

**A FIRST COURSE  
IN  
ABSTRACT ALGEBRA**



---

**A FIRST COURSE**  
**IN**  
**ABSTRACT ALGEBRA**  
**MAT3004 Notebook**

---

**Dr. Guang Rao**

*The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen*



香港中文大學(深圳)

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen



# Contents

Acknowledgments	vii
Notations	ix
<b>1 Week1</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Monday	1
1.1.1 Introduction to Abstract Algebra	1
1.1.2 Group	1
<b>2 Week2</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Tuesday	11
2.1.1 Review	11
2.1.2 Cyclic groups	11
<b>3 Week3</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1 Tuesday	17
3.2 Thursday	22
3.2.1 Cyclic Groups	22
3.2.2 Symmetric Groups	25
3.2.3 Dihedral Groups	28
3.2.4 Free Groups	29
<b>4 Week4</b>	<b>31</b>
4.1 Subgroups	31
4.1.1 Cyclic subgroups	32
4.1.2 Direct Products	36

4.1.3	Generating Sets . . . . .	37
<b>5</b>	<b>Week4 . . . . .</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Reviewing</b>	<b>41</b>
5.1.1	Theorem of Lagrange . . . . .	43
<b>6</b>	<b>Week5 . . . . .</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>49</b>
6.1.1	Derived subgroups . . . . .	52
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>57</b>
6.2.1	Homomorphisms . . . . .	57
6.2.2	Classification of cyclic groups . . . . .	61
6.2.3	Isomorphism Theorems . . . . .	62
<b>7</b>	<b>Week6 . . . . .</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Ring</b>	<b>67</b>
7.1.1	Modular Arithmetic . . . . .	70
7.1.2	Rings of Polynomials . . . . .	72
7.1.3	Integral Domains and Fields . . . . .	73
7.1.4	Field of fractions . . . . .	78
<b>8</b>	<b>Week7 . . . . .</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>8.1</b>	<b>Field of Fractions</b>	<b>81</b>
8.1.1	Homomorphisms . . . . .	82
<b>8.2</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>90</b>
8.2.1	Principal Ideal Domainas . . . . .	90
8.2.2	Qotient Ring . . . . .	92

# Acknowledgments

This book is from the MAT3004 in fall semester, 2018.

CUHK(SZ)





# Notations and Conventions

$\mathbb{R}^n$	$n$ -dimensional real space
$\mathbb{C}^n$	$n$ -dimensional complex space
$\mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$	set of all $m \times n$ real-valued matrices
$\mathbb{C}^{m \times n}$	set of all $m \times n$ complex-valued matrices
$x_i$	$i$ th entry of column vector $\mathbf{x}$
$a_{ij}$	$(i, j)$ th entry of matrix $\mathbf{A}$
$\mathbf{a}_i$	$i$ th column of matrix $\mathbf{A}$
$\mathbf{a}_i^T$	$i$ th row of matrix $\mathbf{A}$
$\mathbb{S}^n$	set of all $n \times n$ real symmetric matrices, i.e., $\mathbf{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ and $a_{ij} = a_{ji}$ for all $i, j$
$\mathbb{H}^n$	set of all $n \times n$ complex Hermitian matrices, i.e., $\mathbf{A} \in \mathbb{C}^{n \times n}$ and $\bar{a}_{ij} = a_{ji}$ for all $i, j$
$\mathbf{A}^T$	transpose of $\mathbf{A}$ , i.e, $\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{A}^T$ means $b_{ji} = a_{ij}$ for all $i, j$
$\mathbf{A}^H$	Hermitian transpose of $\mathbf{A}$ , i.e, $\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{A}^H$ means $b_{ji} = \bar{a}_{ij}$ for all $i, j$
$\text{trace}(\mathbf{A})$	sum of diagonal entries of square matrix $\mathbf{A}$
$\mathbf{1}$	A vector with all 1 entries
$\mathbf{0}$	either a vector of all zeros, or a matrix of all zeros
$\mathbf{e}_i$	a unit vector with the nonzero element at the $i$ th entry
$\mathcal{C}(\mathbf{A})$	the column space of $\mathbf{A}$
$\mathcal{R}(\mathbf{A})$	the row space of $\mathbf{A}$
$\mathcal{N}(\mathbf{A})$	the null space of $\mathbf{A}$
$\text{Proj}_{\mathcal{M}}(\mathbf{A})$	the projection of $\mathbf{A}$ onto the set $\mathcal{M}$



## 8.2. Thursday

### 8.2.1. Principal Ideal Domains

For a fixed finite set of elements  $a_1, \dots, a_n$  in a commutative ring  $R$ , let  $\langle a_1, \dots, a_n \rangle$  denote the subset:

$$\{r_1a_1 + \dots + r_na_n \mid r_i \in R\}$$

**Proposition 8.10** The set  $\langle a_1, \dots, a_n \rangle$  is an ideal of  $R$ .

*Proof.* 1. It forms a group.

2. Given any  $\sum_i r_i a_i \in I$ , for any  $r \in R$ , we have

$$r \sum_i r_i a_i = \sum_i (rr_i) a_i \in I.$$

■

**Definition 8.9** We call  $\langle a_1, \dots, a_n \rangle$  the ideal **generated** by  $a_1, \dots, a_n$ . An ideal  $\langle a \rangle = \{ar \mid r \in R\}$  generated by one element  $a \in R$  is called the **principal ideal**. ■

**R** Note that  $R = \langle 1 \rangle$  and  $\{0\} := \langle 0 \rangle$  are both principal ideals.

**Theorem 8.3** Every ideal in the ring  $\mathbb{Z}$  is a principal ideal.

*Proof.* w.l.o.g., suppose  $I$  contains nonzero element, say  $a$ . Then  $-1 \in \mathbb{Z}$  implies that  $-a \in I$ , and therefore  $I$  contains at least one positive integer. Suppose  $I$  contains a positive integer  $d$  that is smaller than any other elements that is positive in  $I$ . We claim  $I = \langle d \rangle$ .

For any  $a \in I$ , we have  $a = dp + r$  for  $0 \leq r < d$ , which implies that  $r = a - dp$  lies in  $I$ , since  $I$  is an ideal, which implies  $d = 0$ , i.e.,  $a = dq$ . Thus  $I \subseteq \langle d \rangle$ .

On the other hand, we have  $dr \in I$  for any  $r \in \mathbb{Z}$ , i.e.,  $\langle d \rangle \subseteq \mathbb{Z}$  ■

**Proposition 8.11** Given  $a, b$  in a commutative ring  $R$ . If  $b = au$  for some unit  $u \in R$ , then  $\langle a \rangle = \langle b \rangle$ . If  $R$  is an integral domain and  $\langle a \rangle = \langle b \rangle$ , then  $b = au$  for some unit  $u \in R$ .

*Proof.* For the case  $b = 0$ , we imply  $a = 0$  and the result is trivial.

For  $b \neq 0$ , there exists  $u, v \in R$  such that  $b = au$  and  $a = bv$ . Thus

$$b = buv \implies b(1 - uv) = 0$$

Since  $R$  is an integral domain, and  $b \neq 0$ , we have  $1 - uv = 0$ , which implies  $uv = 1$ , o.e.,  $u$  is a unit. ■

**Definition 8.10** [PID] If  $R$  is an integral domain in which every ideal is principal, we say that  $R$  is a **principal integral domain**. ■

We claim that for any field  $k$ , the ring of polynomials  $k[x]$  is also a PID.

**Proposition 8.12** Let  $R$  be a commutative ring. For  $\forall d, f \in R[x]$  such that the leading coefficient of  $d$  is a unit in  $R$ , then there exists  $q, r \in R[x]$  such that

$$f = qd + r,$$

with  $\deg r < \deg d$ .

*Proof.* We prove this theorem by induction.

If  $\deg f < \deg d$ , take  $r = f$  and  $q = 0$

Let  $d = \sum_{i=0}^n a_i x^i \in R[x]$  be fixed, where  $a_n$  is a unit of  $R$ . For any given  $f = \sum_{i=0}^m b_i x^i \in R[x]$ ,  $m \geq n$ , suppose the claim holds for any  $f'$  with  $\deg f' < \deg f$ .

Construct  $f' = f - a_n^{-1} b_m x^{m-n} d$ , thus there exists  $q', r' \in R[x]$  with  $\deg r' < \deg d$  such that

$$f - a_n^{-1} b_m x^{m-n} d = q' d + r'$$

which implies

$$f = (q' + a_n^{-1} b_m x^{m-n}) d + r'$$

■

**Theorem 8.4** Let  $k$  be a field, then  $k[x]$  is a PID.

*Proof.* Let  $I$  be an ideal of  $k[x]$ . Let  $d$  be a nonzero polynomial in  $I$  with the least leading degree. The existence of this polynomial is because the leading degree of a polynomial is a non-negative integer. It is clear that  $\langle d \rangle \subseteq I$ . It suffices to show  $I \subseteq \langle d \rangle$ .

For  $\forall f \in I$ , we have  $f = qd + r$  for some  $q, r \in k[x]$  such that  $\deg(r) < \deg(d)$ . Then  $r = f - qd$  lies in  $I$ . Since  $d$  has the least degree, we imply  $r = 0$ . Thus  $f = qd$ , which implies  $f \in \langle d \rangle$ . Thus  $I \subseteq \langle d \rangle$ . ■

## 8.2.2. Quotient Ring

Let  $R$  be a commutative ring. Let  $I$  be an ideal of  $R$ . Define a relation  $\sim$  on  $R$  as follows:

$$a \sim b, \text{ if } b - a \in I$$

**Definition 8.11** [Congruent modulo] If  $a \sim b$ , we say that  $a$  is congruent modulo  $I$  to  $b$ , and write

$$a \equiv b \pmod{I}$$

**Proposition 8.13** Congruence modulo  $I$  is an equivalence relation.

*Proof.*

1.  $a - a = 0 \in I$
2.  $a - b \in I$  implies  $b - a = (-1)(a - b) \in I$
3.  $a - b, b - c \in I$  implies  $(a - b) + (b - c) \in I$

**Definition 8.12** [Residue] Let  $R/I$  be the set of equivalence classes of  $R$  w.r.t. the

relation  $\sim$ . Each element in  $R/I$  has the form

$$\bar{r} = r + I = \{r + a \mid a \in I\}, \quad r \in R$$

We call  $\bar{r}$  as the **residue** of  $r$  in  $R/I$ . Note that  $r \in I$  implies  $\bar{r} = \bar{0}$ . ■

Observe that

$$\begin{aligned} (r + a) + (r' + a') &\in (r + r') + I = \overline{r + r'} \\ (r + a)(r' + a') &\in rr' + I = \overline{rr'} \end{aligned}$$

Thus we define binary operation on  $R/I$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{r} + \bar{r}' &= \overline{r + r'} \\ \bar{r} \cdot \bar{r}' &= \overline{rr'} \end{aligned}$$

**Proposition 8.14** The set  $R/I$  equipped with the addition and multiplication defined above, is a **commutative ring**.

**Proposition 8.15** The mapping  $\pi : R \rightarrow R/I$ , defined by

$$\pi(r) = \bar{r}, \quad \forall r \in R$$

is a surjective ring homomorphism with the kernel  $\ker(\pi) = I$ .

Let  $m$  be a natural number. The set

$$m\mathbb{Z} = \{mn \mid n \in \mathbb{Z}\}$$

is an ideal of  $\mathbb{Z}$ .

**Proposition 8.16** The quotient ring  $\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}$  is isomorphic to  $\mathbb{Z}_m$ .

*Proof.* Define  $r_m$  to be the remainder of the division of  $r$  by  $m$ .

It is clear that  $\bar{r} = r_m$ . We define a mapping  $\phi : \mathbb{Z}_m \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}$ :

$$\phi(r) = \bar{r}, \quad \forall r \in \mathbb{Z}_m$$

We claim it is a homomorphism:

- $\phi(1) = \bar{1} = 1_{\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}}$
- $\phi(r +_m r') = \overline{r +_m r'} = \overline{(r + r')_m} = \overline{r + r'} = \bar{r} + \bar{r'} = \phi(r) + \phi(r')$
- $\phi(r \cdot_m r') = \phi(r)\phi(r')$

Then we show that  $\phi$  is bijective:

For any  $\bar{r}$  in  $\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}$ , we have  $\phi(r_m) = \bar{r}$

Suppose  $\phi(r) = \bar{r} = 0$  in  $\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}$ , then  $r \in m\mathbb{Z}$ , which implies  $r = 0$ .

■

**Proposition 8.17** Let  $\phi : R \rightarrow R'$  be a ring homomorphism, then the image of  $\phi$

$$\text{im}\phi = \{r' \in R' \mid r' = \phi(r) \text{ for some } r \in R\}$$

is a ring.

**Theorem 8.5 — First Isomorphism Theorem.** Let  $R$  be a commutative ring, let  $\phi : R \rightarrow R'$  be a ring homomorphism, then

$$R/\ker\phi \cong \text{im}\phi$$

**Corollary 8.1** If the ring homomorphism is surjective,  $\phi : R \rightarrow R'$ , then

$$R' \cong R/\ker\phi$$

■ **Example 8.7** For the map  $\phi : \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_m$  defined by  $\phi(n) = n_m$  for  $\forall n \in \mathbb{Z}$ , it is clear

that  $\phi$  is a surjective ring homomorphism, and  $\ker\phi = m\mathbb{Z}$ . Thus

$$\mathbb{Z}_m \cong \mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}$$

question

■ **Example 8.8** The ring  $\mathbb{Z}[i]/(1+3i)$  is isomorphic to  $\mathbb{Z}/10\mathbb{Z}$ .

Define a map  $\phi : \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}[i]/(1+3i)$ :

$$\phi(n) = \bar{n}$$

Show that  $\ker\phi = 10\mathbb{Z}$ , and therefore

$$\mathbb{Z}/10\mathbb{Z} \cong \mathbb{Z}/10\mathbb{Z}$$

■ **Example 8.9** The rings  $\mathbb{R}[x]/(x^2+1)$  and  $\mathbb{C}$  are isomorphic.

Define a map from  $\mathbb{R}[x]$  to  $\mathbb{C}$ :

$$\phi\left(\sum_{k=0}^n a_k x^k\right) = \sum_{k=0}^n a_k i^k$$

Question: PID of  $\mathbb{R}[x]$  implies  $\ker\phi = \langle p \rangle$  for some  $p \in \mathbb{R}[x]$ . Then show that  $\ker\phi = \langle x^2 + 1 \rangle$ .

By isomorphism theorem,  $\mathbb{R}[x]/(x^2+1) \cong \mathbb{C}$ .



