

Extra Credit Assignment 13 (last one)

Due Wednesday, December 2 11:59 PM

Choose as many as you want of the following options, and hand in the result. For each one you hand in, you have the potential to earn ten points.

- (a) As we near the end, reflect on how your semester has gone. You can construe this in the context of Math 4330, or in the context of your college life in general.

What have you done that you would like to keep doing?

What have you done that you would like to change?

What has the academic system around you done that you would like to see continue? (The system includes your professor(s), mentor(s), advisor(s), staff, et cetera.)

What has the academic system around you done that you would like to see change?

- (b) Read one of the following books:

(a) The Shape of Space by Jeffrey R. Weeks.

(b) Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea by Charles Seife.

(c) The Man Who Loved Only Numbers by Paul Hoffman.

(d) Fermat's Last Theorem by Simon Singh. (Sometimes this book is also entitled Fermat's Engima.)

(e) The Code Book by Simon Singh.

Tell me which one you read, and then write whatever comes to mind. What ideas were interesting? What history was interesting? What were some things you thought a teacher should have told you already?

The point of this assignment is for you to read something interesting and fun about mathematics. You can be honest with your submission, and just tell me your honest reactions.

- (c) Many students find *proof* to be quite a surprise in the math major curriculum. Tell me about when during your college career you first encountered this notion, and tell me when you had to become proficient at it. What has your experience been like? Are there any changes you might suggest to how proof is introduced to students? (Whether we should have students learn the language of proof earlier, or whether certain ideas should be taught differently?) Were you given appropriate and sufficient advice about when/how/why to take certain proof-based classes? Relatedly: How has your idea of what a math major would be (when you signed up) fit with what the major has actually been like?