Math 199: Putnam Seminar

Fall 2018 – Instructor: Pat Devlin

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Instructor: Pat Devlin, he/him/his, Gibbs assistant professor [call me Pat]
    Office hours: In LOM 222c (on the third floor). Available by appointment
    Email: patrick.devlin(at)yale.edu
    Course webpage: See canvas for everything

Class Meetings: We will meet every Tuesday evening from 6:30pm to 8pm in LOM 214 and 215 (except for the first meeting on September 4, which will be in LOM 200 and 201).

Course Description: This class is an exploration of proof-based mathematics problems. The primary goal of the course is to prepare students to take the annual Putnam exam, through mini-lectures, student presentations, and group work on interesting mathematics. The Putnam exam is the preeminent math competition for undergraduates in the United States and Canada [wikipedia], which takes place on the first Saturday in December. This course will mostly be focused on proof strategies and techniques that are useful in competitive mathematics.

Assuming sufficient student interest, the course will be divided into two parallel sessions. One will focus on the introductory mechanics of mathematical proof, and the other will focus on more advanced techniques. First years and non-majors are welcome to attend!

Text: None

Grading: The grades for this course are pass/fall. A passing grade consists of three components:

- Students must take the Putnam exam on **Saturday December 1**, which will be held in LOM starting at approximately 9am.
- Attendance is required and will be checked at the beginning of each session. Students must arrive on time. At most three absences are permitted throughout the term, and the instructor must be notified of these by email.
- Students are to submit solutions to homework problems.

Those unable to take the exam must receive instructor permission to take the course.

Remark: The Virginia Tech Regional Mathematics Competition will take place on **Saturday October 27** in LOM starting at about 9am. Interested students should contact the instructor about taking this, but it is not required for the course.