

## Re: Is this math test too easy?

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**From:** Herman Rubin ([hrrubin\\_at\\_odds.stat.purdue.edu](mailto:hrrubin_at_odds.stat.purdue.edu))

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In article <orj5q0d5ha1fta94nl09u1gtvjpdjnd1q@4ax.com>, Mxsmanic <mxsmanic@hotmail.com> wrote:

>Acid Pooh writes:

>> *There is a point -- if nobody were taught basic algebra in middle-high school, colleges would be burdened with teaching their engineering and physics students the material.*

>But students who didn't need the material would not be wasting time >studying it. Which is more efficient?

Who doesn't need it? At this time, students are denied the option of studying anything basic; few of the teachers know anything basic.

Also, if you do not know the basic conceptual and structural material, you are very unlikely to be able to recognize the possibility of using it, or the ideas it provides, later. And if you have learned some special cases well, the general idea can become FAR more difficult.

>> *Presumably, students should have the opportunity to choose what they want to study after high school, instead of being forced into a track system in middle school.*

>They should have that opportunity at any time.

>> *Imagine what would happen if one of these high-school physics track students decided to study english instead. They would be six years behind their peers since they only learned what was essential for continuing a physics education.*

>They can always catch up. And if they decided to stay in physics, >they'd be finished a lot faster than students who had to cover a lot of >useless, irrelevant material as part of their physics education.

sci.math: Re: Is this math test too easy?

I agree about the useless, irrelevant material. So get rid of that.

>> *Says one who undoubtedly has \*not\* taken a proof based course.*

>*I don't depend on courses for proofs.*

>> *Obviously, if you think that mathematics can be learned by rote,*

>> *you've never taken a proof based course.*

>*That's not what I think. I simply think that mathematics is largely*

>*unnecessary to most people in most circumstances. Teaching higher*

>*mathematics is mostly a waste of time.*

At this time, probability and statistics has become higher mathematics. However, any intelligent decision making under uncertainty requires these, and not the current teaching of computational methodology.

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This address is for information only. I do not claim that these views are those of the Statistics Department or of Purdue University.

Herman Rubin, Department of Statistics, Purdue University

hrubin@stat.purdue.edu

Phone: (765)494-6054

FAX: (765)494-0558