Learning Requires Doing

A goal for this course is for you to gain experience solving problems, both using formal definitions and proofs and using computer programming. The homework assignments are essential practice for you to think about the material outside of class and identify what you don’t understand.

It’s entirely reasonable to make mistakes when you’re first learning material. As such, I want the homework assignments to be low stress. If you make a serious effort to solve the problems and turn them in by the deadline, then your homework grade will be fine, even if you make mistakes.

Assignment Expectations

1. You must make a serious attempt to answer every problem for an assignment to count.
   This doesn’t mean you need to get them all right, but it’s unacceptable not to attempt a problem, e.g., because it looks hard or you didn’t leave yourself enough time. To count toward a complete submission, any problem for which you can’t give a full solution needs to be accompanied by a clear explanation of your thinking, e.g.,
   “I could prove that \( A \) is a subset of \( B \), but proving that \( B \) is also a subset of \( A \) seems to require that \( B \) exhibit the following properties that I don’t know how to prove…”

2. Programming exercises involving should be submitted electronically.
   There are instructions on the first homework assignment for using the `submit145` script, which is like the `submit101` script you may have used before. If this isn’t working, let me know and email me your work.

3. Proofs or other written work can be submitted electronically or on paper.
   To submit electronically, include a PDF file with any code and use the `submit145` script.
   To submit on paper, please bring your assignment to class. If you’re unable to come to class, you can put your assignment in my mailbox in the Computer Science Department office or slip it under the door of my office, but these are less preferable.

\[\text{CMPS 145} \cdot \text{Spring 2020}
\]

Guide to Assignments

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Assignments must be neat and clear.

Whether involving proofs or programs, all assignments must be clearly composed and neatly laid out. Your programs should include concise comments that make it clear what you are doing, and your proofs must be legible with a clear structure.

Make sure all work has your name and the assignment number at the start. In general, at least one blank line should separate consecutive problems/programs.

Printed work should be stapled in the top left corner. Do not submit work on paper with frayed edges torn from a notebook.

You get three free "late days".

For flexibility, you have three free “late days” that you can use to extend the deadline of any homework assignment by 24 hours. For example, using a late day on an assignment due on Thursday at 3:10 p.m. would make the assignment due on Friday at 3:10 p.m. You may use multiple late days per assignment.

It’s a good idea to try every assignment and submit it for feedback, even if you’ve used up your late days. Remember that the assignments are meant to give you practice; completing them will help you to learn the material (and thus to succeed on future assignments and exams).

If you know you won’t be able to submit an assignment, talk to me. If you’re experiencing a major problem – medical, psychological, family, etc. – that is interfering with your ability to complete your class work, you should talk with the Dean of Studies, your class advisor, or Health Services, who will recommend appropriate accommodations to all of your professors, who honestly want to help you.

Assignment Grading

Grading with points is an exercise in frustration.

Exercises

Rather than assign fine-grained points, each exercise on a homework assignment will be assigned one of the following categories:
• **Excellent** (E): A solution that meets or exceeds all requirements and reflects excellent work. There are no non-trivial mistakes.

• **Satisfactory** (S): A solution that meets the requirements and displays evidence that you understand the concepts, although there may be a few small problems.

• **Progressing** (P): Partial understanding of concepts is evidence, and all parts of the exercise have a good-faith attempt. However, there are significant errors that cause the solution to fall short of the requirements.

• **Incomplete** (I): A solution that fails to meet the requirements for the exercise. There may be significant omissions, including skipping parts of a proof or missing required functionality in a program. There is not enough evidence to determine if the concepts are fully understood.

**Assignments**

The same categories are used to grade the assignment as a whole, based on the individual exercise grades:

• **Excellent** (E): All exercises earned S or E marks, including at least one E.

• **Satisfactory** (S): All exercises earned S marks.

• **Progressing** (P): At least one section was less than satisfactory, but none were incomplete.

• **Incomplete** (I): At least one section was incomplete.

**What Does My Grade Mean?**

I encourage you not to focus on your exact grades for labs or homework assignments or to try to “convert” them into As, Bs, etc. Instead, make sure that you’re making a serious effort to solve each problem, following the instructions, and learning from each assignment, whether you received an E or an I. If you do this consistently, you’ll do well in the course! If you’re still concerned about your grade, send me an email or come talk to me during my office hours.