Summer School Experiences

Cameron Farnsworth on his Summer School Experience

During the summer of 2010, I participated in Texas A&M's Junior Bridge Program, which is a part of their Mentoring through Critical Transition Points (MCTP) program. A typical day at this program consisted of attending classes in the morning and going to problem workshops in the afternoon. The classes that were given were on real analysis and modern algebra. Two levels of classes were offered and students were placed depending on their previous coursework. I was placed in the advanced section because I had already taken two semesters each of real analysis and modern algebra. The director of the program was also willing to be flexible with students as far as the coursework. The advanced algebra class was to be working on field theory and Galois theory, which was material I had just covered in my modern algebra course. So I was allowed to study something else independently from Hungerford's *Algebra*. There were also a few other students who studied measure theory from Royden's *Real Analysis* as opposed to doing the analysis work from Rudin's *Principles of Mathematical Analysis* that the rest of us were working on.

I was admitted into this program not by applying directly to it, but because the people who were running Texas A&M's REU passed my application on to this program. In retrospect, while I had been hoping to attend an REU this past summer, I am convinced that the Junior Bridge Program was actually a better fit for me. I had been unsure as to whether I really wanted to pursue a graduate degree in mathematics, and I had been considering continuing my education in computer science instead. However, after the month I spent at Texas A&M, I am convinced that I should continue in mathematics. I highly recommend this program to anybody else who is unsure as to whether a mathematics graduate program is for them. I encourage anybody with interest in this to go to the following website which has more information about the program I attended and others: `http://www.math.tamu.edu/undergraduate/research/MCTP/`