

18.310 Homework 10: Peer reviews

Due Wednesday November 20th at 6PM

1 Logistics

In this assignment, you will write peer reviews on other students' complete articles (see homework 6). Each student is assigned to a group of 3 or 4 students (see the groups later in this document), and will write a peer review on the articles submitted by **two** (irrespective of whether the group has size 3 or 4) students in their group, namely the students listed (in cyclic order) **before** and **after** them in the group. In a group of size 4, the 1st student listed will thus comment on the papers of the 2nd and 4th students in the group.

Your first task is to email as soon as possible your complete article (exactly the same version as what you have uploaded on the site for HW9, part 1) to the two students who will write reviews on it (the ones before and after you in your group). This needs to be **done by Friday November 15th at 11:59PM at the latest**. If you fail to email your paper by then, we will **impose a penalty** for the final grade of your article. If you haven't received the articles you are supposed to review by midnight Friday, email go one of the instructors and we will send them to you.

Once your two peer reviews are prepared, please send them to us, *and also* email them to these two students. And on Thursday November 21st, bring a printout of your reviews to your assigned recitation, and the reviews will be discussed then.

2 Peer Review Guidelines

The purpose of writing a peer review is for you to help your classmate to improve his/her paper. To write a review that is helpful, think about what sorts of comments would be most helpful to you as you revise your paper; write similarly helpful comments for your two peers. You should devote at least an hour to reading and commenting on each of your peer's paper. Consider the following questions:

1. Is the paper clear? The assigned audience are math majors, so the author should write clearly enough for the paper to make sense to you. Point out anything that you find to be confusing or unclear. Try to point out precisely what is causing the confusion so the author can determine how best to clarify the text.
2. Is the paper consistent and correct? If you aren't comfortable stating that something is incorrect, you could word your comment as a question ("Why is...?") or as a confusion ("I don't understand why...").
3. Are new topics and ideas introduced with sufficient explanation? New topics and ideas should be connected to ideas that are familiar to the audience. Also, the reason for introducing the new topic or idea should be clear.

4. Are topics presented in a logical order? This question applies to all levels of the paper. For example, sections should be presented in a logical order, and the steps within a proof should be presented in a logical order.
5. Does the paper achieve an appropriate balance of conciseness and explanation? Point out places where the text is too wordy or too concise.
6. Is the paper proofread for grammar, spelling, etc? Be sure to give some honest comments about what is done well in the paper as well suggestions for improving the paper.

3 Grading

You will not assign a grade as part of your peer review. However, your peer reviews will be graded on a scale of 10 as follows:

- 10: A thorough review that points out confusing parts of the paper and includes helpful suggestions (e.g., suggesting restructuring, how to explain more clearly, helpful figures...) and probing questions (e.g., Is this lemma really necessary? Could you prove this theorem more elegantly by...?). Rationales for comments are clearly explained.
- 7: A less thorough review with some helpful comments.
- 4: Few helpful comments.
- 0: Failed to submit a peer review.

4 Groups

Student names removed for privacy reasons.

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