

Technical writing, of which your reports are an example, is hard, and hard work! But, with practice, you can get better at it, and, in the process, make ideas more clear in your own mind. You are always welcome to ask me for help on any aspect of your report, at any stage of writing.

Content Your report will have three main parts:

Introduction Discuss your understanding of the problem, and the concepts involved. Rephrase what the problem is asking, in your own words. If there are any definitions that are new, explain these, too.

Approaches Discuss the main approaches you applied to solve the problem. Why did you try these? Which approach(es) is (are) more effective, and why?

Solutions Your main goal is answer the questions in the report, as much as possible. Sometimes, you will not have complete answers (for instance, why something is true). In that case, include the best answer you can (for instance, if you don't know why something is true, list the examples you tried, and how they support your claim).

Level of detail All parts of your report should include enough detail and supporting arguments to convince a peer (say, someone who is in this class, but has not seen this activity before) that what you say is correct. It is also possible to include too much detail, hiding your main points.

Attribution It is perfectly fine to use ideas of other students from class, but in that case, please give credit where credit is due. Note that, even when you work extensively with others, writing the report is (with the exception of group assignments) very much an individual assignment.

Format The prose part of your report should be typed or typeset. You may put in diagrams, equations, tables, etc. neatly by hand. A cover sheet is not necessary; just put your name on the first sheet. Do not use binders, plastic covers, etc.; simply staple the pages of your report together.

Rubric Your projects will be graded on the following scale:

- 5** Includes complete introduction, and analysis of approaches. All questions are completely answered and clearly justified. Writing is clear, organized, and easy to read.
- 4** Includes complete introduction, and some analysis of approaches. All questions are answered, mostly justified, with numerous and carefully chosen examples supporting the rest. Writing is clear and organized.
- 3** Includes complete introduction, and effective approaches. Most questions answered with some explanation, and some examples. Writing is understandable and somewhat organized.
- 2** Includes mostly complete introduction. There are reasonable approaches to solving most of the problems, with some progress (examples that support answers, patterns observed). Writing is understandable.
- 1** Incomplete introduction, some reasonable approaches, little progress towards solutions. Writing is hard to read.
- 0** Minimal work.

The minimum score for an A is 4, for a B is 3, etc. I may award half-points (for instance, 3.5) for papers that fit between categories.