

Computational Thinking

Discrete Mathematics

Number Theory

Topic 00 : Module Introduction

Logic

Lecture 01 : Module Overview

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Graphs and
Networks

Autumn Semester, 2025/26

Collections

Outline

- Motivation and aim of this module.
- Administration trivia — Contact hours, Assessment structure, ...
- Resources

Enumeration

Relations & Functions

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What?

(Aim)

Aim, as per the Module Descriptor ...

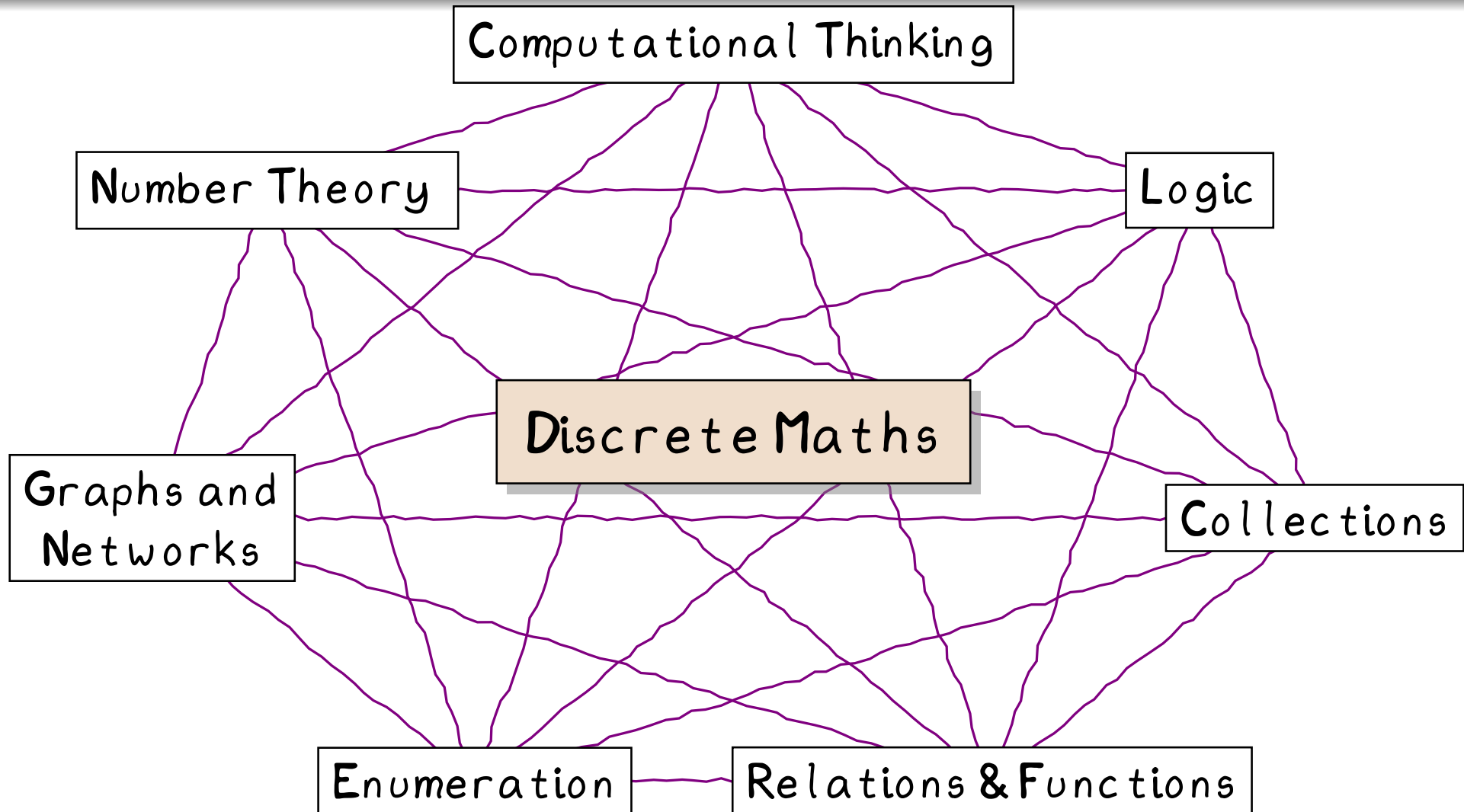
This module provides a solid foundation of selected topics in discrete mathematics related to computing and information sciences. The topics are covered in an elementary manner in order to reinforce understanding of concepts and improving algebraic problem-solving skills so that the student can effectively proceed with their study of a degree programme in computing.

Translation (Informal Aims)

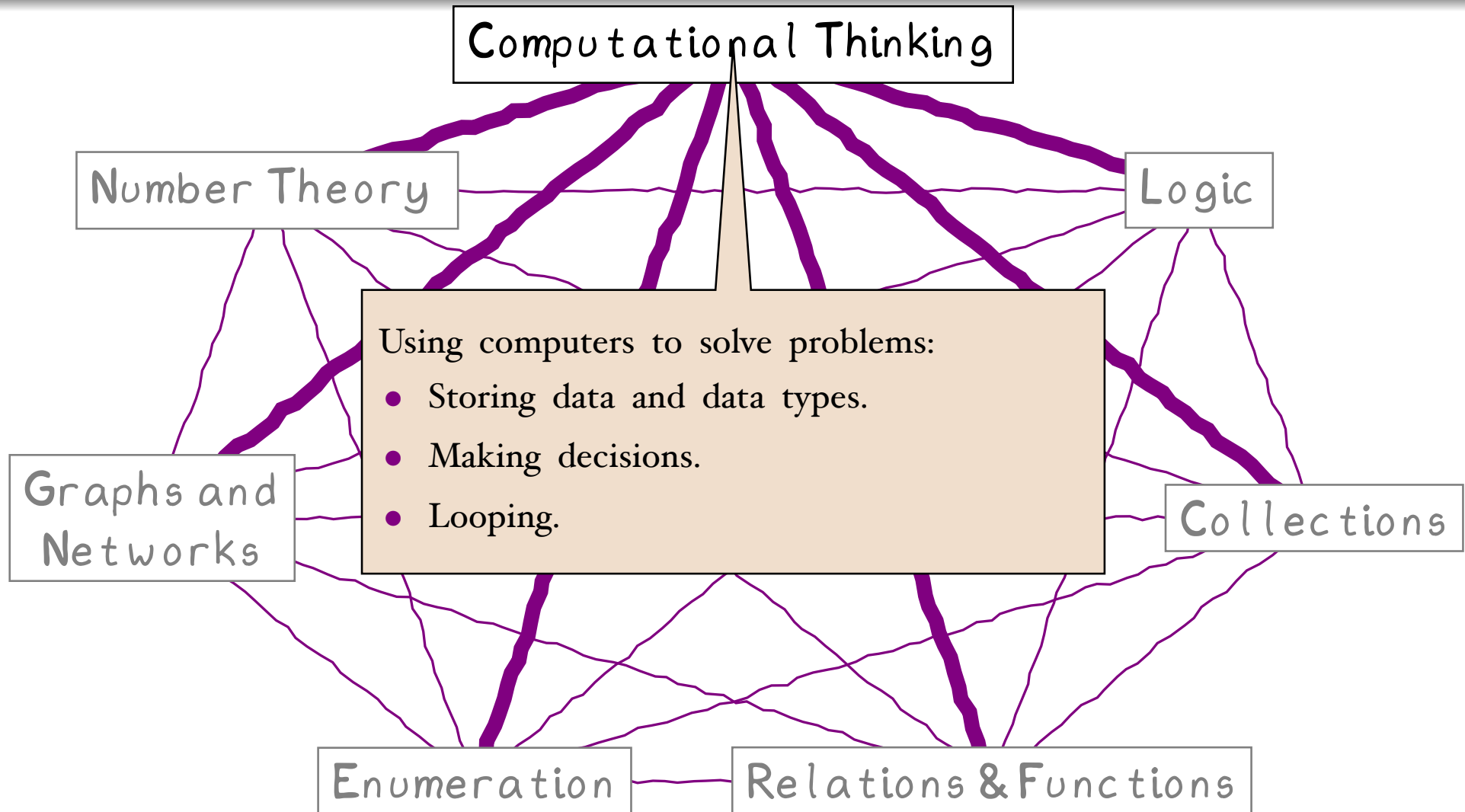
- ① Reason logically — aim for precision and correctness over speed.
- ② Develop and manipulate theoretical models
— a **set** is a collection of things, a **relation** is a collection of pairs of things, a **graph** is a collection of things with pairwise connections, etc..
- ③ Translate
computing concepts/implementation (Python) \leftrightarrow theoretical models (mathematics).

What?

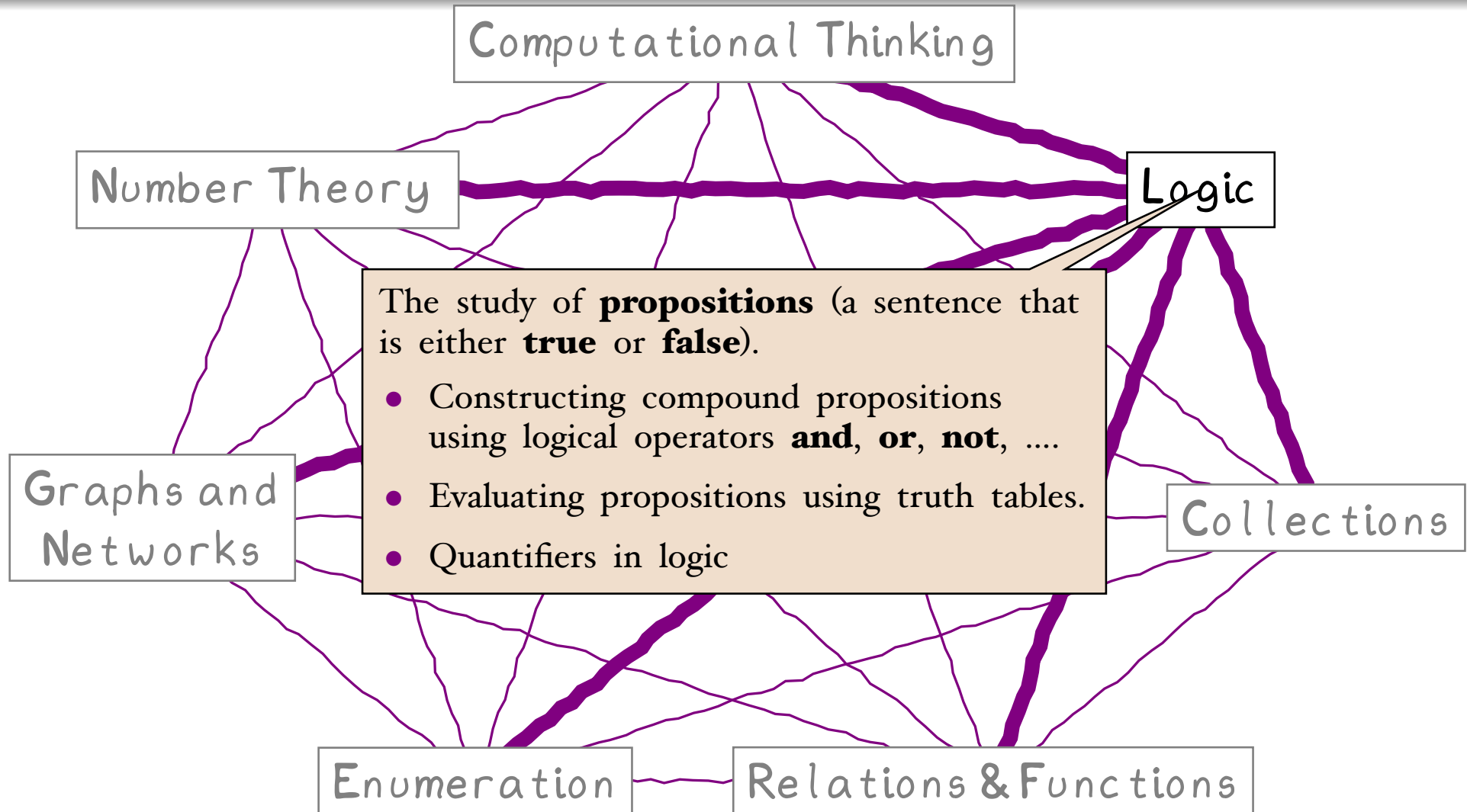
(Discrete Mathematics)



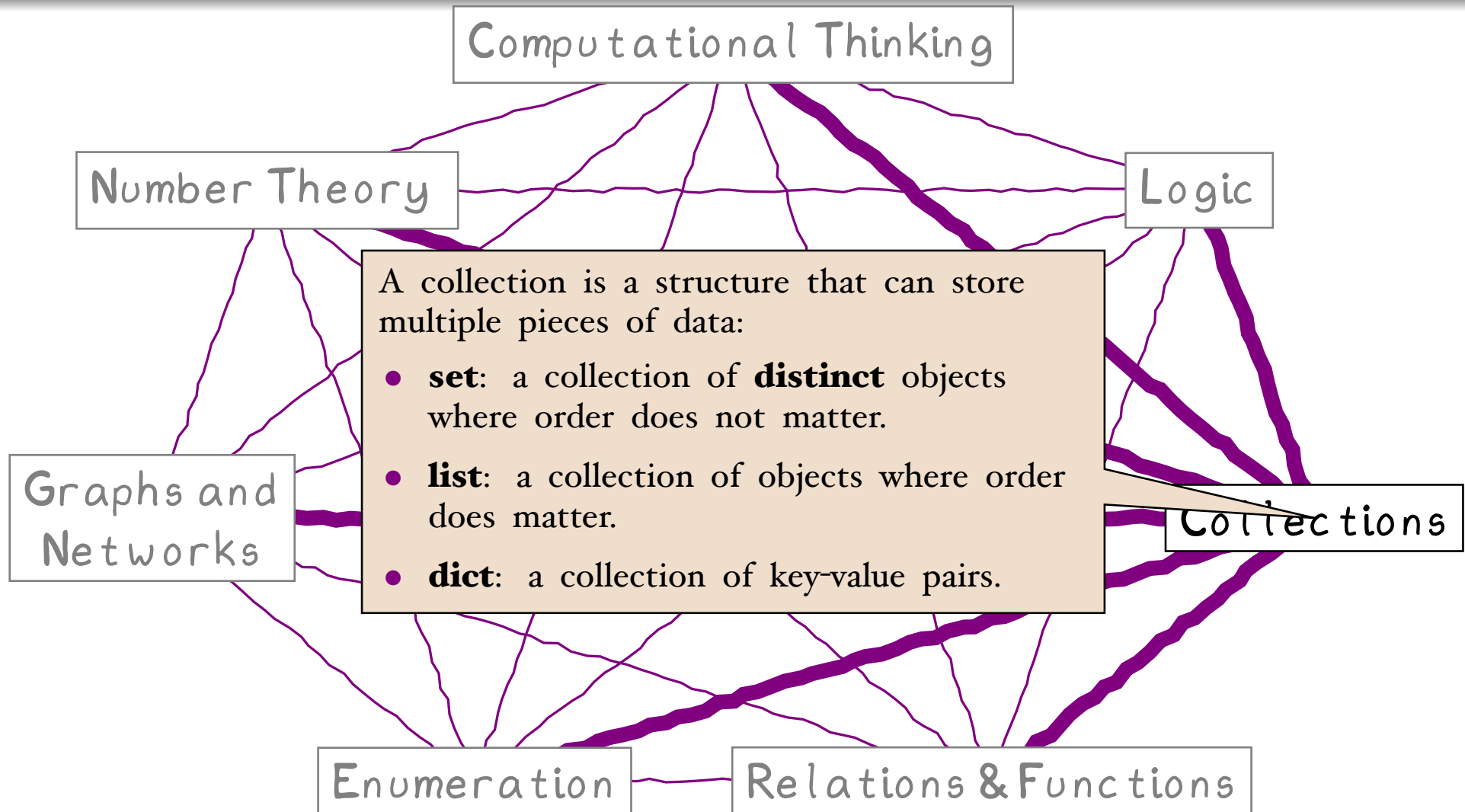
What?



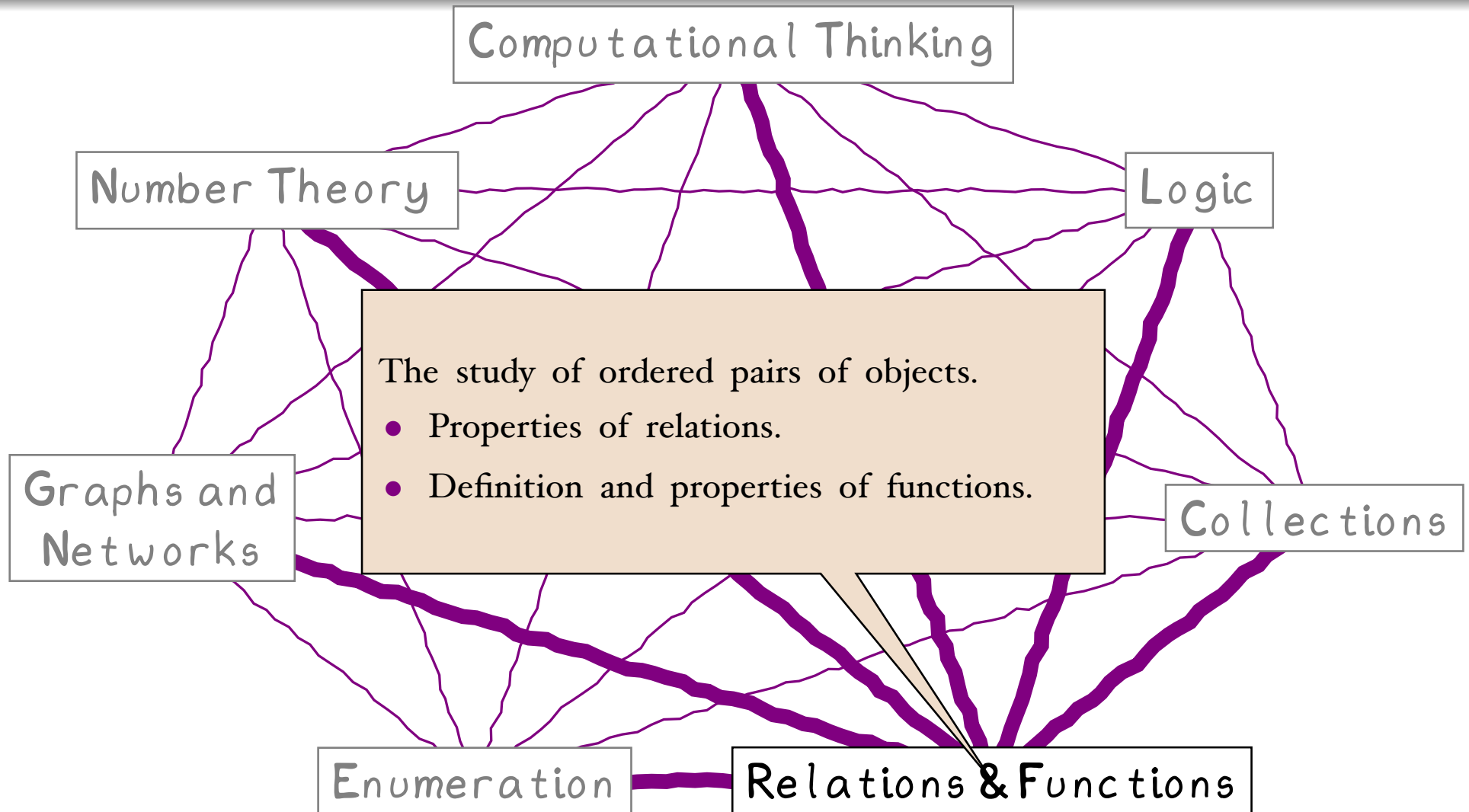
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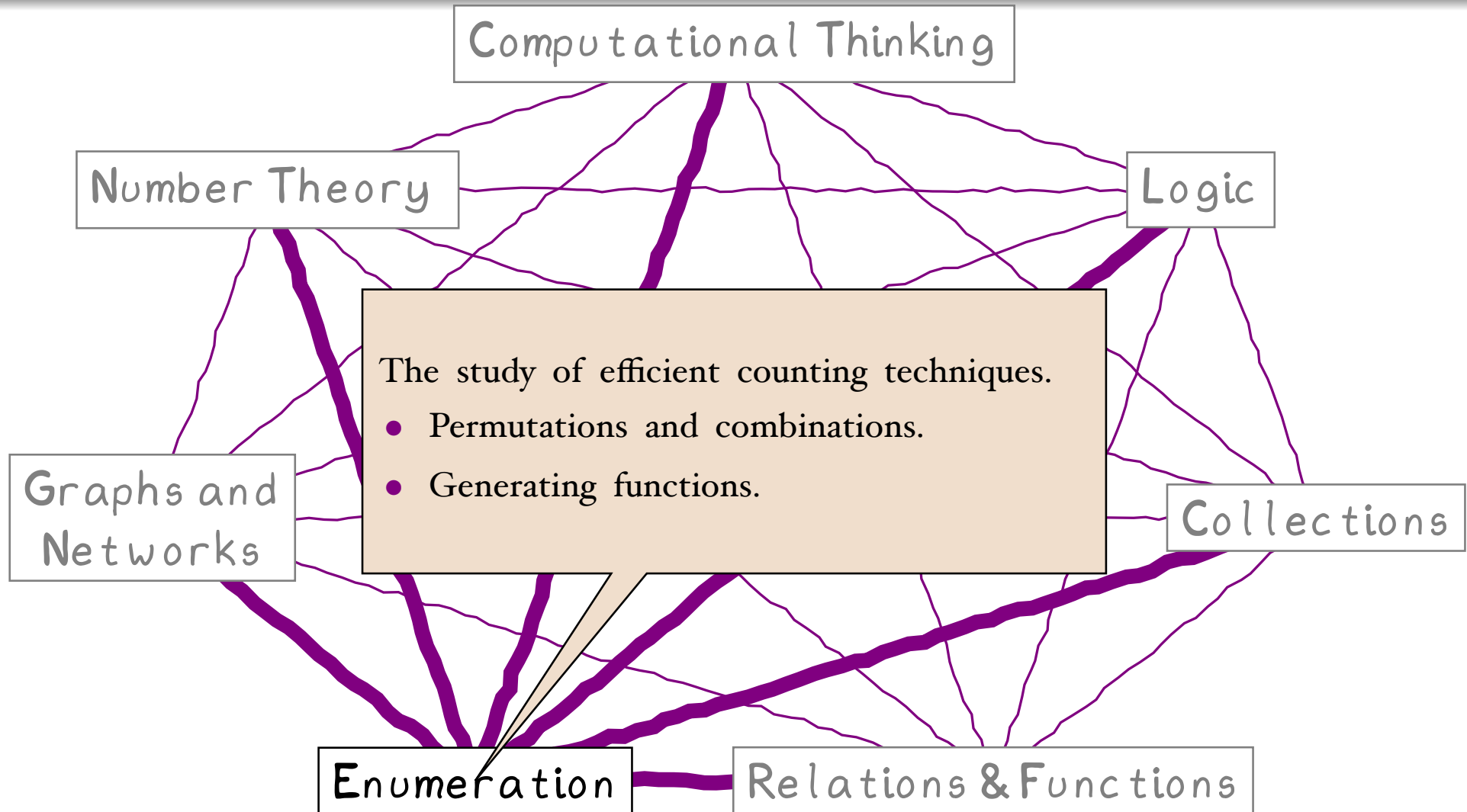
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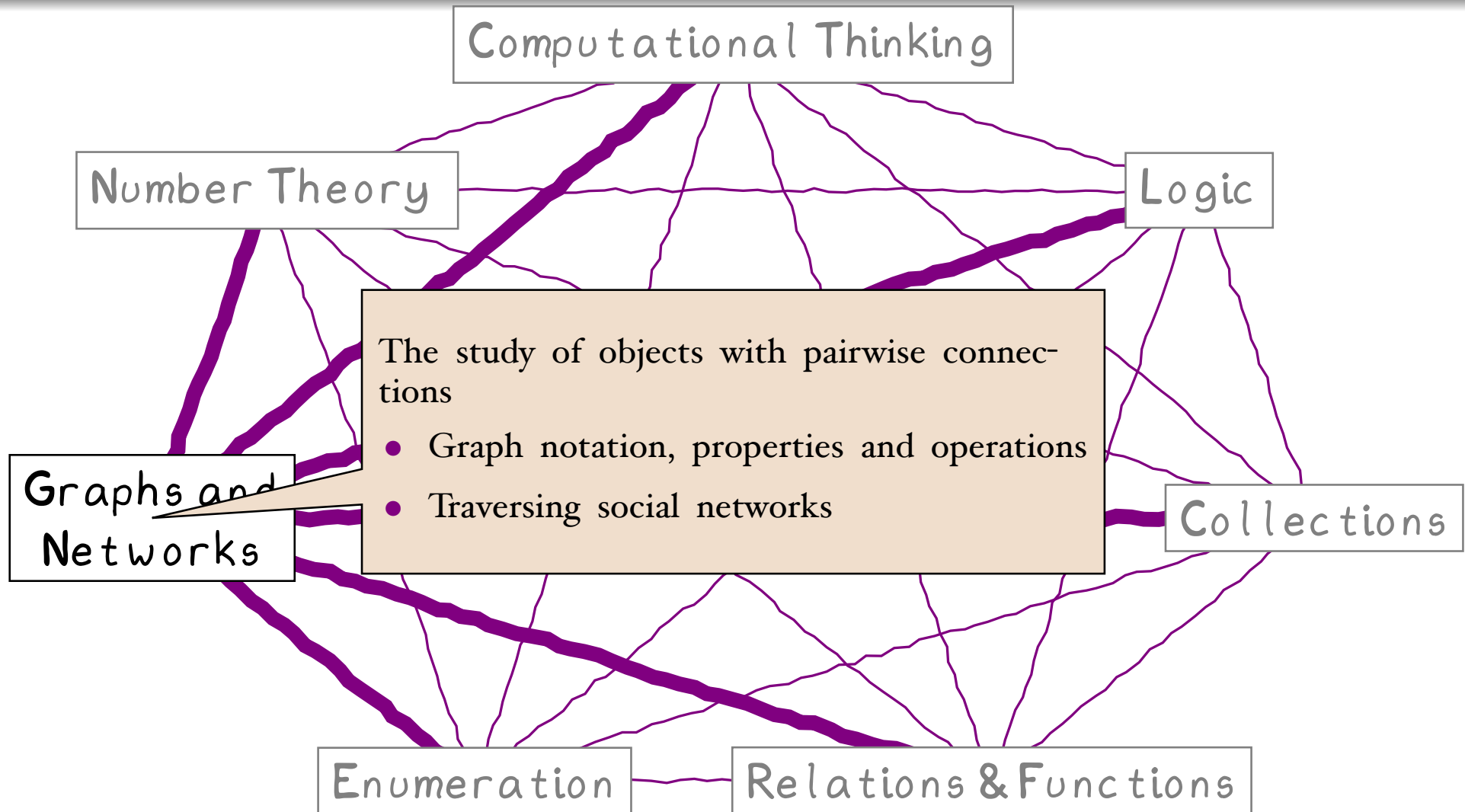
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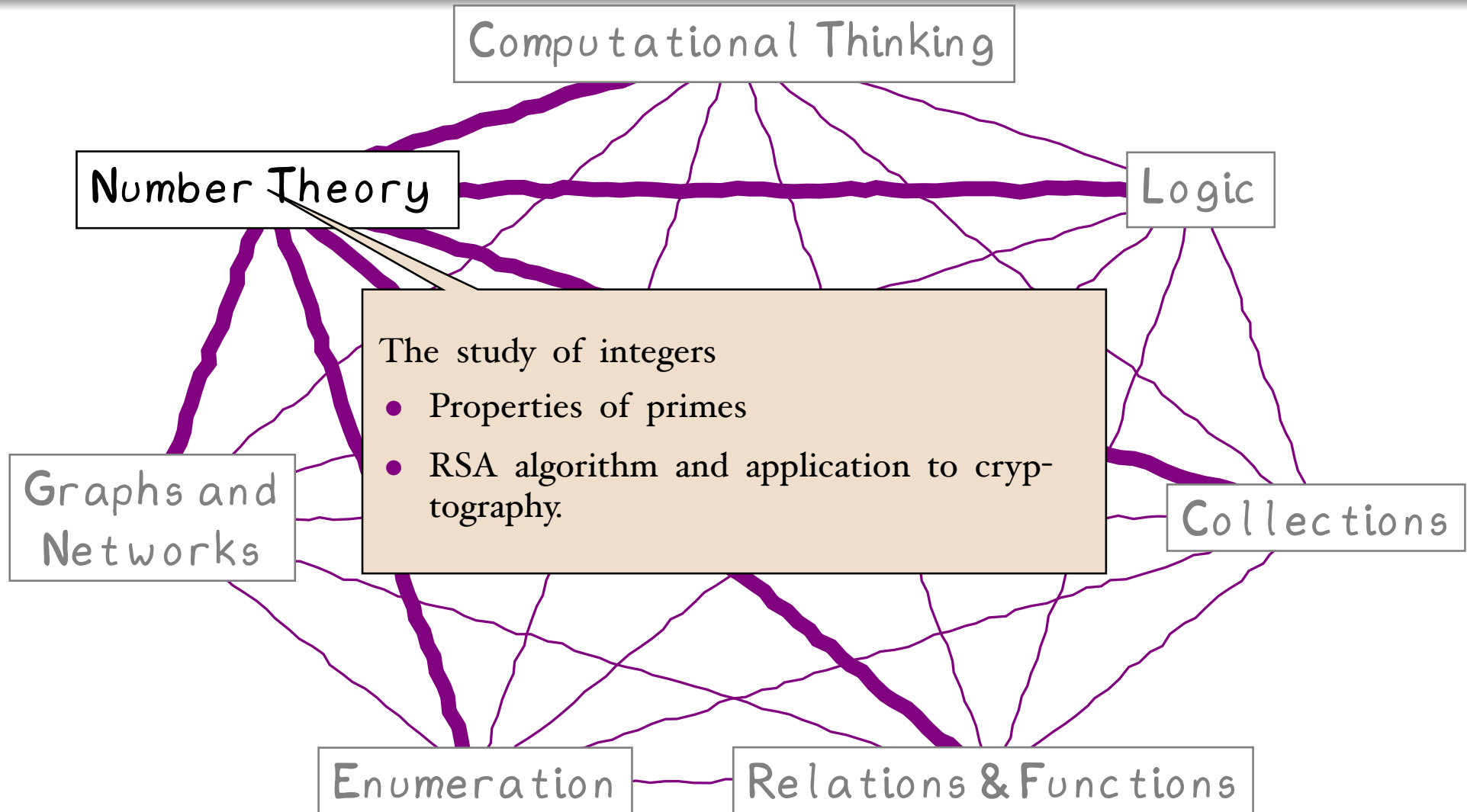
What?



What?



What?

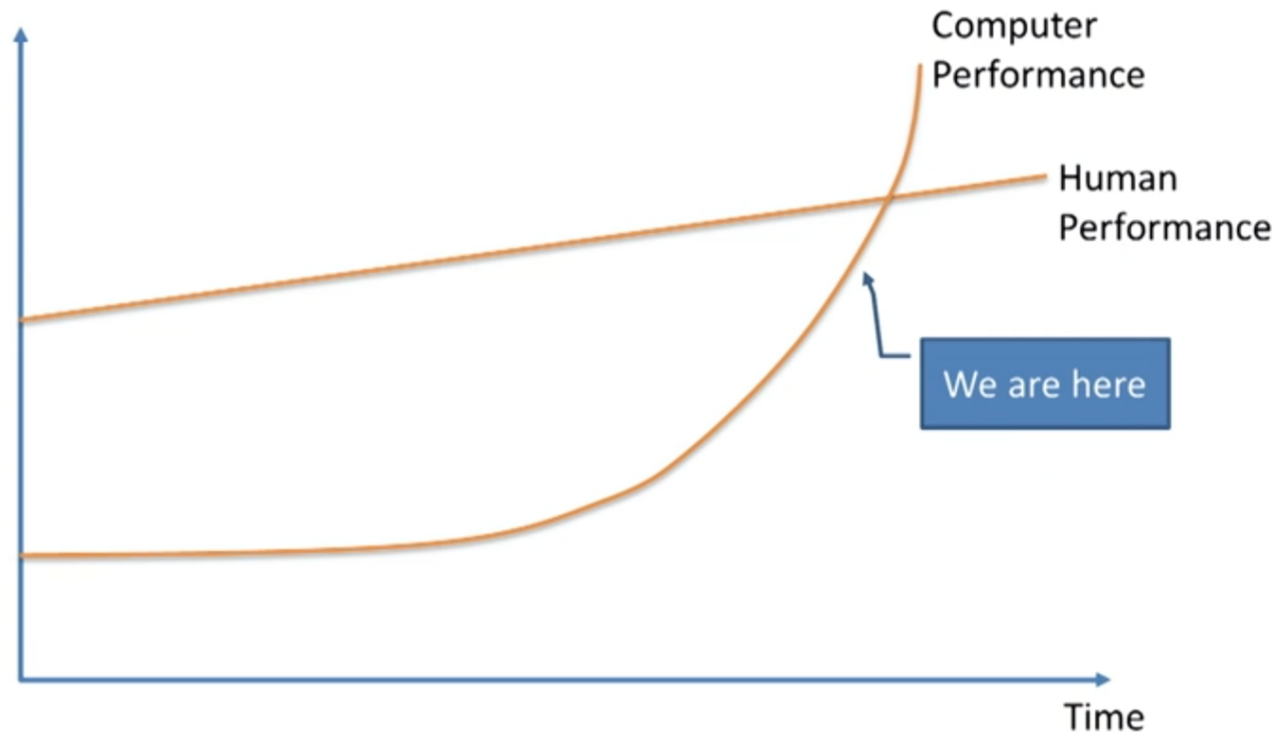


Why?

Many, many reasons ... pickinig one* ...

Machine learning is the future of computing

Discrete mathematics is the core of machine learning.



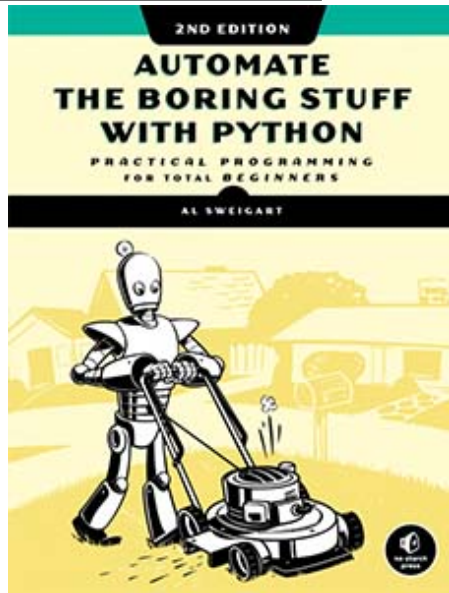
*The AI Revolution: Our Immortality or Extinction
waitbutwhy.com/2015/01/artificial-intelligence-revolution-2.html

Why?

(Aim)

Computers are faster and more accurate* than us, they don't get board/distracted†
⇒ Get computers to do the hard (and/or boring) stuff

See Al Sweigart's books



Or our view on life



Why have a dog and bark?

Exception to this are the generative text models (chatGPT, Bard, ...) where accuracy is replaced by "most likely/probable".

†Well, if you don't count Teslas, in FSD mode, driving over pedestrians ...

How?

(Contact Hours)

- ⚙️ Three lectures per week
 - ⚙️ Cover concepts, definitions, examples, etc.
 - ⚙️ BUT feel free to stop me and ask questions at any point.
 - ⚠️ **You should print out notes in advance of lecture, or have access to them during class.**
 - ⚙️ Ideally you skimmed over the notes in advance of lecture.
 - ⚠️ **Take notes during lectures.**
- ⚙️ One tutorial per week
 - ⚙️ Review of exercises based on the material covered in the lectures.
 - ⚠️ **You need to have printout of tutorial sheets in advance of lecture.**
 - ⚙️ Ideally you have attempted/completed some/all questions in advance of tutorial and you are just attending the tutorials to show off.
 - ⚙️ Online quiz for self review at end of each topic.
- ⚙️ One practical per week
 - ⚙️ Using Python (via *colab notebooks*) to demonstrate implementation details of discrete mathematics concepts.
 - ⚙️ Introduce programming in Python — never have too much programming.
 - ⚠️ **You need to upload notebook by end of week (Saturday 11:00pm).**

How?

(Assessment Structure)

75% End of Semester Exam

Current plan (this is subject to change so ask about this in week 10!)

- 4 questions (typically 3–5 parts per question. Answer all questions (i.e. no choice).
- Tend not to have question per topic.
- 80% same material as last year — see pre-Covid exam papers, but there may still be some differences in format/style of questions as will the relative emphasis/weighting of the different topics.

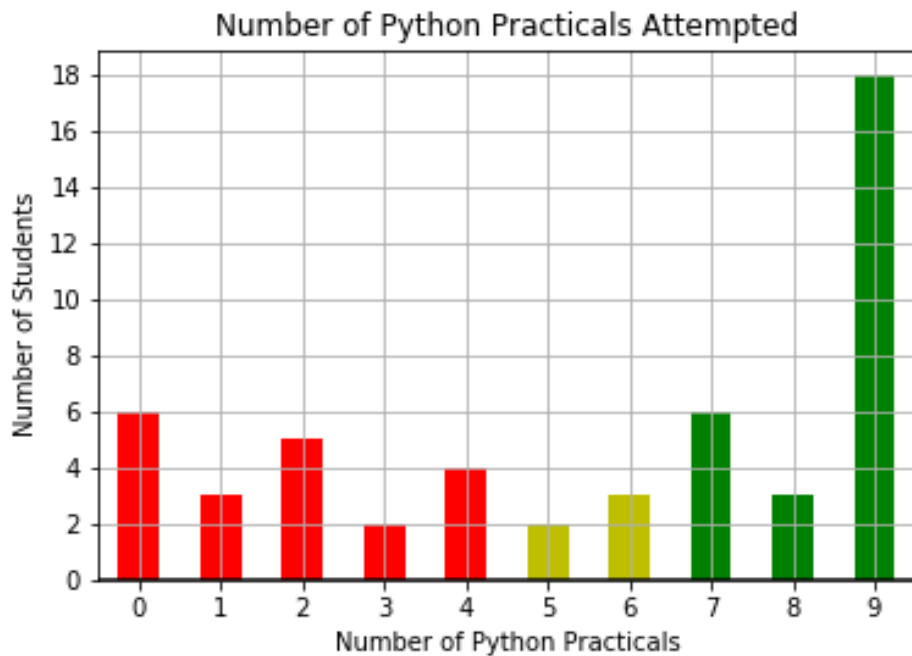
25% Continuous Assessment

- Practical work based on 10 python practicals and 2 online class tests[‡].
- In theory[§], weekly assignments, are graded in advance of next week.

[§]In practice, I ~~may~~ will fall behind a bit.

A Brief Look at 2019/20 Results

- 52 students enrolled, but only 28 passed! \Rightarrow pass rate of 53.8%.
- Of the 32 students who attempted at least 5 practicals, 25 passed \Rightarrow pass rate of 78.1%.
- Of the 27 students who attempted at least 7 practicals, 24 passed \Rightarrow pass rate of 88.8%.



Keep up with the material:

- Read notes before & after lectures
- Attend practicals and upload practical work on time.
- Attempt tutorial questions.

Note “Attempted” \neq “Completed correctly”

A Brief Look at Last Year's Results (2024/25)

- 88 students, pass/compensation rate of 64%. (better but can still improve)
- Comparison of Practical Work (CA) vs Final Exam:
 - One student passed while failing the CA

It is possible to pass this module without doing the practical work but the odds are against you.

- Average grade on CA was 66.1% while on Final Exam was 47.5%

The CA is graded easier (a carrot to help keep you motivated during the semester).

- Average number of practicals attempted last year was 6.6.

While (like in 2018/19) the more practicals a student attempted the more likely they passed the module, but if you miss a week or two it is not “end of the world”.

Who?

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Background

- PhD in Applied Mathematics and Civil Engineering.
- BSc (H) Physics.

Academic Interests

- Dynamical systems, in particular systems with hysteresis
- Game development
- Languages: C/C++, Python, Java

Dr Kieran Murphy

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Background

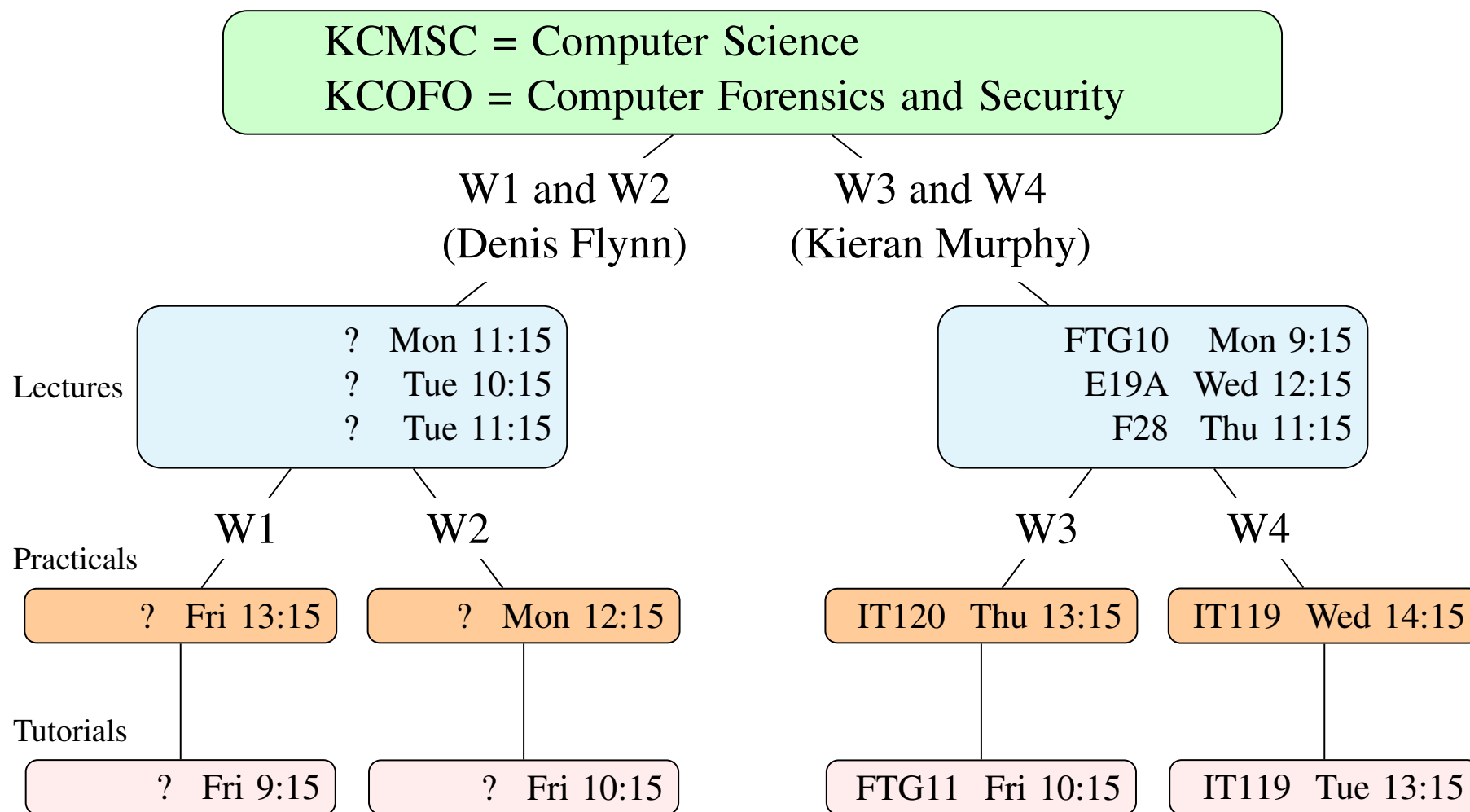
- PhD in Applied Mathematical Sciences
- BSc (H) Applied Mathematics.

Academic Interests

- Dynamical systems, in particular numerical analysis
- Game development
- Languages: C/C++, Python, Java

When?

(Correct as of 11 Sep 2025)

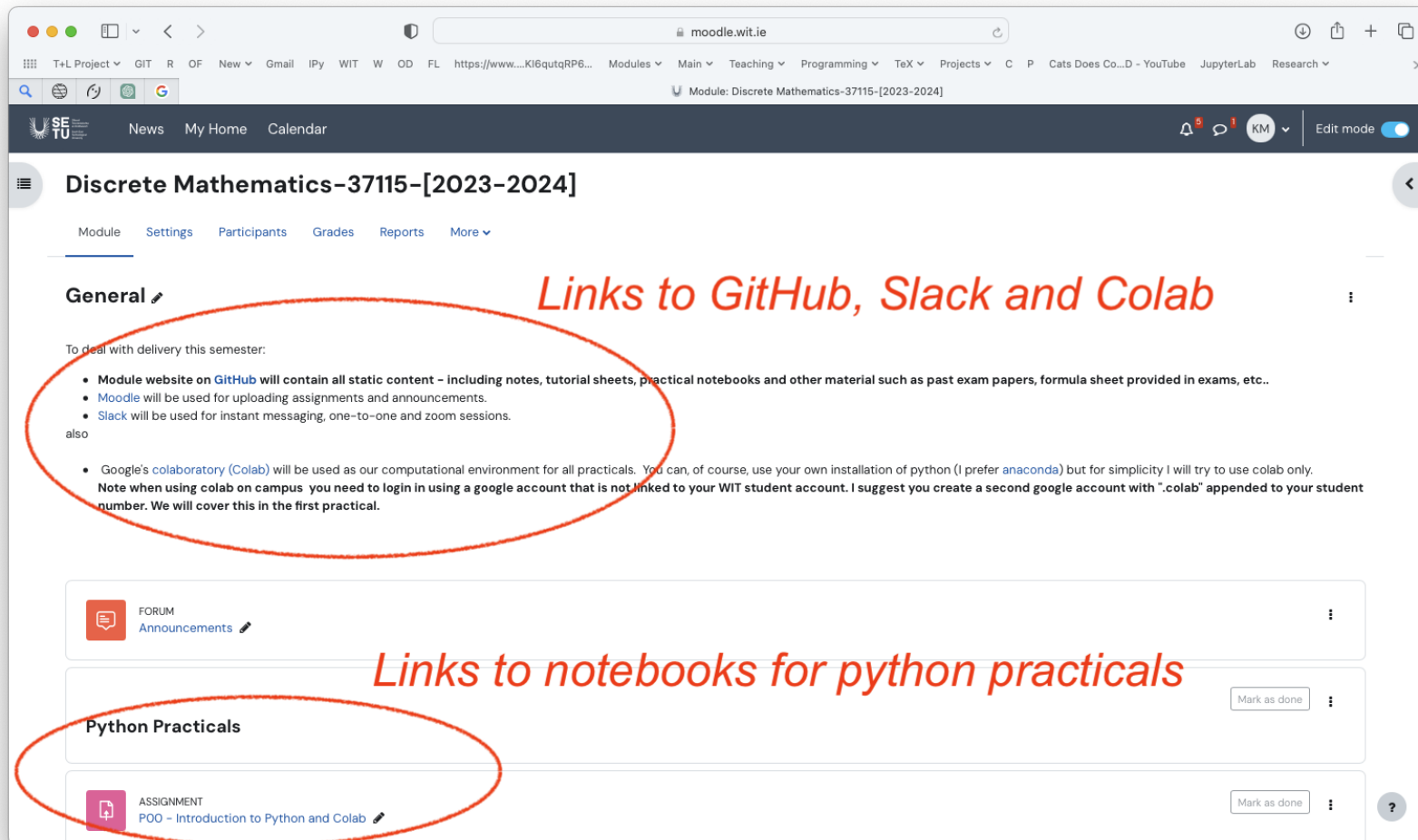


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Resources — Moodle

- URL: moodle.wit.ie/course/view.php?id=217956
- Used for all notices, assignment and practical work submissions.



The screenshot shows the Moodle course page for Discrete Mathematics-37115-[2023-2024]. The page is titled "Discrete Mathematics-37115-[2023-2024]" and has tabs for Module, Settings, Participants, Grades, Reports, and More. The "General" section is active, showing a list of links to GitHub, Slack, and Colab. A red circle highlights this section, with the text "Links to GitHub, Slack and Colab" written in red. Below this, the "Python Practicals" section is visible, containing an assignment titled "P00 - Introduction to Python and Colab". A red circle highlights this section, with the text "Links to notebooks for python practicals" written in red.

General

To deal with delivery this semester:

- Module website on [GitHub](#) will contain all static content – including notes, tutorial sheets, practical notebooks and other material such as past exam papers, formula sheet provided in exams, etc..
- Moodle will be used for uploading assignments and announcements.
- Slack will be used for instant messaging, one-to-one and zoom sessions.

also

- Google's [colaboratory \(Colab\)](#) will be used as our computational environment for all practicals. You can, of course, use your own installation of python (I prefer [anaconda](#)) but for simplicity I will try to use colab only. Note when using colab on campus you need to login in using a google account that is not linked to your WIT student account. I suggest you create a second google account with ".colab" appended to your student number. We will cover this in the first practical.

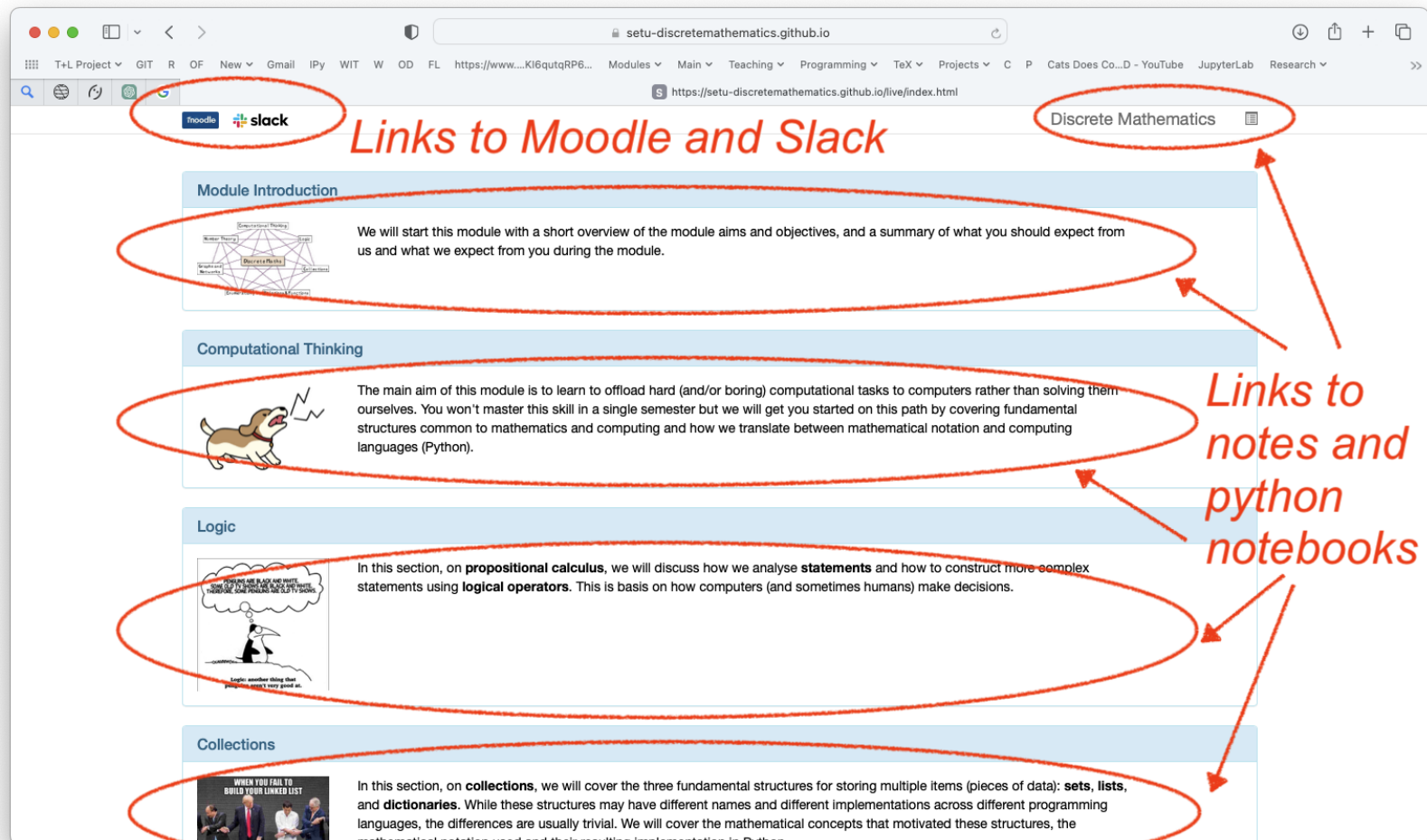
FORUM
Announcements

Python Practicals

ASSIGNMENT
P00 - Introduction to Python and Colab

Resources — Github

- URL: [SETU-DiscreteMathematics.github.io/live](https://setu-discretemathematics.github.io/live)
- Used for all content (slides, notebooks, tutorial sheets).



The screenshot shows the website [setu-discretemathematics.github.io](https://setu-discretemathematics.github.io/live) in a browser. The page has a navigation bar with links to Moodle and Slack circled in red. The main content area is divided into sections: Module Introduction, Computational Thinking, Logic, and Collections. Each section has a title, an image, and a description. Red ovals highlight the text in each section, and red arrows point from the text to the right, where the text "Links to notes and python notebooks" is written. The "Links to Moodle and Slack" text is also circled in red.

Links to Moodle and Slack

Discrete Mathematics

Module Introduction

We will start this module with a short overview of the module aims and objectives, and a summary of what you should expect from us and what we expect from you during the module.

Computational Thinking

The main aim of this module is to learn to offload hard (and/or boring) computational tasks to computers rather than solving them ourselves. You won't master this skill in a single semester but we will get you started on this path by covering fundamental structures common to mathematics and computing and how we translate between mathematical notation and computing languages (Python).

Logic

In this section, on **propositional calculus**, we will discuss how we analyse **statements** and how to construct more complex statements using **logical operators**. This is basis on how computers (and sometimes humans) make decisions.

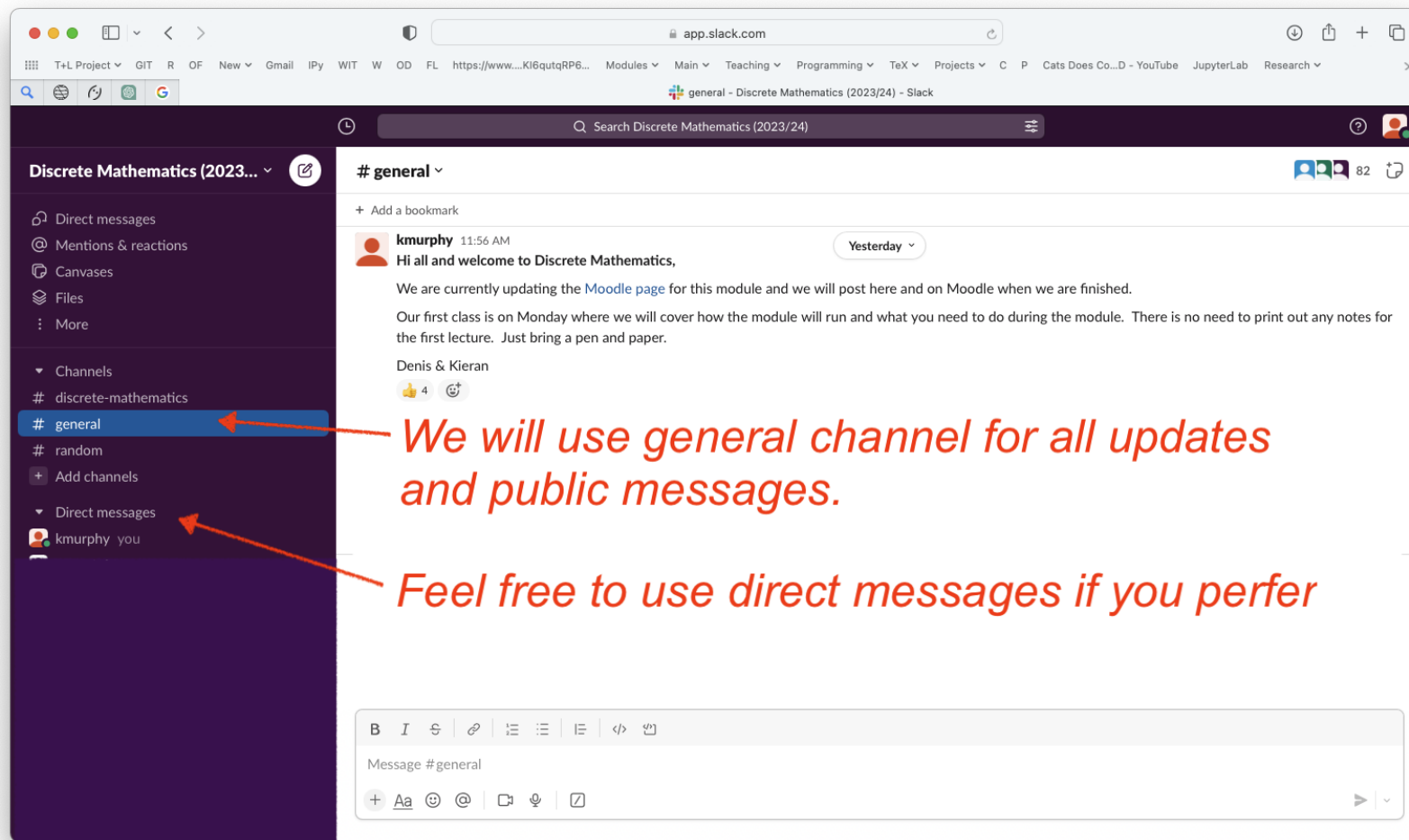
Collections

In this section, on **collections**, we will cover the three fundamental structures for storing multiple items (pieces of data): **sets**, **lists**, and **dictionaries**. While these structures may have different names and different implementations across different programming languages, the differences are usually trivial. We will cover the mathematical concepts that motivated these structures, the mathematical notation used and their resulting implementation in Python.

Links to notes and python notebooks

Resources — Slack

- URL: discretemathe-7co3349.slack.com
- Used for instant messaging, one-on-one sessions, etc.



Resources — Colab

- We will use the online Google Colab[¶] environment to code in python for all of our practical work.
- You can open a notebook from these slides by clicking the "OPEN in COLAB" icon or clicking/scanning the QR code



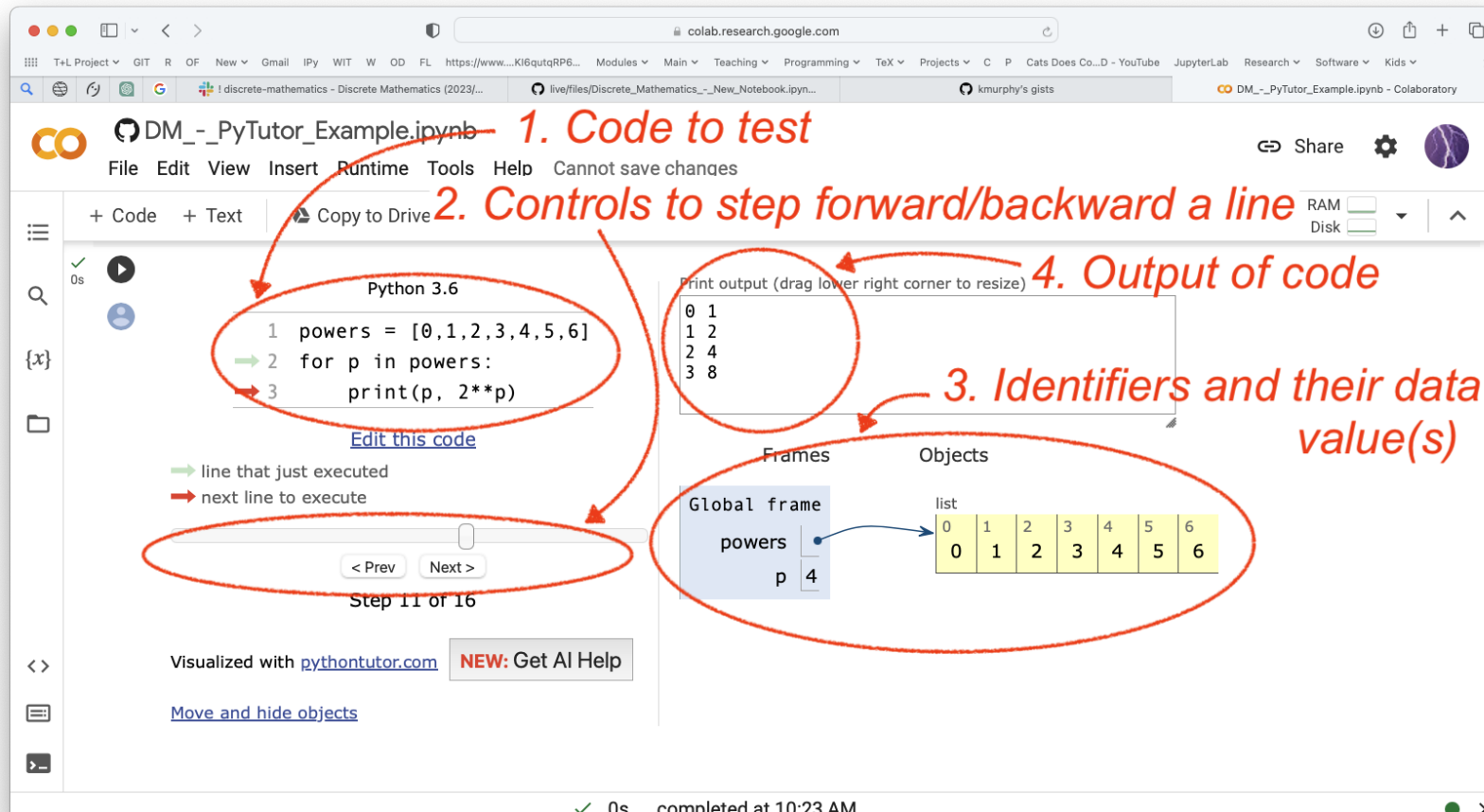
Since using Colab is such a large part of our module we have a separate set of slides covering using Colab in more detail.



[¶]Alternatively, if you want to install python on your laptop you could use the anaconda distribution from www.anaconda.com (just install the latest 64-bit, version 3.+).

Resources — PyTutor

- PyTutor (pythontutor.com) is a website that helps programmers to learn Python, Javascript, C/C++, and Java by visualising code execution (shows what happens to data as code runs, line by line).
- We will run PyTutor from within Colab so will demo PyTutor when we cover Colab (or click/scan the QR code).

The screenshot shows the PyTutor interface within a Google Colab notebook. The notebook is titled "DM_-_PyTutor_Example.ipynb". The code being executed is:

```
1 powers = [0,1,2,3,4,5,6]
2 for p in powers:
3     print(p, 2**p)
```

Annotations on the screenshot include:

- 1. Code to test**: Points to the code editor.
- 2. Controls to step forward/backward a line**: Points to the navigation buttons at the bottom.
- 3. Identifiers and their data value(s)**: Points to the "Frames" and "Objects" panels.
- 4. Output of code**: Points to the "Print output" panel.

The "Print output" panel shows the following output:

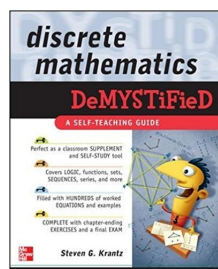
```
0 1
1 2
2 4
3 8
```

The "Frames" panel shows the "Global frame" with the variable "powers" pointing to a list object. The "Objects" panel shows the list object with indices 0 through 6 and values 0 through 6.

Text Books

I

I like the following textbooks on discrete mathematics and expect that my notes will overlap significantly with these books. I do encourage you to read* them[†], however, be aware they may use different notation or cover different topics.



Discrete Mathematics Demystified

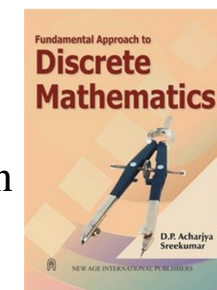
by Steven Krantz

Touches on nearly all of the topics that we hope to cover. We will probably go into greater depth in places, but a very nice and short read.

Fundamental Approach to Discrete Mathematics

by D. P. Acharjya Sreekumar

I also liked this book, however, due to time constraints, this module only focuses on material in chapter 1–4, 8, and 10.



*or skim them over a coffee or two.

[†]I also like *Applied Discrete Structures* by Alan Doerr and Kenneth Levasseur — it is a good source of exercises. (and is free (legally))

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Final Comments on Module

- Discrete Mathematics concepts appear either directly or indirectly in approximately 22 of the 30 modules on your degree.
 \implies *Knowing Discrete Mathematics concepts greatly simplifies rest of the course.*
- The module is intended to be an introduction to a large number of topics, so treatment is broad rather than deep.
 - ✓ Most of material is at an introductory level.
 - ⚠ Keeping in sync with material, practicals and tutorials is important.
- The continuous assessment (the practicals) is intended to reinforce the connections between programming and discrete mathematics.

The CA is a “carrot not a stick” — we want you to enjoy the module and keep up to date with the material.

