



Rings and Fields

PMATH 334



Tomáš Vávra

Preface

Disclaimer Much of the information on this set of notes is transcribed directly/indirectly from the lectures of PMATH 334 during Winter 2022 as well as other related resources. I do not make any warranties about the completeness, reliability and accuracy of this set of notes. Use at your own risk.

For the table of contents, I am most likely following Dummit, Foote: *Abstract algebra*.

For any questions, send me an email via <https://notes.sibeliusp.com/contact>.

You can find my notes for other courses on <https://notes.sibeliusp.com/>.

Sibeliuss Peng

Contents

Preface	1
1 Introduction & Motivation	3
1.1 Fermat's Last Theorem	3
1.2 Straightedge and compass construction	3
2 An introduction to Rings	5
2.1 Definitions and basic properties	5
2.2 Zero divisor and integral domain	6
2.3 Field	7
2.4 Subring	8
2.5 Unit	8
3 Ring Homomorphisms	10
3.1 Ideals & Quotient rings	11
3.2 Isomorphism theorems	13
4 More on Ideals	15
4.1 Maximal ideals	17
4.2 Maximal ideals and Zorn's Lemma	18
5 Polynomial rings	20
5.1 How to make new rings from old rings? yo~hu~	20
5.2 Basic Definitions and Examples	20
5.3 Rings of fractions	21
6 Chinese Remainder Theorem	23

Introduction & Motivation

1.1 Fermat's Last Theorem

Fermat's Last Theorem

The equation $x^m + y^m = z^m$ has no non-trivial solutions in integers for $m \geq 3$.

For example, $(1, 0, 1)$, $(-1, 0, 1)$ for m even, are trivial solutions.

In 1897, Gabriel Lamé announced that he has a proof. First he assumed that m is a prime. He writes

$$z^p = x^p + y^p = (x + y)(x + \zeta_p y)(x + \zeta_p^2 y) \cdots (x + \zeta_p^{p-1} y)$$

where $\zeta_p = \cos(\frac{2\pi}{p}) + i \sin(\frac{2\pi}{p})$. Consider the ring

$$\mathbb{Z}[\zeta_p] = \{a_1 + a_2 \zeta_p + a_3 \zeta_p^2 + \cdots + a_{p-2} \zeta_p^{p-2} : a_i \in \mathbb{Z}\}$$

which is the smallest ring containing \mathbb{Z} and ζ_p .

Then the next step is to show that $(x + \zeta_p^j y)$'s are coprime in $\mathbb{Z}[\zeta_p]$. Let q_i 's be primes.

$$\prod_i q_i^{p\alpha_i} = z^p = (x + y)(x + \zeta_p y) \cdots (x + \zeta_p^{p-1} y)$$

If $(x + \zeta_p^j y)$'s are coprime in $\mathbb{Z}[\zeta_p]$, then $(x + \zeta_p^j y) = (\cdots)^p$ is of p -th power (*). But this is wrong if the factorization is non-unique. However, we have $\mathbb{Z}[\zeta_p]$ can be a unique factorization domain (UFD). This means (*) works. Kummer salvages the argument for approximately (conjecturally) 60% of prime exponents. And these primes are called **regular primes**.

1.2 Straightedge and compass construction

We are given a length 1 straightedge ruler, and a compass. With these, we can

- connect two points with a straightedge,
- draw a circle, centered at A , and going through B ,
- draw intersections of two line segments, circle & line, two circles.

What lengths are constructible? where length means distance between two points. We can do $+$, $-$, \times , \div , $\sqrt{}$. Then we can do field extensions:

$$\mathbb{Q} \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{2}) \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{2}, \sqrt{3}) \rightarrow \dots$$

Is trisection of an angle doable? No, **not possible**.

Possible to **double the cube**, **square the circle** of the same area?

What regular m -gons are constructible? This is equivalent to the question: is $\cos(\frac{2\pi}{m}) + i \sin(\frac{2\pi}{m})$ constructible?

These can be answered via field extensions.

Other applications including **coding theory**.

An introduction to Rings

2.1 Definitions and basic properties

ring

A ring is a set with two binary operations $+$, \times , such that

1. $(R, +)$ is an abelian group.
 - $+$ is commutative and associative.
 - $\exists 0 \in R, 0 + a = a + 0 = a$ for all $a \in R$.
 - $\forall a \in R, \exists (-a) \in R, a + (-a) = (-a) + a = 0$.
2. \times is associative $(a \times b) \times c = a \times (b \times c)$.
3. distributive laws hold: $(a + b) \times c = (a \times c) + (b \times c)$.

The ring is called commutative if \times is commutative. The ring is said to have an identity if $\exists 1 \in R, 1 \times a = a \times 1 = a$, for all $a \in R$, and this does not require the existence of inverse.

For simplicity, we write

$$ab := a \times b, \quad b - a = b + (-a)$$

Example:

\mathbb{Z} is a commutative ring with identity.

Trivial rings: Let $(R, +)$ be an abelian group. We define $a \times b = 0$ for all $a, b \in R$. The result is a commutative ring with “trivial structure”.

$R = \{0\}$ is a zero ring. $0 = 1$ in this case, and it is the only such ring. It leads to assumption $0 \neq 1$, saying $R \neq \{0\}$.

$\mathbb{Q}, \mathbb{R}, \mathbb{C}$ are commutative rings with identity.

$\mathbb{Z}_m = \{0, 1, \dots, m-1\}$ with $+, \times \bmod m$ is a ring with identity, and commutative.

The real quaternions: $\{a + bi + cj + dk : a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{R}\}$. Addition is “component-wise”. And the multiplication follows

$$i^2 = j^2 = k^2 = -1, \quad ij = -ji = k, \quad jk = -kj = i, \quad ki = -ik = j$$

And this is non-commutative ring, with identity 1.

Let X be a set, A be a ring. Consider the set $F = \{f : X \rightarrow A\}$. Define

$$(f + g)(x) = f(x) + g(x), \quad (f \times g)(x) = f(x) \times g(x)$$

F commutative & having identity is inherited from the ring A .

$M_m(\mathbb{Z})$ is the ring of square $m \times m$ matrices with coefficients in \mathbb{Z} . It is non-commutative ring with identity.

A function $f : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is said to have compact support, if $\exists a, b \in \mathbb{R}$, $f(x) = 0$ for $x \notin [a, b]$.
 $R = \{f : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R} : f \text{ has compact support}\}$ is a commutative ring, without identity.

Proposition 2.1

Let R be a ring. Then

1. $0a = a0$ for all $a \in R$.
2. $(-a)b = a(-b) = -(ab)$ for all $a, b \in R$.
3. $(-a)(-b) = ab$ for all $a, b \in R$.
4. If R has an identity 1, then it is unique, and $(-a) = (-1)a$.

Proof:

We see that

$$\begin{aligned} 0a &= (0 + 0)a = 0a + 0a \\ 0a - 0a &= (0a + 0a) - 0a = 0a + (0a - 0a) \\ 0a &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

We also see that

$$(-a)b + ab = ((-a) + a)b = 0b = 0$$

□

We would like to be able to cancel with respect to x : $ab = ac$ then $b = c$. However, this is not true in general.

Example:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

However,

$$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \neq \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

2.2 Zero divisor and integral domain

zero divisor

A nonzero element $a \in R$ is called a zero divisor, if there exists $b \in R$ and $b \neq 0$, such that $ab = 0$ or $ba = 0$.

integral domain

A commutative ring with identity, $1 \neq 0$, is called an integral domain, if it contains no zero divisor.

Proposition 2.2

Let R be a ring. Assume that $a, b, c \in R$, and a is not a zero divisor. If $ab = ac$, then either $a = 0$ or $b = c$ (i.e., we can multiplicatively cancel).

Proof:

Observe that

$$ab = ac$$

$$ab - ac = 0$$

$$a(b - c) = 0$$

As a is not zero divisor, then either $a = 0$ or $b - c = 0$. □

If zero divisors exist, then cancellation does not hold:

$$ab = 0 = a \cdot 0 \not\Rightarrow b = 0$$

Remark:

In integral domains, $ab = 0 \implies a = 0$ or $b = 0$.

2.3 Field**division ring**

A ring with identity 1 , $1 \neq 0$, is called a division ring, if every nonzero element has a multiplicative inverse, i.e., for all $a \in R, a \neq 0$, there exists $b \in R$, such that $ab = ba = 1$.

Consider an example $ab = 1$ existing and $ba = 1$ not existing.

Example:

Real sequences (x_1, x_2, \dots) . Ring of operators on the sequences, \times is composition. Take

$$D : (x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots) \mapsto (x_2, x_3, x_4, \dots)$$

$$S : (x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots) \mapsto (0, x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots)$$

Then

$$D(S(x_1, x_2, \dots)) = Id(x_1, x_2, \dots)$$

but $S \circ D \neq Id$.

field

A commutative division ring is called a field.

Example:

$\mathbb{Q}, \mathbb{R}, \mathbb{C}$ are fields. Quaternions are “only” a division ring because non-commutative. \mathbb{Z}_p is a field for p prime.

Proposition 2.3

Any finite integral domain is a field.

\mathbb{Z} is an integral domain, but far from a field.

Proof:

Check Corollary 10.13 of PMATH 347. □

2.4 Subring

subring

Let R be a ring. A nonzero subset $S \subseteq R$ is called a subring of R , if it is a ring with the operations from $(R, +, \times)$ restricted to S .

That means: $S \neq \emptyset$. $x + (-y) \in S, \forall x, y \in S$. $xy \in S, \forall x, y \in S$.

Example:

$\mathbb{Z}_2 \subseteq \mathbb{Z}$, but \mathbb{Z}_2 is not a subring of \mathbb{Z} .

$2\mathbb{Z} = \{2 \cdot z : z \in \mathbb{Z}\}$ (ring has no identity) is a subring of \mathbb{Z} (ring has identity).

Ring of matrices $M_2(\mathbb{R})$ (1 is identity matrix) has a subring $S = \left\{ \begin{pmatrix} a & a \\ a & a \end{pmatrix} : a \in \mathbb{R} \right\}$ and

$\begin{pmatrix} 1/2 & 1/2 \\ 1/2 & 1/2 \end{pmatrix}$ is the identity in S .

2.5 Unit

unit

Assume that R is a ring with an identity $1 \neq 0$. A $a \in R$ is called a unit, if there exists $b \in R$ such that $ab = ba = 1$. Set of units of R is denoted by R^\times .

Example:

$$\mathbb{Z}^\times = \{\pm 1\}$$

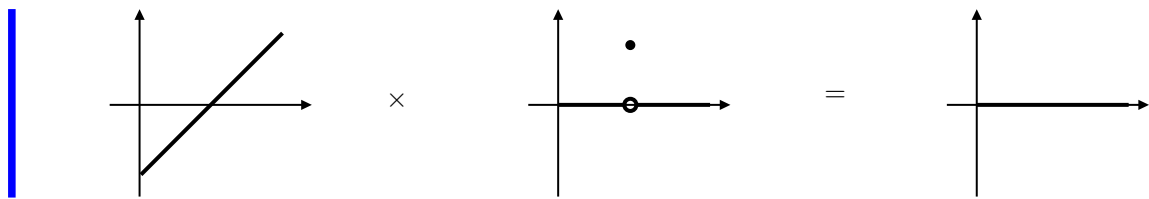
$$\mathbb{Z}_m^\times = \{a \in \mathbb{Z}_m : \gcd(a, m) = 1\}, \mathbb{Z}_p^\times = \mathbb{Z}_p \setminus \{0\} \text{ for } p \text{ prime.}$$

Consider ring R of $[0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, where $(f \times g)(x) = f(x) \cdot g(x)$, $1_R = 1(x)$. Units are the functions such that $f(x) \neq 0$ for $\forall x \in [0, 1]$. Then $f(x)^{-1} = \frac{1}{f(x)}$. All non-units are zero divisors. If $g(y) = 0$,

$$\text{then } h(x) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } x = y \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \text{ gives } (g \times h) = 0(x) = 0_R.$$

Ring of all continuous functions $[0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is a subring of the previous ring. Units as before, because $1/f$ exists and is continuous.

Consider $f(x) = x - 1/2$.



Ring Homomorphisms

ring homomorphism

Let R, S be rings.

1. A ring homomorphism is $\phi : R \rightarrow S$, such that
 - (a) $\phi(a + b) = \phi(a) + \phi(b)$, for all $a, b \in R$.
 - (b) $\phi(ab) = \phi(a)\phi(b)$, for all $a, b \in R$.
2. The kernel of ϕ , $\ker \phi = \{a \in R : \phi(a) = 0_S\}$.
3. A bijective homomorphism is called isomorphism.

Remark:

Isomorphism means “same ring”, denote $R \cong S$.

Example:

$\{0, 1\} = \mathbb{Z}_2 = R, S = \{a, b\}$ with $a + a = a, a + b = b, \dots$. Then $R \cong S$.

Example:

$\mathbb{Q} = \{\frac{a}{b} : a, b \in \mathbb{Z}\}$ with cancellation $\frac{a}{b} = \frac{ca}{cb}$

Can we say $\mathbb{Z} \subseteq \mathbb{Q}$? not in the purest sense. \mathbb{Z} corresponds to $\{\frac{a}{1} : a \in \mathbb{Z}\}$.

\mathbb{Q} contains an isomorphic copy of \mathbb{Z} . $S \subseteq \mathbb{Q}$ such that $S \cong \mathbb{Z}$.

Example:

$\phi : \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_2$. $\phi(2k) = 0, \phi(2k + 1) = 1$. Then

$$\begin{aligned}
 \ker \phi &= 2\mathbb{Z} \\
 \phi^{-1}(0) &= 2\mathbb{Z} = \ker \phi \\
 \phi^{-1}(1) &= 1 + 2\mathbb{Z} \\
 &= 1 + \ker \phi \\
 &= 3 + \ker \phi
 \end{aligned}$$

Example:

$\phi : \mathbb{Z}[x] \rightarrow \mathbb{Z} : p(x) \mapsto p(0)$. Then

$$\begin{aligned}\ker \phi &= \phi^{-1}(0) = \{a_d x^d + a_{d-1} x^{d-1} + \cdots + a_1 x + 0 : a_i \in \mathbb{Z}\} \\ &= x\mathbb{Z}[x] = \{x \cdot p(x) : p(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]\}\end{aligned}$$

and

$$\phi^{-1}(a) = x\mathbb{Z}[x] + ax^0 = \ker \phi + ax^0$$

Example:

$\phi : \mathbb{Z}[x] \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_2 : p(x) \mapsto p(0) \bmod 2$. Then

$$\ker \phi = \phi^{-1}(0) = x\mathbb{Z}[x] + 2\mathbb{Z}$$

$$\phi^{-1}(1) = 1 + \ker \phi$$

Example:

$\phi : \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{R} : a \mapsto a$, then $\ker \phi = \{0_{\mathbb{R}}\}$.

Proposition 3.1

Let R, S be rings, $\phi : R \rightarrow S$ be homomorphism.

1. The image of ϕ , $(\text{Im}(\phi))$, or $\phi(R)$ is a subring of S .
2. $\ker \phi$ is a subring of R . Moreover, $\forall r \in R, \forall \alpha \in \ker \phi, r\alpha \in \ker \phi, \alpha \in \ker \phi$. (That is $\ker \phi$ is closed under multiplication by the elements from R)

Proof:

1. If $a, b \in \phi(R)$, then

$$a - b = \phi(x_a) - \phi(x_b) = \phi(x_a - x_b) = \phi(x_{a-b}) \in \phi(R)$$

2. $\phi(r\alpha) = \phi(r) \cdot \phi(\alpha) = \phi(r) \cdot 0 = 0$

□

Can we get a ring structure on $a + \ker \phi$? There is a factor ring $R / \ker \phi$. For example, $\mathbb{Z} / 2\mathbb{Z} \cong \mathbb{Z}_2$.

3.1 Ideals & Quotient rings

ideal

Let R be a ring, let $I \subseteq R$ be a subring, let $r \in R$.

1. I is called a left ideal, if $rI \subseteq I$ where $rI = \{ri : i \in I\}$.
2. I is called a right ideal, if $Ir \subseteq I$.
3. I is an ideal, if it is left & right ideal (two sided ideal).

Ideal Test

Check K is an ideal of R :

- $k - j \in K$ for all $j, k \in K$; and
- $rk, kr \in K$ for all $k \in K, r \in R$.

It is a quick generalization of previous definition. Reference: [Laurent W. Marcoux's 334 notes](#).

additive quotient

Let $I \subseteq R$ be an ideal. The additive quotient is defined as $R/I = \{a + I : a \in R\}$.

Example:

$\mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z} = \{\{\dots, -6, 3, 0, 3, 6, \dots\}, \{\dots, -5, -2, 1, 4, \dots\}, \{\dots, -4, -1, 2, 5, 8, \dots\}\}$. Additive group.

Let $I = 3\mathbb{Z}$. Then $a + I$ are called (additive) cosets.

Proposition 3.2

Let R be a ring, I an ideal of R , then R/I is a ring with the operations

$$(a + I) +_{R/I} (b + I) =: (a +_R b) + I$$

$$(a + I) \times_{R/I} (b + I) = (a \times_R b) + I$$

The ring properties R/I follow from R being a ring.

quotient ring

R/I is called the quotient ring of R by I .

Remark:

If I is not an ideal, then the definition of the operations on R/I is not well defined.

Example:

Let R be commutative ring with identity $1 \neq 0$, $m \geq 2$. Let $M_m(R)$ be ring of square matrices with coefficients in R .

Denote

$$L_j(R) = \{A \in M_m(R) \mid A_{ik} = 0, \forall i \in [n], k \in [m] \setminus \{j\}\}$$

which means only the j -th column can have non-zero entries. Then $L_j(R)$ is a left ideal in $M_m(R)$. This can be verified by the matrix multiplication. $L_j(R)$ is not a right ideal, i.e., $L_j(R) \cdot M \not\subseteq L_j(R)$ for some $M \in M_m(R)$.

Analogously, a right ideal can be obtained by taking

$$T_i(R) = \left\{ A \in M_m(R) \mid A_{kj} = 0, \forall k \in [n] \setminus \{i\}, j \in [m] \right\}$$

Example:

Let $R = \mathbb{Z}[x]$ and $I = x^2\mathbb{Z}[x]$.

Then $R/I = \{a + bx + p(x) : a, b \in \mathbb{Z}, p(x) \in I\}$.

For $a \in R/I$, \bar{a} denotes $a + I$.

3.2 Isomorphism theorems

Lemma 3.3

Let I be an ideal in R , then $a + I = b + I$ ($\bar{a} = \bar{b}$) if and only if $b - a \in I$. Namely, every member of the coset can be the representative.

Theorem 3.4: First isomorphism theorem

If $\phi : R \rightarrow S$ is a ring homomorphism, then $\ker \phi$ is an ideal in R , $\text{Im } \phi$ is a subring of S , and $R / \ker \phi \cong \text{Im } \phi$.

Proof:

Theorem 4.2 of <http://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/~lwmarcou/notes/pmath334.pdf>

Consider $\tau : R / \ker \phi \rightarrow \phi(R) : r + \ker \phi \mapsto \phi(r)$. □

Example:

$\mathbb{Z}[x] / 2\mathbb{Z}[x] \cong \mathbb{Z}_2[x]$. We can define $\phi : p(x) \mapsto p(x) \pmod{2}$.

Theorem 3.5

For any ideal $I \subseteq R$, the map $R \rightarrow R/I$ defined by $\pi : r \mapsto r + I$ is a surjective ring homomorphism with kernel I . It is called the natural projection of R onto R/I . Thus every ideal is a kernel of some homomorphism.

Proof:

Prove surjectivity is as before in first iso theorem. To prove homomorphism, both \times and $+$. Now prove $\ker \pi$.

- Let $i \in I$, then $\pi(i) = i + I = I = 0_{R/I}$.
- Let $a \in R/I$, then $\pi(a) = a + I$, but $a \notin I$. Thus by lemma, $a + I \neq I = 0 + I$. □

Theorem 3.6: Second isomorphism theorem

Let A be a subring of R , B an ideal of R . Then $A + B = \{a + b : a \in A, b \in B\}$ is a subring of R . $A \cap B$ is an ideal of R and $(A + B)/B \cong A / A \cap B$.

Proof:

Consider the map $\phi : A \rightarrow (A + B)/B : a \mapsto a + B$. Then apply first isomorphism theorem.

Or check Theorem 4.3 of <http://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/~lwmarcou/notes/pmath334.pdf>. □

Remark:

$$(A + B)/B = \{a + b + B : a \in A, b \in B\} = \{a + B : a \in A\} \stackrel{?}{=} A/B$$

This reduction can't happen because B is not necessarily an ideal of A .

Example:

Let $R = \mathbb{Z}$, then $a\mathbb{Z} + b\mathbb{Z} = \gcd(a, b) \cdot \mathbb{Z}$. $a\mathbb{Z} \cap b\mathbb{Z} = \text{lcm}(a, b) \cdot \mathbb{Z}$. Then by second iso thm

$$\frac{\gcd(a, b)\mathbb{Z}}{b\mathbb{Z}} \cong \frac{a\mathbb{Z}}{\text{lcm}(a, b)\mathbb{Z}}$$

Lemma 3.7

If $m \mid n$, then $m\mathbb{Z}$ is an ideal of $m\mathbb{Z}$, and $|m\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}| = \frac{n}{m}$.

The coset representative in $(m\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$ are $\{0, m, 2m, \dots, (\frac{n}{m} - 1)m\}$. Applying to $A + B/B \cong A/A \cap B$, we have

$$\frac{b}{\gcd(a, b)} = \frac{\text{lcm}(a, b)}{a} \implies ab = \text{lcm}(a, b) \cdot \gcd(a, b)$$

Theorem 3.8: Third isomorphism theorem

Let $I \subseteq J$ be ideals in R . Then J/I is an ideal in R/I and $(R/I)/(J/I) \cong R/J$.

Proof:

Define $\phi : R/I \rightarrow R/J : a + I \mapsto a + J$. Then show that $\ker \phi = J/I$ and then use first isomorphism theorem.

Or check Theorem 4.4 of <http://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/~lwmarcou/notes/pmath334.pdf> □

Example:

$$(\mathbb{Z}/6\mathbb{Z})/(3\mathbb{Z}/6\mathbb{Z}) \cong \mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z} \cong \mathbb{Z}_3.$$

Theorem 3.9: Fourth isomorphism theorem/correspondence theorem

Let R be ring, I ideal in R . The correspondence $A \leftrightarrow A/I$ is an inclusion preserving bijection between the set of subrings (A) of R , $I \subseteq A \subseteq R$, and the set of subrings of R/I . Furthermore, A/I is an ideal in R/I if and only if A is an ideal in R ($I \subseteq A$).

Proof:

No first isomorphism theorem. Expand and verify the definitions. □

The interesting part is: subring of R/I gives subring of R .

More on Ideals

Let $A \subseteq R$ with identity.

(A)

1. (A) = the smallest ideal containing A (in R)

2. Let

$$RA = \left\{ \sum r_i a_i : r_i \in R, a_i \in A \right\}$$

$$AR = \left\{ \sum a_i r_i : r_i \in R, a_i \in A \right\}$$

$$RAR = \left\{ \sum r_i a_i r'_i : r_i, r'_i \in R, a_i \in A \right\}$$

where these are all finite sums.

3. If $A = \{a\}$, then $(A) =: (a)$ is called a principal ideal.

4. If an ideal $I = (A)$ for A finite, we call I finitely generated.

Remark:

$$(A) = \bigcap_{\substack{I \text{ ideal of } R \\ A \subseteq I}} I$$

The intersection is indeed an ideal.

$(A) \subseteq \cap I$ because (A) is the smallest. $\cap I \subseteq (A)$ because it contains $I = (A)$.

Note that $\cup I_\alpha$ is not an ideal in general.

What is (A) ?

Assume R is commutative. Then (A) contains $a \in R$, and also $ra, r \in R, a \in R$, and their sums. This is precisely the definition of RA . Thus $RA \subseteq (A)$.

Note that $1 \in R$. Then $A \subseteq RA$, and RA is an ideal itself. By minimality, $(A) \subseteq RA$.

To conclude, $(A) = RA = AR = RAR$ in the commutative case.

In particular, the principal ideal $(A) = a \cdot R = \{ar : r \in R\}$, because let $A = \{a\}$, we have

$$AR = \left\{ \sum ar_i : r_i \in R \right\} = \left\{ a \left(\sum r_i \right) : r_i \in R \right\}$$

works in commutative rings.

Warning In non-commutative rings, we have $(A) = RAR$, so

$$(a) = RaR \neq \{r_i a r'_i : r_i, r'_i \in R\}$$

Example:

$R = \mathbb{Z}$, the principal ideal (m) is $m\mathbb{Z}$.

Example:

Let $R = \{f : [0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}\}$. Then $I = \{f \in R : f(1/2) = 0\}$ is an ideal. And $I = (g)$ where

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } x = 1/2 \\ 1 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

For $h \in I$, $h = g \cdot h \in (g)$. Note that g is an identity element of I , but not of R .

Example:

$C = \{f : [0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \mid f \text{ is continuous}\}$ is a subring of R . $I = \{f \in C : f(1/2) = 0\}$ is again an ideal. BUT! I is not a principal ideal, I is not even finitely generated (not easily proven).

Note that I here is different from last example, where the instructor made a mistake at first.

Example:

Let $R = \mathbb{Q}[x]$. Consider subring $S = x\mathbb{Q}[x] + \mathbb{Z}$. An ideal $I = x\mathbb{Q}[x]$.

1. $I = (x)$ in R
2. I is an ideal in S where I is not finitely generated

If I is finitely generated in S , then there exists $p_1, \dots, p_k \in I$

$$I = (p_1, \dots, p_k) = \left\{ \sum_{i=1}^k p_i(x) q_i(x) : q_i \in S \right\}$$

As p_i are in ideal $I = x\mathbb{Q}[x]$, p_i don't have constant term. However, this is not possible. Take an element $\frac{a}{b}x \in I$, then

$$\frac{a}{b}x = \sum_{i=1}^k p_i(x) q_i(x)$$

As p_i 's are fixed, one need to find proper q_i 's to make this equation hold. Now consider b to be a prime such that b does not divide the product of denominators of p_i 's, then it's impossible to find any q_i 's to make this equation holds. Therefore I is not a finite generated ideal in S .

Proposition 4.1

Let I be an ideal in R with identity $1 \neq 0$.

1. $I = R$ if and only if I contains a unit.
2. Let R be commutative. Then R is a field if and only if the only ideals in R are 0 and R .

Proof:**Statement 1**

(\Rightarrow) Because $1 \in R = I$, and 1 is a unit.

(\Leftarrow) Let $u \in I$ be a unit. Then $u \cdot u^{-1} = 1 \in I$. Let $r \in I$, as $1 \in I$, then $1 \cdot r \in I$, hence $I = R$.

Statement 2

(\Rightarrow) Let $0 \neq I \subseteq R$ be an ideal. Then it contains a unit. Then by (1), $I = R$.

(\Leftarrow) Take arbitrary $0 \neq r \in R$. The ring (r) can't be zero ideal, hence $(r) = R$. Thus $1 \in (r)$. That means there exists $s \in R$, such that $1 = r \cdot s$. Then $s = r^{-1}$. Hence r is a unit. \square

Corollary 4.2

A nonzero homomorphism from a field to a ring is an injection.

Proof:

Let ϕ be such a homomorphism. $\ker \phi$ is an ideal of the field. This implies $\ker \phi = 0$ (injective homomorphism) or R , the whole field. And the second possibility tells us ϕ is a zero map, which is eliminated by the assumption. \square

4.1 Maximal ideals

maximal ideal

An ideal M in an arbitrary ring R is called a maximal ideal if $M \neq R$ and there is no proper ($\neq R$) ideal I , $M \subseteq I \subseteq R$.

Alternatively, ideal I of a ring R is maximal if the only ideals containing I are I and R .

Theorem 4.3

Assume that R ring is commutative. The ideal M is maximal if and only if R/M is a field.

Proof:

By 4th iso thm, or correspondence theorem, R/M is a field \Leftrightarrow ideals of R/M are zero ideals and $R/M \Leftrightarrow$ only ideals of R containing M are M and $R \Leftrightarrow M$ is maximal. \square

Example:

$p\mathbb{Z}$ is maximal ideal for any p prime.

Theorem 4.4

$p\mathbb{Z}$ is maximal if and only if $\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z}$ is a field.

Example:

$(2, x)$ in $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ is maximal. $\mathbb{Z}[x]/(2, x) \cong \mathbb{Z}_2$ because $(2, x)$ is a kernel of $\phi : p(x) \mapsto p(0) \bmod 2$.

Example:

Let $R = \{f : [0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}\}$ and $M_c = \{f \in R : f(c) = 0\}$. Consider $\phi : R \rightarrow \mathbb{R} : f \mapsto f(c)$. Then $\ker \phi = M_c$. As $\mathbb{R} = \phi(R)$, then $R/M_c \cong \mathbb{R}$ is a field. Hence M_c maximal.

4.2 Maximal ideals and Zorn's Lemma

Consult Section 10.3 of **PMATH 347** if needed.

Is every ideal (proper) contained in some maximal ideal? No. Consider \mathbb{Q} with standard $+$ and $a \times b = 0_+$ for all $a, b \in \mathbb{Q}$. We have ideals

$$\left\{ \frac{a}{2} : a \in \mathbb{Z} \right\} \subseteq \left\{ \frac{a}{4} : a \in \mathbb{Z} \right\} \subseteq \cdots \subseteq \left\{ \frac{a}{2^k} : a \in \mathbb{Z} \right\} \subseteq \cdots$$

These ideals are not contained in a maximal ideal. This happens because there's no identity.

Theorem 4.5

In a ring with an identity, every proper ideal is contained in some maximal ideal.

Wrong idea Given I , then $I \subseteq \bigcup_{\substack{I \subsetneq A \\ A \neq R}} A$. But this is not an ideal. For example, $\mathbb{Z}_6 \subseteq \mathbb{Z}_2 \cup \mathbb{Z}_3$ is not an ideal.

Right idea $I \subseteq \bigcup_{A \in C} A$ for C being a “chain”

$$I \subseteq A_1 \subseteq A_2 \subseteq \cdots \subseteq A_m \subseteq \cdots$$

partial order

A partial order on a set S is a relation on X such that

1. $a \leq a$ for all $a \in S$,
2. If $a \leq b$ and $b \leq a$ then $a = b$ for all $a, b \in S$,
3. If $a \leq b$ and $b \leq c$, then $a \leq c$ for all $a, b, c \in S$.

So set inclusion \subseteq is a partial order.

The ordering does not have to be “linear”: $\text{sth} \leq \text{sth} \leq \text{sth} \leq \cdots$. For sets, we can have

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} & \{a, b\} & \subseteq & \{a, b, d\} & \\ & \swarrow & & \searrow & \\ \{a\} & & & & \{a, b, c, d, e\} \\ & \nwarrow & & \nearrow & \\ & \{a, c\} & \subseteq & \{a, c, e\} & \end{array}$$

A chain C in a partially ordered set (S, \leq) is a subset such that for all $x, y \in C$, $x \leq y$ or $y \leq x$ (i.e., all elements are comparable).

Zorn's Lemma

Let (S, \leq) be a partially ordered set with the property that each chain has an upper bound in S . Then S contains a maximal element.

Theorem 4.6

Let R be a ring with 1. Then every proper ideal I is contained in some maximal ideal.

Proof:

Let $F = \{J : J \text{ is a proper ideal of } R, M \subseteq J\}$. Notice (F, \subseteq) is a poset (partially ordered set). Recall some notations/definitions:

- Chain: subset $G \subseteq F$, s.t. $\forall x, y \in G, x \subseteq y \text{ or } y \subseteq x$ (comparable)
- Upper bound of $G \in F$, $m \in F$, s.t. $\forall g \in G, g \subseteq m$.
- Maximal in F : $m \in F$, s.t. $\forall a \in F, (m \subseteq a) \implies (a = m)$.

Let $C \subseteq F$ be a chain. Put $M := \bigcup_{A \in C} A$. M is an ideal because

1. nonempty: $A \in C, I \subseteq A$, then $I \in M$.
2. Let $a \in A, b \in B$, and $A, B \in C$. WLOG, assume $A \subseteq B$. Then $a, b \in B$, then $a - b \in B$, then $a - b \in M$.
3. $\forall r \in R, a \in M$, we have $a \in A \in C$, then $ra \in A, ra \in M$.

We claim that M is an upper bound of C in F . If $M = R$, then $1 \in A \in C$. But then by proposition, $A = R$. Contradiction.

Then apply Zorn lemma.

Or check proposition 10.8 of **PMATH** 347.

□

Polynomial rings

5.1 How to make new rings from old rings? yo~hu~

I don't want to put this section to the previous chapter. So here it is.

Direct products

Let $(R_i, +_i, \times_i)$ be rings. $R_1 \times R_2$ is a ring with

$$\begin{aligned}(r_1, r_2) \oplus (s_1, s_2) &= (r_1 +_1 s_1, r_2 +_2 s_2) \\ (r_1, r_2) \otimes (s_1, s_2) &= (r_1 \times_1 s_1, r_2 \times_2 s_2)\end{aligned}$$

Then this applies to $\prod_i R_i$ (works for at most countable R_i 's).

Direct sum

For finitely many R_i 's, it is just direct product. For infinitely many R_i 's

$$\bigoplus_{i \in I} R_i = \{(r_1, r_2, r_3, \dots) : r_i \in R_i, \text{ only finitely many } r_i \neq 0\}$$

5.2 Basic Definitions and Examples

Let R be a commutative ring with identity. A polynomial with coefficients in R with undeterminate/-variable x is a **formal** expression

$$p(x) = a^n x^n + a_{n-1} x^{n-1} + \dots + a_1 x + a_0$$

with $a_i \in R, \forall i \in 0, \dots, n$. If $a_m \neq 0$, then $\deg p = n$. If $a_n = 1$, we call $p(x)$ monic.

$R[x] = \{a^n x^n + a_{n-1} x^{n-1} + \dots + a_1 x + a_0 : n \in \mathbb{N}, a_i \in R\}$ with operations

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{i=0}^n a_i x^i + \sum_{i=0}^m b_i x^i &= \sum_{i=0}^{n+m} (a_i + b_i) x^i \\ \left(\sum_{i=0}^n a_i x^i\right) \times \left(\sum_{i=0}^m b_i x^i\right) &= \sum_{k=0}^{n+m} \left(\sum_{i=0}^k a_i b_{k-i}\right) x^k\end{aligned}$$

Observe that R appears in $R[x]$ as constant polynomials. $R[x]$ is commutative ring with identity.

Proposition 5.1

Let R be an integral domain, let $p, q \in R[x]$ be nonzero elements. Then

1. $\deg pq = \deg p + \deg q$
2. the units of $R[x]$ are precisely the units of R .
3. $R[x]$ is an integral domain.

Proof:

$$p(x)q(x) = \underbrace{a_n b_m}_{\neq 0} x^{n+m} + \dots$$

Let $p(x) \in R[x]$ be invertible, then there exists q such that $pq = 1$. By (1), $\deg p = 0$. Thus $\deg q = 0$. p, q are constant polynomials.

$pq = 0$, then $\deg p + \deg q = 0$. Then $\deg p = \deg q = 0$. Then they are all constant polynomials. As R is integral domain, we have $p = q = 0$. \square

Formal power series

Ring of all power series $R[[x]] = \{\sum_{i=0}^{\infty} a_i x^i : a_i \in R\}$ with the same operations defined as polynomial rings.

1. $R[[x]]$ is a commutative ring identity.
2. Units of $R[[x]]$ are $\sum_{i=0}^{\infty} a_i x^i$ with a_0 unit in R .

Laurent series

$$R((x)) = \left\{ \sum_{i=N}^{\infty} a_i x^i : a_i \in R, N \in \mathbb{Z} \right\}$$

5.3 Rings of fractions

Construct \mathbb{Q} from $R = \mathbb{Z}$. Define

$$\mathbb{Q} = \left\{ \frac{p}{q} : p, q \in \mathbb{Z}, q \neq 0 \right\}$$

$\frac{p}{q}$ is a “formal” fraction. ($p \cdot q^{-1}$ does not work). However, $\frac{1}{1}, \frac{2}{2}, \frac{3}{3}$ are distinct formal fractions. We want to have them be in equivalent classes.

We define $\frac{a}{b} \sim \frac{c}{d}$ iff $ad = bc$ (use only the ring operations). Then define \mathbb{Q} be the equivalence classes of \sim . For that, we need to show that \sim is equivalence: reflexive, symmetric, transitive.

We define addition as

$$\frac{a}{b} + \frac{c}{d} = \frac{ad + bc}{bd}$$

is well-defined on equivalence classes. We can obtain $+$ on the equivalence classes through definition of $+$.

We define multiplication as

$$\frac{a}{b} \times \frac{c}{d} = \frac{ac}{bd}$$

is well-defined on equivalence classes.

Then we obtain \mathbb{Q} . Note that the well-definednesses need a proof. See Section 11.1 of [PMATH 347](#).

$\frac{2}{1}, \frac{1}{2} \in \mathbb{Q}$, then $\frac{2}{1} \cdot \frac{1}{2} = \frac{2}{2} \sim \frac{1}{1}$ is an identity. Thus 2 is invertible in \mathbb{Q} . Every integer is a unit in \mathbb{Q} .

If R have zero divisors, $ab = 0$ and $a, b \neq 0$. Then if a invertible: $1 = a^{-1} \cdot a$, then $b = a^{-1}(a \cdot b) = 0$. Contradiction. Thus **zero divisors do not have inverses in any ring**. Now consider

$$a = \frac{a}{1} = \frac{ab}{b} = \frac{0}{b} = 0$$

contradiction to $a \neq 0$. Thus we will avoid zero divisors.

Theorem 5.2

Let R be a commutative ring.

Chinese Remainder Theorem

to be filled later.