

Instructor: Prof. Isabella Novik, e-mail novik@math.washington.edu

Office: Padelford C-416, (206)616-9373

Class web-page: <http://www.math.washington.edu/~novik/461/>

Lectures: SIG 227, MWF 11:30–12:20

Teaching Assistant: Yihao Zhang, e-mail yihaoz93@uw.edu

Registration: If you are trying to add this class, please look at the web registration system for course openings: there is a lot of movement in and out of classes throughout the first week Sept 28–Oct 4; during this first week, you can add and drop classes using MyUW and don't need permission from me as long as there is space. Also please talk to me about getting on the waiting list. You must attend all lectures this first week to be eligible for a space in the class.

Textbooks: we will loosely follow

- Jiří Matoušek and Jaroslav Nešetřil, *Invitation to discrete mathematics*, 2nd edition.

We'll sometimes also use

- L. Lovász, J. Pelikán, and K. Vesztegombi, *Discrete mathematics. Elementary and beyond*.

I suggest that you buy the first book; both books can be found on the *reserve* shelf in the Math Library (Padelford C-306). In addition, I'll be posting my detailed lecture notes on-line.

Office Hours will be on Mondays and Wednesdays 2:20-3:50 (or by appointment) in Padelford C-416, starting the first week of classes.

Grades: There will be a total of 200 points in the course: 160 points for the tests (80 for the final exam and 40 for each of the two midterms), and 40 points for the homework. Your final grade will be based on a curve. However, to get 2.0 in this course you must score about 55% of the total number of points. If you do *extremely well* on the final (and have done a good job on the homework assignments), I may factor this into your final grade.

Tests: The midterms will take place on *Friday, October 21* and *Friday, November 18*; the (comprehensive) final will be on *Wednesday December 14, 2:30-4:20*. For the midterms and final you may bring one sheet (front and back) of handwritten notes. More information about each of these tests will be provided about a week prior to the test. Make-up midterms will not be given. If you miss one of these exams due to **unavoidable, compelling, and well-documented** circumstances, your final exam will be weighted more heavily.

Homework: There will be weekly homework assignments (usually due Friday in class) consisting of 5–10 problems. Most of problems will require proofs. The assignments will be posted on the web-page of the class. Late homework is not permitted. I will drop your lowest homework grade to allow for a missed assignment. Plan to spend a lot of time on homework—perhaps as much as six-seven hours a week on average.

Reading: You will be given a few sections of the book to read each week. When you “read” a math text, do it with pencil and paper and check the details (especially the ones that are skipped in the book) for yourself; also try to prove some of the theorems on your own, before reading the text proof.

Guidelines on how to write up solutions to problems — see a separate handout.

I encourage you to discuss the homework with other students in the class, or with me, but you must write everything up *on your own*.