

Math 1190
Putnam Exam Seminar

Fall 2013
Dr. Ryan C. Daileda

Course URL: <http://www.trinity.edu/rdaileda/putnam>

Office Hours and Contact Information: Consult the course web page.

Course Content: This course will focus on mathematical problem solving skills, specifically those skills necessary for the annual William Lowell Putnam Exam Competition (for further information on the exam consult the course web site). We will not only emphasize techniques for solving various types of problems, but also how to carefully communicate solutions to others. The material we cover will be wide-ranging, thought-provoking, and hopefully a little bit fun, too.

Homework: Homework will be assigned every Wednesday. The following Monday we will discuss the theme of that assignment's problems, and will go over their solutions (in varying degrees of detail). After our in-class discussion, I will occasionally ask you to turn in a carefully written version of one of the solutions. The point of these write-ups is to allow you to practice and get feedback on your mathematical communication, without the added stress of needing to come up with the solution on the spot.

Quizzes: There will be a quiz in class every Wednesday. The purpose of these quizzes is to give you some idea of what to expect on the Putnam Exam. You will be exposed to a variety of problems and will be graded on the quality (as well as the mathematical content) of your writing.

Attendance: In addition to regular class attendance, you are expected to attend both sessions of the Putnam Exam, which will be held on the first Saturday in December.

Grades: 40% of your overall score in the course will be based upon your scores on the homework and quizzes. The remaining 60% will be based solely upon your attendance at the Putnam Exam. *Failure to attend the exam without my prior consent will result in a grade of F.*

Expectations: I expect each student to do their best and maintain a positive attitude throughout the semester. In order to prepare you for the level of difficulty of the Putnam Exam many of the problems we will see will be quite challenging. This should not be seen as some sort of academic punishment, but rather as a chance to hone your problem solving skills.

Academic Integrity: All students are covered by the Trinity University Honor Code that prohibits dishonesty in academic work. Under the Honor Code, a faculty member will (or a student may) report an alleged violation to the Academic Honor Council. It is the task of the Council to investigate, adjudicate, and assign a punishment within certain guidelines if a violation has been verified. Students who are under the Honor Code are required to pledge all written work that is submitted for a grade: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this work" and their signature. The pledge may be abbreviated "pledged" with a signature.

The specifics of the Honor Code, its underlying philosophy, and the norms for sanctioning can all be found on the Academic Honor Council website, accessed through the Trinity Homepage:

http://www.trinity.edu/departments/academic_affairs/honor_code/

Special Needs: If you have a documented disability and will need accommodations in this class, please speak with me privately early in the semester so I may be prepared to meet your needs. If you have not already registered with Disability Services for Students, contact the office at 999-7411. You must be registered with DSS before I can provide accommodations.