

# Solution to Wolpack M6 February Problem

Zach Clawson, zdclawso@ncsu.edu  
Mathematics, Freshman

## Problem:

One in seven mathematicians is a philosopher, while one in nine philosophers is a mathematician. Is the total number of mathematicians greater than the total number of philosophers, or conversely?

## Solution:

Let  $M$  denote the event that a random person selected is a mathematician, while  $K$  denotes the event that the random person selected is a philosopher.

Using these notations and the common notation for the probability function,  $P : S \rightarrow [0, 1]$ , we rationalize the following:

$$\begin{aligned}P(K|M) &= \frac{1}{7} \\ P(M|K) &= \frac{1}{9}\end{aligned}$$

Using basic conditional probability formulas, we find:

$$\begin{aligned}P(K|M) &= \frac{P(K \cap M)}{P(M)} \\ P(K|M) &= \frac{P(M|K) \cdot P(K)}{P(M)} \\ \implies \frac{1}{7} &= \frac{\frac{1}{9} \cdot P(K)}{P(M)} \\ \implies \frac{9}{7} &= \frac{P(K)}{P(M)}\end{aligned}$$

Since  $\frac{P(K)}{P(M)} = \frac{9}{7} \implies \frac{P(K)}{P(M)} > 1 \implies P(K) > P(M)$ , let  $m$  denote the number of mathematicians in our sample space,  $k$  denote the number of philosophers, and  $n$  the total of number of people in the sample space. Thus  $P(K) = \frac{k}{n}$  and  $P(M) = \frac{m}{n}$ . Thus  $P(K) > P(M) \iff \frac{k}{n} > \frac{m}{n} \implies k > m$

$\therefore$  The total number of mathematicians is less than the total number of philosophers.

Q.E.D.