

MATH 220
Term Paper Format, Organization and Policies

When in doubt, communicate with me!
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Formatting details

Paper Standard size (8.5" x 11")

Page Margins 1" on all sides (top, bottom, left, right)

Font 12-pt. easily readable (e.g., Times Roman).

Note that you may use an italic font for emphasis in running text. All variables, constants, equations, formulas etc. must be italicize.

Spacing Double-spaced throughout, including captions and bibliography.

Paper Organization

Title Page should be unnumbered. It should include Student's Name, Course and Section number, topic number (as it appears in the List of Possible Topics), Title and Abstract.

Title As with any paper you write, a title is important. It should catch the attention of the reader as well as reflect the content of your paper. It should not be too long and it should not be too general.

Abstract should be short (from 50 words to 250 words) and directed to a more general audience than the rest of the paper.

Briefly summarize your paper explaining the basic purpose of your paper, state the focusing question(s). Abstract is not the same as an introduction! An abstract should be short and as independent from the paper as possible.

Abstract is not the same as a paper proposal! Avoid empty phrases like "In this paper we consider, among other results, that ...". Just write "We consider .." (**In the rest of the text use third person writing your paper.**)

Write your abstract after writing the body of your paper.

Table of Contents Make sure to update it (if you make changes in your document) if you type it manually. Note that there is an option in Word and LaTeX to create it automatically. Leave this page unnumbered.

Introduction should prepare the reader to understand the rest of the paper. State the problem here and explain it to the reader. Assume that the reader is unfamiliar with the problem. The introduction should

- briefly describe the history of the problem.
- indicate the reader why the problem is interesting;

- give some indication what will follow in the paper (state the question or questions that you will examine in your paper);
- include schemes of logical dependence of sections. **Knowing what to expect in each section of the paper can help the reader to understand your paper**
- **(optional:)** mention related and open problems.

Body (the main part consisting of a few sections.) The body should be

- a mix of English narrative and more abstract representations (define everything that you are talking about, discuss discoveries and applications);
- divided into sections and subsections to make the exposition clearer.

It also should include

- simple examples to illustrate of all important ideas and to help your reader understand your reasoning (pictures and diagrams could be useful).
- worked out details of the main topic or result.

Remember that **the paper need not contain full proofs, but *should have a significant mathematical content*** (e.g. an outline of the proof, its steps, and techniques used, examples and counter-examples for definitions).

In addition, make sure

- to simplify your ideas and put them in a straightforward way. As a question is raised in the reader's mind, the paper is ready to answer it.
- that each of your results depends on the main theorem and/or that all the theories used are related to each other and defined in a proper step by step order.

Conclusion The conclusion will be the last paragraph of your paper. It should not sound too much as an introduction. Sum up your key points here. It should give your reader a sense of satisfaction and completion. You may also suggest further reading and explain why your topic is important for readers.

References *You should cite sources through your paper* and list the references after. You must use and cite two or more sources. It is appropriate to use Wikipedia and/or other material that you found on the World Wide Web as a good starting point for learning about your topic. But a college-level paper needs to consult directly printed materials (e.g. a book, journal, or newspaper article) that are linked through the library website or a faculty member's website. Don't use/cite what you will find on web through a general search engine.

For references format see, for example, page 211 in your textbook.

Appendix A: Figures and Tables All graphs, tables, diagrams and other pictures should be neatly drawn with relevant labels. **Do not embed them in the text.** They should be collected in an appendix at the end of the paper, labeled (for references in the text) and titled.

Cite all pictures, tables, diagrams that not created by you. It is considered plagiarism if you don't.

Appendix B (optional) You can have more appendices if needed. Materials in an appendix should be referenced at some point in the body of the paper.

Policies

Use your own words. The only way to demonstrate that you understood the topic is showing this by your own words.

Do not plagiarize. Plagiarism is offering someone else's work as your own, whether one sentence or whole paragraphs, and whether from a web source, book, periodical, or the writing of other students.

Plagiarism is a Honor violation. It is also dishonest to submit your own paper as original work in more than one course. For more details, see http://library.tamu.edu/services/library_tutorials/academic_integrity/academic_integrity_3.html

Use quotation appropriately. Include only quotations that you cannot express in your own words. Quoting from the text, you must clearly explain the meaning and relevance of the quotation.

References

- [1] K.P. Lee, A Guide to Writing Mathematics, <http://www.cs.ucdavis.edu/~amenta/w10/writingman.pdf>
- [2] M. Tomforde, Mathematical Writing: A Brief Guide, <http://www.math.uh.edu/~tomforde/MathWriting.pdf>