

All About Lab Exercises and the Term Paper

All work is due at 11:55PM on the due date, unless stated otherwise. We will grade and return them to you as quickly as possible. We will try for three class periods, but can't guarantee it.

Doing Lab Exercises

The lab exercises, and lab sessions, try to prepare you to solve problems on your own (after the class is over). We do not mind being asked for help; indeed, we welcome it because it helps us know what students are finding difficult or confusing, and sometimes a few words about the problem in class will clarify the assignment immensely.

When you come to us, or send us a note, asking for help, please be prepared to tell us what you have done to solve the problem. We are almost certain to ask you "What have you tried?" This is because understanding how you have tried to solve the problem will help us figure out exactly what your difficulty is and what we can do to help you. Remember, we will do everything we can to avoid solving the problem for you. When we give you help, our goal is to help you solve the problem yourself.

You are scheduled for a particular lab session (it's the "Lab Section" to which you are assigned). If for some reason you cannot make your scheduled lab session, please try to attend one of the other lab sessions and see if a computer is available. Students for a particular section get priority, but if a computer is not being used, you are welcome to sit in on that lab session. Also, the open labs in 1154 Meyer and 75 Hutchison have the software required to do the labs, so you can work there.

Please turn in your lab work electronically through SmartSite. The work will be graded, and grades and comments returned to you through SmartSite.

Doing the Term Paper

You are required to write a term paper for this course. This paper is a research paper on the use of computers and/or computer applications in some field of interest to you. It must be at least 2800 words in length, with references, describing some sort of computer application or use that relates to your major or a field which interests you. A paper of this length is approximately 10 pages of double-spaced text using a proportional 11-point font (see below) and printed on a laser printer.

This is an opportunity for you to learn about how computers are used in some area of your own choosing. We can only cover so much in lecture, and this is your chance to tailor part of the course to your own liking. As a useful side effect, you will also become proficient using a computer-based word processor to produce a pleasing-looking paper.

To help you do a good job on this paper, we have divided the work into four parts:

1. A 1 or 2 page prospectus, worth 10 points, due on Thursday, January 13;
2. A 2 page research progress report, worth 20 points, due on Thursday, January 27;
3. A brainstorming or rough draft (the "spew" paper), worth 70 points, due on Thursday, February 17; and,
4. Your completed term paper, worth 200 points, due on Thursday, March 3.

You must use a computer-based word processor (like Microsoft Word), and print it on a letter-quality printer (preferably a laser printer, like those in the labs). Your work must be free of spelling and grammatical errors. We will not accept handwritten work, or work printed using unclear type. Please use an 11 point, proportional font for all your term paper work (see the discussion of fonts below for more explanation), and include your name and email address.

Please turn in each assignment at the beginning of class on the date it is due. Also submit the completed paper electronically, through SmartSite (but not the prospectus, progress report, or brainstorming draft).

Late Homework

In general, late work will not be accepted without a valid medical reason. You will be required to bring a doctor's note. Please come see me if the circumstances are truly extraordinary and non-medical.

Notes on Fonts and Typefaces

Each typeface's characters have a characteristic shape. A *font* is a complete set of characters in one typeface and one size (although in the computer world, "typeface" and "font" are often used interchangeably). Below are some examples of *proportional* and *non-proportional* (also called *monospace* or *typewriter*) fonts, and some styles like **boldface** and *italics*. You will learn much more about fonts in your labs on word processing!

A proportional font's characters are of varying widths, so the characters take up different amounts of room on the line:

This is a proportional font named Times New Roman in 11 point size.

Notice how much space is taken up by 10 i's:

iiiiiiiiii

Notice how much space is taken up by 10 x's:

xxxxxxxxxx

A typewriter font's characters are all of the same size, so the characters take up the same amount of room on the line:

This is a non-proportional, typewriter-like font also in 11 point.

Notice how much space is taken up by 10 i's:

iiiiiiiiii

Notice how much space is taken up by 10 x's:

xxxxxxxxxx

Styles can be added to most fonts. **Bold** adds "thickness" to all characters in a font. *Italics* makes each character "slant" to the right.

This is a "plain" Times New Roman font.

This is a Times New Roman font with a bold style.

This is a Times New Roman font with an italics style.

Font size is measured in *points* (a typesetter term). The more points, the larger each character is in all dimensions.

This is a Times New Roman font in 10 points size.

This is a Times New Roman font in 11 points size.

This is a Times New Roman font in 12 points size.

This is a Times New Roman font in 14 point size.

This is a typewriter font in 10 point size.

This is a typewriter font in 11 point size.

This is a typewriter font in 12 point size.

This is a typewriter font in 14 point size.