Math 480W: The Art and Craft of Problem Solving
Fall 2019

Instructor: Amarpreet Rattan  Office: K10516
Class days: Tuesdays  Class times: 14.30-17.20
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Overview

Are you someone who likes problem solving? Do you find it fun to work on a challenging problem for hours, and immensely rewarding when you find a nice solution? If so, this may be the course for you. The course is designed for students with a strong interest in problem solving and the determination to spend the time to find a solution. This course is intended as a preparation for the Putnam Contest, where students are faced with the dual challenge of finding solutions to very challenging math problems and presenting them clearly and concisely.

The course will review strategic principles, tactical approaches, and specific technical tools for problem solving, as well as discussing problem solving folklore. As this is also a writing course, a lot of emphasis will be placed on presenting solutions clearly; students will learn how to structure and organize arguments appropriately, as well as present technical detail with clarity and concision. This is meant to be a fun and challenging course, and so there are strict entry requirements (see below).


Prerequisites: MACM 201 with a grade of at least B. At least one of MACM 201, Math 240, Math 242, Math 251, Math 252 with a grade of at least A, or both of MACM 203, MACM 204 with a grade of at least A. Or permission of the instructor.