

— PROBLEMS SEMINAR II —

MAT 329, Taught Organised by Jakob Streipel

Tuesdays 9:30–10:20 AM

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The broad goal of this seminar is to meet once a week to discuss mathematical problems suggested at the previous meeting. They might come from all sorts of places — competition problems, interesting problems from various books, cool head-scratchers from the Internet — and they might require all sorts of tricks, techniques, ideas, and background knowledge.

Discussions of problems and presentations of solutions will be primarily student led. The goals of any given meeting are to:

- Find problems,
- (Maybe) solve those problems,
- Figure out that or why some problems are easier than we thought,
- Figure out that or why other problems are harder than we thought,
- Get confused,
- Get unconfused,
- Scratch our heads (literally and figuratively),
- Say “oooh, I think I get it” and seize the marker/chalk,
- Wonder at someone else’s clever insight,
- Have them explain it to us,
- Learn cool mathematics,
- Have fun.
- (If there is time, figure out why this is called “Problems Seminar II.”)

This is recommended for students wishing to participate in the annual William Lowell Putnam Competition, but is welcome to anyone with an interest in serious pondering of mathematical problem solving.

The prerequisite for this is a grade of C or better in MAT 261 – Introduction to Abstract Mathematics or permission from the department chair.