

DISCRETE MATHEMATICS

Math 245

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Suggestions for preparing for the First Exam

I. Know how to use truth tables:

- To show two statements are equivalent.
- To prove a statement is a tautology or a contradiction.
- To show that an argument is valid.

II. Know how to translate from English to formal logic.

- Standard “or” versus “exclusive or.”
- Variety of ways to express a conditional.
- Variety of ways to express universal and existential statements.
- Know how to negate a statement.

III. Logical arguments:

- Know the basic valid arguments (modus ponens, disjunctive syllogism, universal instantiation). The names are not as important as an ability to use them well.
- Knights and knaves problems.
- Solution of a logic puzzle: 1) Identify the basic predicates, 2) translate the complex statements, 3) derive a conclusion using valid arguments.

IV. Sets: Know the definitions!

- Subset. Intersection, union, set difference, complement.
- Power set, Cartesian product, partition.

V. Sets: Know how to do simple proofs. Be able to:

- Draw a Venn diagram illustrating set operations.
- Use an element argument in a direct proof that one set is a subset of another.
- Use division into cases when appropriate.
- Give a short proof by translating to a logical statement and using logical equivalences.
- Use established properties (distributivity, De Morgan's etc.) to algebraically prove new ones.