

35. Prove that if

$$\frac{a_0}{1} + \frac{a_1}{2} + \cdots + \frac{a_n}{n+1} = 0,$$

then

$$a_0 + a_1x + \cdots + a_nx^n = 0$$

for some x in $[0, 1]$.

Let $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + \cdots + a_nx^n$, and let $g(x) = a_0x + \frac{a_1}{2}x^2 + \cdots + \frac{a_n}{n+1}x^{n+1}$. Since each term has an x in it, $g(0) = 0$. Also, $g(1) = a_0 + \frac{a_1}{2} + \cdots + \frac{a_n}{n+1}$. But by our assumption this means $g(1) = 0$. Finally we note that since g is a polynomial it is continuous and differentiable on $(0, 1)$, and so Rolle's Theorem applies: there exists $x_0 \in (0, 1)$ such that $g'(x_0) = 0$. But $g'(x) = f(x)$, so $f(x_0) = 0$.

Do you have any idea how long it took me to stumble upon this?