1. Consider the veracity or falsehood of each of the following statements. For bonus, argue for those that you believe are true while providing a counterexample for those that you believe are false.

① There is a field with 16 elements.

② In $\mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{7}]$, $\begin{pmatrix} 9 & 4 \\ 28 & 9 \end{pmatrix}$ is a prime.

③ The polynomial $x^3 + ax^2 + bx + c \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$ where a is odd, b is even and c is odd, is always irreducible over $\mathbb{Z}$.

④ $\mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{-5}]$ is a UFD.

⑤ In $\mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{7}]$, $\begin{pmatrix} 8 & 3 \\ 21 & 8 \end{pmatrix}$ is a unit.

Solution.

① True.

Example. Let $F = \mathbb{Z}_2[x]/(x^4 + x + 1)$. That is, F consists of the polynomials in $\mathbb{Z}_2[x]$ mod $x^4 + x + 1$. Thus F is the set of all polynomials of degree less than 4 with coefficients in $\mathbb{Z}_2[x]$, so that $|F| = 16$. Addition and multiplication in F are carried out mod $(x^4 + x + 1)$. It is clear that F is a commutative ring. Since

$$\begin{aligned} 1 \cdot 1 &= 1 \\ x(x^3+1) &= 1 \\ (x+1)(x^3+x^2+x) &= 1 \\ x^2(x^3+x^2+1) &= 1 \\ (x^2+1)(x^3+x+1) &= 1 \\ (x^2+x)(x^2+x+1) &= 1 \\ x^3(x^3+x^2+x+1) &= 1 \\ (x^3+x^2)(x^3+x) &= 1, \end{aligned}$$

it follows that every nonzero element of F has a multiplicative inverse, so that F is a field.

② True.

Proof. Let $A = \begin{pmatrix} 9 & 4 \\ 28 & 9 \end{pmatrix}$. Suppose $A = BC$. Then it follows that

$$-31 = \det(A) = \det(B)\det(C),$$

so that one of B and C has determinant ± 1. Assume without loss of generality that $\det(C) = \pm 1$. It follows that C is invertible; thus $AC^{-1} = B$. That is $A \mid B$, so we can conclude that A is prime. □

(3) True.

Proof. Let $p(x) = x^3 + ax^2 + bx + c \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$, where b is even and a and c are odd. Suppose to the contrary that $p(x)$ is not irreducible. Then it follows that $p(x)$ must have a root, say $x_0 \in \mathbb{Z}$. So $0 = p(x_0) = {x_0}^3 + a{x_0}^2 + bx_0 + c$. That is, $x_0(-{x_0}^2 - ax_0 - b) = c$. This says that x_0 is a divisor of c. Then since c is odd, it must be the case that x_0 is also odd. But then we must have that ${x_0}^3$ is odd, $a{x_0}^2$ is odd, and bx_0 is even, so that ${x_0}^3 + a{x_0}^2 + bx_0 + c$ is odd, a contradiction since ${x_0}^3 + a{x_0}^2 + bx_0 + c = 0$ is even. Thus $p(x)$ is irreducible. □

(4) True.

Proof. First we want to show that the elements

$$A = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 \end{pmatrix}, B = \begin{pmatrix} 3 & 0 \\ 0 & 3 \end{pmatrix}, C = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ -5 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \text{ and } D = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -1 \\ 5 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

are irreducible in $\mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{-5}]$. We shall only show that A and C are irreducible since the arguments for B and D are similar. Suppose $A = A_1A_2$. Then it follows that

$$4 = \det(A) = \det(A_1)\det(A_2).$$

Observe that since we are in $\mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{-5}]$, it is impossible for the determinant of any matrix to be 2. Moreover, since the determinant of every matrix is nonnegative, we must have that either A_1 or A_2 has determinant of 1, so that one of A_1 and A_2 is a unit. Thus A is irreducible. Now suppose $C = C_1C_2$. Then it follows that

$$6 = \det(C) = \det(C_1)\det(C_2).$$

No matrix has determinat 2 or 3 in $\mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{-5}]$. Thus one of C_1 or C_2 must be a unit, and it follows that C is irreducible. Since the units in $\mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{-5}]$ are ± 1, it follows that none of the irreducibles above are associates. It follows immediately that $\mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{-5}]$ is not a UFD because we have the following two distinct factorizations into irreducibles:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 6 & 0 \\ 0 & 6 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 3 & 0 \\ 0 & 3 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ -5 & 1 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & -1 \\ 5 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

□

(5) True. Since the determinant of the matrix in question is 1, it is a unit.

2. In a previous homework we encountered the integral domain R of 2×2 matrices of the form $A = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ -b & a-b \end{pmatrix}$ where $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$. Do the following:

(1) Prove that no element of R can have a negative determinant.

(2) Find a nontrivial unit.

(3) Find all units. Give an argument for your answer.

4. Find an element whose determinant is a prime.
5. Decide whether $\begin{pmatrix} 3 & 0 \\ 0 & 3 \end{pmatrix}$ is irreducible or not. If not factor it into irreducibles.
6. Do the same for $\begin{pmatrix} 5 & 0 \\ 0 & 5 \end{pmatrix}$.
7. Do the same for $\begin{pmatrix} 34 & 41 \\ -41 & -7 \end{pmatrix}$.
8. Show that the element $A = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$ is a prime by showing that if $MN \equiv 0 \bmod A$, then either $M \equiv 0 \bmod A$ or $N \equiv 0 \bmod A$.

Solution.

1. **Proof.** Let $A = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ -b & a-b \end{pmatrix} \in R$. Since

$$\det(A) = a(a-b) + b^2 = \left(a - \frac{b}{2}\right)^2 + \frac{3}{4}b^2 \geq 0,$$

it follows that no element of R can have a negative determinant. $\square$

2. A nontrivial unit in R is $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ -1 & 1-1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$.

3. Let $A = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ -b & a-b \end{pmatrix} \in R$ be a unit. It follows by 1 that

$$1 = \det(A) = a^2 + b^2 - ab;$$

thus we want integers a and b such that $a^2 + b^2 - ab = 1$. By completing the square we get that

$$a^2 + b^2 - ab = 1 \text{ iff } a = \frac{b}{2} \pm \sqrt{\frac{4 - 3b^2}{4}}.$$

For the discrimant to be positive, we must have that $b = 0$ or $|b| = 1$. It follows that (a, b) is an integral solution of $a^2 + b^2 - ab = 1$ iff

$$(a, b) \in \{(-1, 0), (1, 0), (0, 1), (1, 1), (0, -1), (-1, -1)\}.$$

Thus the group of units is

$$\left\{ I, -I, \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & -1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} -1 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \right\}.$$

4. The element is $\begin{pmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ -1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ has determinant 3.

(5) The matrix $\begin{pmatrix} 3 & 0 \\ 0 & 3 \end{pmatrix}$ is not irreducible since we have the following factorization into irredcibles:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 3 & 0 \\ 0 & 3 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} -1 & -2 \\ 2 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ -2 & -1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

The factors in the factorization above are irreducible since their determinants are prime.

(6) Let $B = \begin{pmatrix} 5 & 0 \\ 0 & 5 \end{pmatrix}$. Claim that B is irreducible.

Proof. Suppose $B = XY$. Then it follows that

$$25 = \det(B) = \det(X)\det(Y).$$

Now suppose that $\det(X) = 5$. Then if we have that $X = \begin{pmatrix} x & y \\ -y & x-y \end{pmatrix}$, it follows that $x^2 - xy + y^2 = 5$. That is

$$x = \frac{y}{2} \pm \sqrt{\frac{20 - 3y^2}{4}}.$$

By observing the discrimant, we see that y can only take on values 0, 1, and 2. But x is not an integer for any of these values. Thus no matrix in R exists with determinant 5. It follows that one of X and Y must have determinant 1, so that this matrix is a unit; thus B is irreducible in R. $\square$

(7) The matrix $\begin{pmatrix} 34 & 41 \\ -41 & -7 \end{pmatrix}$ is not irreducible since we have the following factorization into irredcibles:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 34 & 41 \\ -41 & -7 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ -1 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 4 & 1 \\ -1 & 3 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 7 & 3 \\ -3 & 4 \end{pmatrix}.$$

The factors in the factorization above are irreducible since their determinants are prime.

3. **On Nilpotent Elements.**

(1) Let R be a ring. An element $m \in R$ is called nilpotent if $m^k = 0$ for some positive integer k. Let $r = 1 + m + m^2 + \cdots + m^{k-1}$. Show r is invertible by finding its inverse.

(2) Exemplify (1) by using the matrix $\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$.

Solution.

(1) a

BONUS. Consider the integral domain $R = \mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{3}]$. Let $A = \begin{pmatrix} 5 & 3 \\ 9 & 5 \end{pmatrix}$. Decide if (1)-(4) are irreducible or not. Argue your case.

(1) A.

(2) $\begin{pmatrix} 19 & 11 \\ 33 & 19 \end{pmatrix}$.

(3) $\begin{pmatrix} 34 & 20 \\ 60 & 34 \end{pmatrix}$.

(4) $\begin{pmatrix} 362 & 209 \\ 627 & 362 \end{pmatrix}$.

(5) Factor $\begin{pmatrix} 69 & 0 \\ 0 & 69 \end{pmatrix}$ into irreducibles.

(6) Show that A is prime by showing that R_A is a field. **Hint.** Show that if $M \in R$ has even determinant, then $A \mid M$, and if M has odd determinant, then $A \mid (M - I)$.

(7) Find a nontrivial common divisor of $\begin{pmatrix} 89 & 53 \\ 159 & 89 \end{pmatrix}$ and $\begin{pmatrix} 86 & 48 \\ 144 & 86 \end{pmatrix}$, and show why it is a common divisor.

(8) Find the greatest common divisor of $\begin{pmatrix} 89 & 53 \\ 159 & 89 \end{pmatrix}$ and $\begin{pmatrix} 86 & 48 \\ 144 & 86 \end{pmatrix}$, and give reasons.

(9) Find the lcm of $\begin{pmatrix} 89 & 53 \\ 159 & 89 \end{pmatrix}$ and $\begin{pmatrix} 86 & 48 \\ 144 & 86 \end{pmatrix}$.

More Bonus. Argue every element is a product of irreducibles in R.

Hard Bonus. Argue every irreducible is prime.

Solution.

(1)