MA202:004 Homework instructions

February 22, 1999

Below are a few guidelines that I hope that you will follow in preparing your problem sets to hand in.

- Please write in complete sentences and try to explain what you did to solve the problem. Include the main steps that you carried out. A table of numbers is not a complete answer. You should explain how you produced the table–e.g. tried a few examples, saw a pattern, describe the formula that you used to continue the pattern.
- The best papers will not only carry out computations but will make an effort to explain why the computations lead to the correct answer. This is a very difficult task, but I hope that most of us will be doing this by the end of the semester.
- Pay attention to the details. Mathematical terminology should be used correctly. (Dictionaries may help with this.) Spell words correctly. Follow standard rules of grammar.
- Be neat. Don't turn in your scrap paper. You should find that the solution you hand in is the result of three or four tries to solve the problem.
- Be sure that you describe what you actually did. I found in the last round of papers that several students claimed to do things that did not make sense. Such deceits will be found out on exams.
- Continue to apply our problem solving strategies. For example, on the problem of finding the day of the weak $6^9 50$ days in the future. We found it was helpful to consider the simpler problems of looking 6^1, 6^2 ... into the future.
- If you are having difficulty, please look for help. You have several sources: Your classmates, form a problem solving group to spend some time working on these problems. Your instructor, I am available during office hours and at other times to answer questions. 202Excel is available if you would like to spend additional time on these problems.
- Finally, please write on only one side of the paper. I like to use the backs of your papers to make comments.
- It appears that my idea of maintaining a notebook of problems was not a good one. For the rest of your assignments, just hand in the problems that are due that week.
- If you miss class, please make arrangements to pick up missed assignments promptly.