

## All About Homework

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

For written homework, you must turn in an ASCII, a PostScript, or a PDF version of your answers (you can use any text processor you like to generate these). If you submit PostScript, please be sure the file will print on our department printers (use *ghostscript*(1) or *gs*(1) to check this; if it displays the file properly, the file should print correctly). If your file is a PostScript file, please choose a name that ends in “.ps”. If it is an ASCII file, please choose a name that ends in “.txt”. If your file is a PDF file, please choose a name that ends in “.pdf”.

Please turn in your written exercises and programs electronically through MyUCDavis. Do not use the handin program! If you need to turn in something on paper (for example, a diagram that you can't draw using your text processing program), please hand it to me before the assignment is due, and put a note in what you submit electronically that you have done this. (That way, I will remember to look for something written, rather than mark you off for that problem.)

### Doing Written Exercises

When you are asked to analyze something, or explain something, please be complete, and show your work (including any commands you give, and their output, to show how you did the problem). Otherwise, even if you get the right answer, you will get **ZERO** (that's *0, zip, nada, rien, nothing*) points. Think your answer through and do a rough draft. Students (and professionals, actually) often overlook this, but it is vital. Write clearly and cogently. If the question asks for an opinion, state your opinion clearly, justify it, and don't ramble. Answers that start, “My opinion is yes ...” and conclude with “... on the other hand it could equally well be no” won't get much credit.

I do not mind being asked for help; indeed, I welcome it because it helps me know what students are finding difficult or confusing, and sometimes a few words about the problem in class will clarify the assignment immensely. I do mind being asked for help before you have tried to think the problem through. The classic objectionable question (this really happened) occurred on a homework assignment in which the class was given a buggy program. The assignment said the program did not work, and the homework was to debug it and make it work. That particular class period discussed how to deal with bugs, and gave tips and techniques on how to debug programs. Within 10 minutes of the end of the class during which the assignment was given out, the instructor got this request for help: “The program doesn't run. What do I do now?”

When you come to me, or send me a note, asking for help, please tell me what you have done to solve the problem, because the first question I will ask you is “What have you tried?” This isn't because I think you're wasting my time. It's because understanding how you have tried to solve the problem will help me figure out exactly what your difficulty is and what I can do to help you. Remember, I will do everything I can to avoid solving the problem for you. When I give you help, my goal is to help you solve the problem yourself.

### Late Homework

As this is a graduate class, I expect that you can manage your own time. So if your homework is *occasionally* late, I will assume there is a very good reason. (If the reason is a a serious one, like a medical reason or a family emergency, I'd appreciate your letting me know.) So I will not deduct points without warning you. If this does become a problem for an individual or the class, I do reserve the right to begin imposing penalties, so please do not abuse this!

Also, not I will not post answer keys until all homework has been turned in, so it is to your classmates's benefit, as well as your own, not to be too late.

### Grade Appeals

If you feel that there is an error in grading, please come see me.

