Math 371: Section 002, Winter 2014
MWF 11:00 – 11:50, 116 TMCB

Instructor: Rod Forcade – 316 TMCB
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TA: Wil Cocke (hours to be announced)

Text: Abstract Algebra: A First Course (2nd ed.)
      by Dan Saracino (Approximately Sections 0 through 21).

Prerequisites: Math 313 (Linear Algebra) and Math 290.

Procedure and Grading: We will cover chapters 0 through 21 approximately. Homework, consisting largely of proofs, will constitute fifteen percent of your grade. There will be two mid-terms, one to be given after Section 8, and another after Section 15. The mid-terms will be given in the testing center from February 5 to 6, and from March 5 to 6 respectively. Each mid-term will count twenty-five percent of your grade, and the final exam will count thirty-five percent of your grade. The final exam will be Saturday Apr. 19th from 11:00 to 2:00 in 116 TMCB. Grades will be A:95-100%, A-:90-94%, B+:87-89%, B:83-86%, B-:80-82& etc. Under 60% is failing.

Remarks. Groups, rings and fields are the fundamental objects of modern algebra as it is currently used in the sciences, mathematics, cryptography, computer algorithms and network design, etc. The subject is called “abstract algebra” because mathematicians prefer working in the greatest possible generality – to avoid doing the same problem over and over. Thus the homework assigned will not be repetitive. Each problem may require a new idea. Doing homework with several other people is a good idea, since it tends to generate more imaginative ideas, but you must also learn to work independently. The exams must be done independently and not discussed with other students until they’ve been graded.

Math 371, unfortunately, is only half of the picture and may seem a little cryptic by itself. Much of this material leads into Galois theory, which was aimed at some of the classic problems in mathematics (solving polynomial equations, etc.). Thus, you should take Math 372 to get the complete picture.

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