

Textbook Questions for Math 1010-90 - College Algebra Online

Required Text: *Intermediate Algebra* 5th edition, Larson – Hostetler, (ISBN 9780547102177)

Students often write me with the following question:

Dear Dr. Noonan Heale,

How necessary is the required textbook for your course? I know it's probably very useful, but do we ever do work directly from the book? I ask this because that's quite a chunk of change. If the classwork is all done through canvas and webwork, is it imperative that I also buy the textbook?

Student

This was and is my answer:

I think a textbook is necessary. The videos discuss many of key concepts in each section, but also leave material out (if they covered as much as the book, they would be VERY LONG), plus it is organized differently. I'd recommend reading the sections and watching them. Also, although Webwork gives you good practice, you will probably need much more practice to be successful on exams. There are great practice problems in the text (and solutions available on line for free). Therefore, I think a textbook is necessary, though you will never be asked to produce it and there is no Big Brother to check and see if you have read it or worked problems from it.

If you are looking to save money, look for used copies of the textbook online. If you have time and want to be even more frugal, there are copies of the textbook at the library (you may only be able to check them out for a few hours at a time). If you are on campus every day, you could make stopping by part of your routine. Alternatively, you could buy/borrow an earlier edition of the same textbook – search online (which may be much less expensive). The basics of algebra haven't changed. Then, you should take it to the library or come see me in office hours and compare the suggested problems in the new text with the old, as problem numbers often change.

Finally, remember not to be penny wise pound foolish. Retaking a course is more expensive than buying a book.

RNH.