MATH 340-01: Problem Solving Seminar
Monday, 1:00-1:50pm, 351 College Hall

Instructor: Dr. Stacey Levine
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Office hours: M 2:00-3:00 pm, W 2:00-4:00 pm or by appt

Prerequisites: MATH 215 (or concurrent enrollment) or permission of the instructors.

Course Web Page (Blackboard): www.blackboard.duq.edu
Announcements, discussion board, course documents, etc. can be found on blackboard.

Goals and Objectives: In this course, you will work problems from several different branches of mathematics. Through active participation, you will learn new techniques and ‘tricks’ for solving problems and in turn become a better problem solver. In particular, you will learn how to approach problems when you don’t know which mathematical tools are needed.

Throughout the semester we will work on problems from several sources. Our resources will problems that will be distributed in class and/or posted on blackboard, mostly from the MAA periodicals and even old Mathematical Olympiads (an international mathematics competition for high school students - these challenging problems do not require Calculus or other college level mathematics, but are by no means easy). Most importantly, we will work on problems from past Putnam Exams. The Putnam Exam is an annual mathematics competition for undergraduate students. These problems can be extremely challenging and come from all areas of undergraduate mathematics.

Grading: This course can only be taken on a pass/fail basis. Problems will be assigned each week. Your grade will be based on attendance, preparation, and participation in each class. You will be expected to have worked through the assigned problems and be prepared to discuss them in class each week. Students will present solutions to homework problems during class.

- Students who miss more than one class or who are consistently unprepared for class may fail the course.

- Students may take the Putnam Exam in December in place of a final examination.

Academic Honesty: You are permitted (and even encouraged) to talk with other students or faculty when working on homework problems. You may look through books or web pages for solutions to problems. However, you may not present other people’s work as your own. Make sure to include references to any sources of direct assistance when presenting problems.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations if needed. If you need accommodations, please contact the Office of Freshman Development and Special Student Services in 309 Duquesne Union (412-396-6657) as soon as possible. Accommodations will not be granted retrospectively.