

Math 409–Discrete Optimization

Homework Guidelines

Good mathematics is always written in good English. Write in complete sentences! Be clear and concise. Your writing should be organized: tell me what you think the solution is, how you're going to prove it, then prove it and conclude. In a long or complex proof, it's worthwhile to mention the main idea. Sometimes providing an example will help illustrate an argument.

I do not have psychic powers. I should not have to fill in holes or guess what you're thinking. If I have to read your solution five times or spend more than 10 minutes trying to understand what you are saying then you haven't made a strong case.

I am your fellow student. When writing your solutions imagine me as a fellow student in the class who hasn't yet done this homework. This is a high standard—if one of your friends were to read your homework, would it be understandable to them?

Leave space on the page. Leave some space after each question and use adequate margins so that there is room where I can respond with comments.

Be neat. It's hard to write a good proof in one shot; do scratchwork on a separate piece of paper and turn in a finished product. Also, please staple your homework and remove the frills if you tear out pages from a spiral notebook!

Some Friendly Tips

Work in groups. Working with others is a great way to learn the material and reduce the time to figure out the homework problems. (Write your own solutions, though!) Listen actively to others and constructively criticize each other's solutions. The fruit of good oral communication and dialog will often be a well written presentation.

Ask if you have questions. Don't be afraid to ask Prof. Tseng and I questions during our office hours. If you can't make an office hour don't be shy to request an appointment. We're here to help you succeed in the class.