

Beginnings – A Short Run-Down

- This Document, the Schedule, and the Syllabus are your guides to succeeding in this course. First of all, an explanation of the Main NavBar.
 - **Beginnings** – The document you are reading right now.
 - **Classlist** – Shows who's in the class, including me (Harry Mills – but ‘most everybody calls me ‘Steve.’). It's where I go to send you e-mail, and you can send ME e-mail by clicking on the "Mills, Harry" link in the classlist.
 - **Discussions** – I'm asking for you to check in once a week, at least, and give us all a heads-up on what you learned, what you are struggling with, and how things are going in general. I don't want this to be a major chore, but these discussions are a good place for students to share ideas and find resources for each other.
 - **MyLab** – Where the homework and lessons live. You'll spend most of your time in this course on the <http://pearsonmylabandmastering.com> website. You need to go there and register for Course ID `mills43954` for College Algebra Online, Spring 2013
 - **Practice Tests** – Tests from previous semesters. This is also where this semester's tests and solutions will be posted. Students report that this is an **essential bridge** between interacting with a computer online (multiple choice and single expression answers) and actually taking a written test, that's graded by a person (me).
 - **Schedule** – Aligns the calendar with the work we need to do this semester. Deadlines for tests are listed, here. It should be finished by the end of the first week of classes. Right now, I'm more interested in getting you *started*, and that you are establishing a 12-hour-per-week routine for your work.
 - **Syllabus** – Detailed information on this course, including grade scheme, rules of the game, and other material.
 - **Videos** - The Orientation Video can help give you a feel for the course. Watching it, today, again, I felt that I got carried away doing math, but even though it's a little longer than it should be, it still beats having to come to a face-to-face orientation, where you'd also have to LOOK at me!

The Orientation Video was produced in 2011, so there have been minor changes:
 - The front page of www.aims.edu has changed in appearance, but you still follow the MyAims link, now located on the right of the screen.
 - Course ID for College Algebra Online, Spring 2013, is `mills43954` and that is not the one given in the video.
 - The semester schedule in the video is for a previous semester. (Don't worry about this, until Week 2.
 - The Writing Projects are from a previous semester. (Don't worry about them this first week.)
 - **Writing Projects** – Don't worry about them until Week 2. There will be 4 of

them, and we will discuss them at some length in coming weeks.

- From the front page of the course website on MyAims, follow these links under **Aims Resources**, which are listed in a column on the far right of your screen.
 - [Aims Online Course Tool Tutorials](#). If you scroll to the bottom of the page you will see links to online help with Discussions, Dropbox, etc.
 - [Check your System](#). Make sure your hardware and software are up to snuff.

- Acquire access to the textbook and access to MyLab, and register to do homework on the [MyLab Site](#). The MyLab link takes you to the lessons and homework assignments live. The **Course ID is mills43954**. There are different strategies for accessing these course tools:
 - Buy a new book, bundled with an Access Code.
 - Buy a used book and purchase access on the MyLab Site. <http://pearsonmylabandmastering.com/>. (Cheaper option)
 - Purchase access *without a textbook* online at <http://pearsonmylabandmastering.com/> and just use the *e-book* that is provided on the website. (Cheapest option).

- As soon as you have registered and gained access to the course, get started on homework assignments, starting with the Orientation exercises. The assignments are all found by clicking on Homework in the control panel, after you've gained access to **mills43954**. I've also posted a Pre-Test and Post-Test for Chapter P (Scored to help you *learn* but *not* part of your grade). To see that, either click on Quizzes and Tests from the control panel or just click the Show All button after you've entered the Homework area.

- Most students will find that this is enough to get rolling, but that doesn't mean there isn't lots of help online available and some help available from *me*. I've just found that the less said at this point, the better, and just free myself (and yourself) to ask questions, if you have any.

- The rest of what you need to understand what to do and when can be found in the Syllabus and Course Schedule, which are linked from the Main NavBar.