

Instructions for Assignments

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1 Overview

The summary assignments serve two purposes.

- The first goal of the summaries is to help us (and you) to ensure that you have a reasonable understanding of the topic at hand.
- The second goal is to give you a chance to identify the difficult parts and questions that will naturally arise when you read the chapters. You get bonus points for asking good questions.

This document summarises what we expect from you in your submissions which will constitute 25% of your grade. It also lists out some Do's and Don't's. In addition, this document structure can be used as a template for your submissions, although this is not strictly necessary. Note that this section contains a quick overview of what this summary is about in broad general terms. It encapsulates everything about the topic in a few simple lines. In your summaries, this section can serve a similar purpose and describe the overarching goals of the chapter at hand. A more detailed overview can be seen in the sections below.

2 Our Expectations - Some Details

The summary is supposed to reflect your understanding of the chapter provided to you. At the same time it needs to be brief. Your goal is to explain the main technical ideas in your words and stitch them together into a coherent whole. In particular, you must ensure that you cover all sub topics and subsections, and explain how they achieve the stated goals of the chapter. The book is more or less mathematical in content. Thus, one possible approach could be spell out the key lemmas and theorems. This could be combined with short proof outlines and explanations of how one result leads to the next or what questions it raises. If you use technical terms or concepts, please ensure that these terms are explained either in-place or before the proof. If you feel that some detail is extraneous to the broad idea of some proof then omitting them is fine as long as the statement of the results is suitably modified.

Consider the following guidelines. They will also determine your points:

- **Accuracy:** If you state something, ensure that it is correct. If you state a simplified version of some result, make sure that your statement is consistent with the original, apart from your simplifications.

- **Consistency:** Please be consistent with your notation. I cannot emphasise this enough. It helps to proof read your summary before submission.
- **Coherence:** This is extremely important. Your summary must not read as a disparate, randomly ordered bunch of topics or results, but connect them to the big picture. The end result should present a narrative that reflects your understanding. If this also reflects the sequence of concepts in the chapter, that's good. If you feel that the concepts can be introduced in a better sequence, and you succeed in doing so, that is even better.
- **Brevity:** Please keep the **page limit (3 pages)** in mind. If something can be explained in one sentence, then taking one paragraph to explain it will cost you points.
- **Simplicity:** In any communication, simplicity is key. A book chapter aims to be comprehensive and cover (as well as illustrate) every possible detail. Your goal on the other hand is to simplify and break down these ideas so that a casual reader can grasp the key concepts and mathematical results without excessive and needless detail.
- **Adherence to Deadlines:** As a rule of thumb, the summary for each chapter is due the midnight before the first discussion session for that topic, which will be announced in the preceding session at the latest. As such, the purpose of submitting these summaries is lost if they are submitted late. Hence sticking to the deadlines is crucial.

3 Dos and Don'ts

3.1 Dos

- Adhere to the stated deadlines
- Keep the summary brief.
- Include your matriculation number, name, and the email ID that you registered on the mailing list with.
- Name your submission file `Summary_(your_name)_(matriculation_number)`
- Send them to `shreyas.srinivas@mpi-inf.mpg.de`
- You may discuss the chapter with your classmates. This won't cost you any points. But you must hand in your own written work in your own words.
- If you do discuss ideas and concepts, acknowledge this in a separate "acknowledgements" section at the end of the summary. *This section does not count towards your page limit.* Not doing so will be considered a breach of academic integrity.
- Cover all topics and *important* results.
- Sequence them well.
- Break down complex ideas into simple ones.
- Use technical words where appropriate. This will be helpful in maintaining simplicity and brevity.

3.2 Don'ts

- Ask for extension of deadlines.
- Submit the assignment late (The timestamp on my inbox is the deciding factor).
- Exceed page limits
- Use someone's ideas without proper acknowledgement.
- Use subject-relevant technical words without explanation. You can assume that your audience is conversant in CS but not with your topic.
- Be inaccurate.
- Focus too much on extraneous detail
- Write an incoherent jumble of paragraphs that don't connect to each other.

4 Conclusion

Usually your exposition of ideas will lead you to conclusions that you stated as the chapter goals in your "overview" section. You can state these conclusions in a separate "conclusions" section. Bonus points if you can identify and summarise what you did not understand and any specific questions you would like to ask during the discussions.

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