Elementary Algebra, at COM. This letter is to give you some idea of the requirements for the course and procedures for securing your place in the course. More detailed information can be found in the document, “INFORMATION AND RULES FOR MATH 101.” I will email a pdf of this to all registered students about a week before classes begin. It is also available to registered students at the Moodle site for the course. Please take the time to read this document carefully.

Internet math courses are not for everyone. You need to be especially motivated and self-disciplined to succeed! If you have had a tough time with math and are looking for an easy way to get through this requirement, this course is not the answer. But if you really want to succeed and are willing to put in the time on a regular basis, then read on!

Contacting me (and how I contact you):
If you have a math question, or a question about a course detail that might benefit others, please post it on the discussion forum at the Moodle site. For anything else, such as personal questions, please contact me at my college email: george.golitzin@marin.edu. Please include in the subject header the phrase "math101web." When you email me, I will reply to whatever account you emailed me from. However, when I wish to contact you, I will only use your mycom account. Hence you must check this account frequently.

About the course:
The course is a self-study program administered by the Aleks Online Learning System (http://www.aleks.com/). All your coursework is done at Aleks, with the exception of the on-campus final exam (paper and pencil). This final counts for 35% of your grade. Three tests will be administered on Aleks, each counting 10% of your grade; the remainder of the grade, 35%, is determined by how many Aleks topics you complete. A score of 55% or better on the final exam is required in order to pass the course. (NOTE: this requirement may be changed in future semesters: check the “Information and Rules” document for the current requirement.) If at midterm you do not have a passing grade on the first test, and if in addition your Aleks progress is poor or you have not made any progress in any two-week period, you may be dropped from the course at midterm. Again, please see “Information and Rules” for the specific participation requirement.

Textbook and related materials:
You will need a 1-semester (18-week) subscription to the Aleks Online Learning System. This can be purchased at: http://www.aleks.com/sign_up/mhhe The cost is
approximately $70 for one semester; more details can be found in the “Information and Rules” document. **Students must register at Aleks at the time of purchase.** This requires a 10-digit course code which I will send to all registered students in the week prior to class.

The recommended text is Bittinger, *Introductory Algebra*, 11th edition, published by Pearson (ISBN 9780321599216). While Aleks provides pretty good explanations, the textbook will provide fuller explanations as well as practice problems. Also, whenever you click the explanation button at Aleks, look for a box that references the corresponding section of the textbook, in order to get more help there. The syllabus is arranged around the textbook, and the three exams each cover a set of chapters in the textbook.

**Prerequisites**
The prerequisite for the course is either 1: a grade of C or better (or Pass) in Math 95 at COM or its equivalent at another community or 4-year college), OR 2: a qualifying score in the Math placement test at COM. **The Math Department does NOT accept placement scores from another college.** You can find out more about the placement test, or set up an appointment, at the college testing center; their phone number is (415) 485-9469; or you can email the testing coordinator at patricia.torres@marin.edu. All prerequisites are now administered by the Admissions and Records Office and are no longer the responsibility of the instructor.

**Wait-listed Students Only:**
Students on the waiting list should contact me by email about room in the course. I will either send wait-listed students an Add Code that they can use to register for the course at the college, or I will tell them that there is no more room in the class. **Preference will be given to students who contact me in a timely manner.** The process to add the course requires you to re-register for the course, using the add code. **This can only be done once the term has started, when the waitlist has been purged.** Once you are successfully registered, go ahead and get the Aleks subscription.

**The Moodle Site**
Announcements, a discussion forum, the course syllabus, and a gradebook will be found at the Moodle site for the course. It is important that you check this site regularly for announcements and any threads which I open on the forum. These will also be emailed to your MYCOM account automatically, but NOT to any private email account. In the discussion forums I will introduce some focus problems for each unit, as a way of preparing you for the three Aleks tests as well as for the final exam. Here you can also post your math questions. In order not to be dropped from the course, **all registered students must log in to the Moodle site by the Friday of the first week of classes; wait-listed students must do so within 3 days of receiving an Add code.**
Access to Moodle is available to students registered for the course just before the term begins—wait-listed students will need to wait until they get an add code. You should be able to follow these links on MYCOM to the Moodle shell for the course: log in to mycom, select the "distance education" tab, and then click on the large moodle icon on the upper right corner of the page. The url is http://moodle.marin.edu/. You can also log in directly there by using your mycom login information: type or paste the url http://moodle.marin.edu/ into your browser, then select "CAS User." This will take you to the mycom login menu, but when you log in, you'll be sent to the moodle site. Once you're logged in at the moodle site, notice on the left side the menu labeled "Navigation," and under this the selection "My courses." Click on this, then select the course under it.

Thank you, and good luck in the course!

George Golitzin