18.S34 (FALL 2007)

PROBLEMS ON CONGRUENCES AND DIVISIBILITY

1. (55P) Do there exist $1,000,000$ consecutive integers each of which contains a repeated prime factor?

2. A positive integer n is *powerful* if for every prime p dividing n, we have that p^2 divides n. Show that for any $k \geq 1$ there exist k consecutive integers, none of which is powerful.

3. Show that for any $k \geq 1$ there exist k consecutive positive integers, none of which is a sum of two squares. (You may use the fact that a positive integer n is a sum of two squares if and only if for every prime $p \equiv 3 \pmod{4}$, the largest power of p dividing n is an even power of p.)

4. (56P) Prove that every positive integer has a multiple whose decimal representation involves all ten digits.

5. (66P) Prove that among any ten consecutive integers at least one is relatively prime to each of the others.

6. (70P) Find the length of the longest sequence of equal nonzero digits in which an integral square can terminate (in base 10), and find the smallest square which terminates in such a sequence.

7. (72P) Show that if n is an integer greater than 1, then n does not divide $2^n - 1$.

8. Show that if n is an odd integer greater than 1, then n does not divide $2^n + 2$.

9. (a) (77P) Prove that $\binom{pa}{pb} \equiv \binom{a}{b} \pmod{p}$ for all integers p, a, and b with p a prime, $p > 0$, and $a \geq b \geq 0$.
   (b) (not on Putnam exam) Show in fact that the above congruence holds modulo p^2.
   (c) (not on Putnam exam) Show that if $p \geq 5$, then the above congruence even holds modulo p^3.

10. (82P) Let $n_1, n_2, \ldots, n_s$ be distinct integers such that

$$(n_1 + k)(n_2 + k) \cdots (n_s + k)$$

is an integral multiple of $n_1 n_2 \cdots n_s$ for every integer k. For each of the following assertions, give a proof or a counterexample:

(a) $|n_i| = 1$ for some i.

(b) If further all n_i are positive, then

$$\{n_1, n_2, \ldots, n_s\} = \{1, 2, \ldots, s\}.$$

11. (83P) Let p be in the set $\{3, 5, 7, 11, \ldots\}$ of odd primes, and let

$$F(n) = 1 + 2n + 3n^2 + \cdots + (p-1)n^{p-2}.$$

Prove that if a and b are distinct integers in $\{0, 1, 2, \ldots, p-1\}$ then $F(a)$ and $F(b)$ are not congruent modulo p, that is, $F(a) - F(b)$ is not exactly divisible by p.

12. (85P) Define a sequence $\{a_i\}$ by $a_1 = 3$ and $a_{i+1} = 3^{a_i}$ for $i \geq 1$. Which integers between 00 and 99 inclusive occur as the last two digits in the decimal expansion of infinitely many a_i?

13. (86P) What is the units (i.e., rightmost) digit of

$$\left[\frac{10^{20000}}{10^{100} + 3}\right]?$$

Here $[x]$ is the greatest integer $\leq x$.

14. (91P) Suppose p is an odd prime. Prove that

$$\sum_{j=0}^{p} \binom{p}{j} \binom{p+j}{j} \equiv 2^p + 1 \pmod{p^2}.$$

15. (96P) If p is a prime number greater than 3 and $k = \lfloor 2p/3 \rfloor$, prove that the sum

$$\binom{p}{1} + \binom{p}{2} + \cdots + \binom{p}{k}$$

of binomial coefficients is divisible by p^2.

16. (97P) Prove that for $n \geq 2$,

$$\overbrace{2^{2^{\cdots^{2}}}}^{n \text{ terms}} \equiv \overbrace{2^{2^{\cdots^{2}}}}^{n-1 \text{ terms}} \pmod{n}.$$

17. (99P) The sequence $(a_n)_{n \geq 1}$ is defined by $a_1 = 1$, $a_2 = 2$, $a_3 = 24$, and, for $n \geq 4$,

$$a_n = \frac{6a_{n-1}^2 a_{n-3} - 8a_{n-1}a_{n-2}^2}{a_{n-2}a_{n-3}}.$$

Show that, for all n, a_n is an integer multiple of n.

18. (00P) Prove that the expression

$$\frac{\gcd(m,n)}{n}\binom{n}{m}$$

is an integer for all pairs of integers $n \geq m \geq 1$.

19. (03P) Show that for each positive integer n,

$$n! = \prod_{i=1}^{n} \operatorname{lcm}\{1, 2, \ldots, \lfloor n/i \rfloor\}.$$

(Here lcm denotes the least common multiple, and $\lfloor x \rfloor$ denotes the greatest integer $\leq x$.)

20. (04P) Define a sequence $\{u_n\}_{n=0}^{\infty}$ by $u_0 = u_1 = u_2 = 1$, and thereafter by the condition that

$$\det\begin{pmatrix} u_n & u_{n+1} \\ u_{n+2} & u_{n+3} \end{pmatrix} = n!$$

for all $n \geq 0$. Show that u_n is an integer for all n. (By convention, $0! = 1$.)

21. How many coefficients of the polynomial

$$P_n(x_1, \ldots, x_n) = \prod_{1 \leq i < j \leq n} (x_i + x_j)$$

are odd?

22. Define $a_0 = a_1 = a_2 = a_3 = 1$,

$$a_{n+4}a_n = a_{n+3}a_{n+1} + a_{n+2}^2, \quad n \geq 0.$$

Is a_n is an integer for all $n \geq 0$?

23. Define $a_0 = a_1 = 1$ and

$$a_n = \frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=0}^{n-1} a_i^2, \quad n > 1.$$

Is a_n an integer for all $n \geq 0$?

24. Do there exist positive integers a and b with $b - a > 1$ such for every $a < k < b$, either $\gcd(a,k) > 1$ or $\gcd(b,k) > 1$?

25. Let $f(x) = a_0 + a_1 x + \cdots$ be a power series with integer coefficients, with $a_0 \neq 0$. Suppose that the power series expansion of $f'(x)/f(x)$ at $x = 0$ also has integer coefficients. Prove or disprove that $a_0 | a_n$ for all $n \geq 0$.

26. Suppose that $f(x)$ and $g(x)$ are polynomials (with $f(x)$ not identically 0) taking integers to integers such that for all $n \in \mathbb{Z}$, either $f(n) = 0$ or $f(n)|g(n)$. Show that $f(x)|g(x)$, i.e., there is a polynomial $h(x)$ with rational coefficients such that $g(x) = f(x)h(x)$.

27. Let a and b be rational numbers such that $a^n - b^n$ is an integer for all positive integers n. Prove or disprove that a and b must themselves be integers.

28. Find the smallest integer $n \geq 2$ for which there exists an integer m with the following property: for each $i \in \{1, \ldots, n\}$, there exists $j \in \{1, \ldots, n\}$ different from i such that $\gcd(m+i, m+j) > 1$.