

Check-ins Math 126, Spring 2015

Because we only meet for two days each week, and because there is such a large gap between Wednesday and the following Monday, it is absolutely *essential* that you do significant independent work all week, and not forget about the class over the weekend. For that reason, I am requiring you to “check in” at various times this semester, for credit. The required check-ins are listed below, with the number of HW points each check-in is worth. (For comparison, each problem set is worth about 30–35 points.)

- (5 points) The required text for this class is *A Friendly Introduction to Number Theory*, Silverman (4th ed., 2013, prime number gears on cover). On **Wed Jan 28**, bring your text to class, so I can check that you have it. You must therefore buy the text **immediately**, no exceptions.
- (1 point each week) For the rest of the semester, every Fri, starting **Fri Feb 01**, you will be required to send me an email **by 11:59pm** with one nontrivial question about the homework that has been assigned, or attend our problem session (time and place TBD). By “nontrivial,” I mean that you need to have put in enough effort to get to a point where you realize what it is that you don’t understand. For example, “I don’t get problem 12” is not good enough, but “I don’t get problem 12 because I don’t understand assumptions and conclusions” or “I don’t get problem 12 because I don’t understand how to use the bracket-slash-bracket thing” or “I don’t get problem 12 because I don’t understand how to use the union of two sets” are all good. Alternately, if you think you have the HW in good shape, pick one problem and send me an email describing your solution.

After I get your check-in emails, I will try to send out a mass email response giving hints on the HW that answer your most frequently asked questions. If you are having a lot of problems, I may answer you individually. (You are also free to ask as many questions as you like!)