

Syllabus

Math 395 Problem Solving

Fall '22

Text: we may start using a text later in the semester – I'm not sure yet

Instructor: Jed Herman SCI D 287 eherman@uwsp.edu

Office Hours: M 3:00-4:50, W 3:00 – 3:50, Th 12:00 – 12:50

Office Hours will be available in person and can be made available via zoom on request

Class times & room: Th 11:00 – 11:50 in Science A 213

What the Course is about

UWSP has been participating in the William Lowell Putnam competition since 2007. Each year we have had between five and twenty participants. The number who scored positive points is much smaller. It is a HARD test!

The official purpose of this course is to better prepare students for the exam – to help you recognize how to approach certain kinds of problems, to help you “think outside of the box,” etc.

As a side effect, however, you will learn tidbits and pieces from a wide variety of mathematical fields – not enough for mastery, but hopefully enough to whet your appetite for more.

You will also learn more about *real* mathematics – not mechanics and formulas, but creativity and innovation, the part of mathematics that is sometimes called art. We hope you will like it.

Grading

Grading will be based on three criteria – succeeding at all three will earn you an A:

#1) You must take the Putnam Exam. If you do not take the exam, you will not pass the class (unless you are a high school student or have made other arrangements). The exam is on the first Saturday in December (12/3/22). If you have a conflict, you may have to drop the class – contact your instructor about this immediately.

#2) Attendance. We meet once per week for an hour. You should be here.

Attendance grade = 100% minus 5% per missed class*

*Note that class will NOT MEET on December 15 but DOES MEET on December 8.

If you have some academically recognized reason you cannot attend class periods, we can forgive up to two days before they affect your grade.

#3) Participation. When you are here physically, you should be here mentally. We expect you to *try your best* on problems in class. You might also be asked (occasionally) to learn the solution to a past problem and present it to your classmates.

Participation grade is subjective, but if you are trying and participating, you should get 95% to 100% for this criteria.

If you satisfy #1, your grade will be the average of #2 and #3.

Discussion Boards

There will be a discussion board set up for this course, via Canvas. Its purpose is to allow students to post questions out of class time. Use of the board is strictly optional.

The boards will be monitored after the fact. That is, you will post directly to the board, and the instructors will monitor periodically throughout the week. Certain standards apply to postings:

- Postings are never anonymous
- Postings must not contain inappropriate (foul, rude, hostile) language

Violation of these rules may constitute academic misconduct (see below).

Academic Misconduct Policy

See the following link: <http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf>

Student Rights and Responsibilities

All students are expected to know the UWSP student responsibilities found on the Dean of Students webpage. Information on Academic Concerns is available at

<https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/stu-academic.aspx>. Information on Conduct Concerns and on Personal Concerns are also available on the Dean of Students site.

Accommodations

UWSP is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate **accommodations** to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire an impairment or injury during the semester and you need assistance, please contact the * Disability Resource Center as soon as possible, in room 108 of the Collins Classroom Center (CCC), at 715-346-3365, or at DATC@uwsp.edu. You may also want to visit their website, [Disability Resource Center \(DRC\) - University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point \(uwsp.edu\)](http://www.uwsp.edu/drc).

Important Dates

Putnam Exam	Saturday, December 3 9:00 am – 12:00 noon & 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Scheduled Final time*	unimportant – the only “final” we have is the actual Putnam Exam