Dear Student,

Welcome to a new semester and my math course. My name is Dr. Ryan Kasha, and I will be your professor for this course. My goal is to provide you with the foundation knowledge and thinking skills that you will need for your future math courses and not to overwhelm you. I will show you how math can be fun and not boring.

My background is as follows: I graduated from a magnet high school as the valedictorian of a class of 400 students. After high school, I attended Florida Atlantic University (FAU) and earned my Bachelor’s of Science degree in Mathematics magna cum laude (with high honors). I also earned and graduated with my Master’s of Science in Teaching Mathematics and my Master’s of Education in Educational Psychology from Florida Atlantic University as well. In addition, I earned a minor in Statistics as well along with my Master’s degrees from FAU. Furthermore, I earned my Educational Specialist degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialty in mathematics from FAU. I have also earned a Master’s of Science in Modeling and Simulation and another Master’s of Science degree in Industrial Engineering from University of Central Florida along with a graduate certificate in Instructional Design in Simulations. I have recently earned my doctorate of philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Modeling and Simulation from UCF. In addition to my academic accomplishments, I also have a variety of teaching experiences ranging from elementary school grades through college including an outreach community center and Kids In Distress. At one point, these accomplishments would have been thought of as impossibilities since I was labeled retarded and had many learning disabilities earlier in my life. My eighth grade year was the first time I made straight A’s in my life and realized my natural talent in math. This was when I realized that I wanted to teach math. My parents and some dedicated teachers have always encouraged me to do my very best in everything, and that I can do anything that I set my mind to. To this very day, I carry this forward. I believe that if you are going to do something, you should put 150 percent into it. This will be evident as I teach your math course this semester.

I have always tutored other people in math since I was young, mostly athletes and students that were considered “low achievers” in math. I participated in my high school tutoring program, and I enjoyed it. Teaching is something I love to do and it makes me happy to make a difference for others. My passion for teaching and helping others will be evident throughout this semester.

Here is my philosophy about math: I feel that math should be a fun subject to learn about. I feel that math should not always be a dry and boring subject. This is exactly what math is not to me. I feel that math is like solving a puzzle. Math is a subject of discovery and adventure. It is important to learn the concepts of math and try to make sense of it. Math is not just a bunch of formulas and steps to memorize. Math is all about thinking and problem solving, not rote memorization and tedious calculations. I hope as you learn that you will see that math is all about thinking and discovery. My underlying goal throughout this semester will be to teach you the real concept of mathematics and problem solving. Math serves us through many different applications and through its inherent thinking skills.

With this letter, I welcome you and wish you a semester of success and hopefully, some fun! If there is anything you need help with or any concerns/questions you have throughout this semester, do NOT hesitate to contact me. I will be more than happy to assist you. Let’s have a great and adventurous semester together!

Sincerely,  Dr. Ryan Kasha

Ryan H. Kasha, Ph.D.