

# MA111: Contemporary mathematics

Jack Schmidt

University of Kentucky

August 24, 2011

## SCHEDULE:

- HW 0 is due Friday, Aug 26th, 2011.
- HW 1A is due Friday, Sep 2nd, 2011.
- HW 1B is due Friday, Sep 9th, 2011.
- Exam 1 is Monday, Sep 12th, during class.

Today we will discuss contemporary mathematics, the subject and the course.

What is mathematics?

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- What do you think of when you hear “math”?

# Are these mathematics?

- (A) Is honesty the best policy for voters, or is voting for second-best wiser?  
Does the notion of “voter preference” influence how many candidates run?
- (B) How much more should you expect to pay for “no interest for six months”?
- (C) Jesse James hid a stage-coach worth of gold somewhere in a **corn maze**!  
How can you search the maze without retracing a path more than once?
- (D) **A picture repeated** forms a pattern, but flipping every other copy adds variety. Once you choose a picture, how much variety can you add?
- (E) How can three paranoid pirates divide **the loot** so that each feels he gets at least a third? Is honesty the best policy?

# What is mathematics

- How can we define mathematics so that it addresses these questions?
- But how can we distinguish mathematics from just “everything”?
- Send a one-liner description of contemporary mathematics to me “in writing” or on blackboard as your record of participation for today
- Best (most accurate and compelling) as well as a few funnies will be posted on the blackboard site

# Contact info

- Jack Schmidt ([jack.schmidt@uky.edu](mailto:jack.schmidt@uky.edu))
- Text me or leave voice mail (including name and course) at (512) 522-5137
- See me outside of class in the [Mathskeller](#) (CB63, big red doors in the basement) 9am on Mon, Wed, and 4pm on Fri
- Check [blackboard](#) for links and announcements



# Syllabus

- Absence policy
- Grading
- Exams
- Online homework
- In-class activity

# Flashcards

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  - (B) Buy the e-book direct from the homework website (\$80 ish)
  - (C) Buy a wrinkled photocopy from that guy Lenny hanging out in the parking lot
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- We can see then that there are wrong answers, but there can be more than one right answer.

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