

MAT 299 ("PROBLEM SOLVING")

Spring, 2009 Cl. Nbr. 6762 (section 1) 2:30 – 3:20, Thursdays AMB 164

Instructor: Jeff Rushall
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Instructor: Nándor Sieben
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Office Hours: 12:30-2:30 M, 12:30-1:30 W,
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Course Webpage: All course materials (problems sets, assignments, due dates of materials, etc.) is located at <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~ns46/299/299.html> .

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Content: This course has no textbook, no exams, and no traditional and/or repetitive and/or algorithmic-based homework assignments. Instead, this course will consist only of puzzles and problems – the kinds that you always wished you could think about and tinker with in a mathematics class. We hope this class will magnify the level of joy that you already feel for mathematics/puzzles/problem-solving (after all, they are all the same thing, right?).

Prerequisites: Permission

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: Any person who registers for this class and chooses to not attend will fail this course.

Course Notebooks: Your “course notebook” is defined to be a three-ring binder containing all materials from class and organized as follows:

- 1) *all problem sheets that we give to you, followed by*
- 2) *all your worked-out solutions* to whatever problems you choose to ponder, **followed by**
- 3) *other course-related materials* (like, for instance, handouts, this piece of paper, etc.).
- 4) **You should delineate sections of your notebook with tabs** (homemade are fine).

Calculators: Calculators are, in general, not needed, and are certainly not required.

Homework: A small number of homework problems (as in 1 or 2, usually) will be assigned each day, and are due at the beginning of the next class.

Changes in the first day handout: Events during the term may make it advisable to change information in this handout. Any such changes will be communicated *to* the class *in* the class.

Cheating: “Cheating” in this course means “passing off someone else’s work as your own.” Informally, this means that we do not want you to look in books, do internet searches, etc. for information. If you have concerns as to whether the use of any outside reference is considered plagiarism, see Rushall or Sieben for advice.

Final Exam: The final exam for this course will be held during the scheduled final exam time (**Thursday, May 7th, 12:30p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**). The structure of the final exam will be discussed in more detail later in the class.

COURSE EVALUATION

This class is offered **for a letter grade**. You will pass this class with a decent grade if you do these things:

- Attend class and actively participate (think about problems, ask questions, etc.).
- Work and turn in the short weekly homework assignments
- Present solutions – or partial solutions – to problems that you solve to the entire class.
- Keep a thorough written record of our problems, your solutions, others' solutions, etc.

If you choose to not attend or not actively participate, you will not pass this class.

Note: the deadline to **drop** this class is **February 7th**, the deadline to **withdraw** from this class is **March 24th**.