GRADING RUBRIC FOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Each writing assignment you turn in will be graded on the basis of 4 major aspects of your writing, as well as (when applicable) the quality of your critical assessment of a peer’s assignment. These 4 major aspects are:

(1) Mathematical Correctness: Is it right?
(2) Clarity: Is it clear enough for the person reading it to understand it?
(3) Conciseness: Do you say everything you need to say and nothing more?
(4) Mechanics: Do you have proper command of the English language?

Below is the general grading scale/rubric I will use to assess you in these areas.

(1) **Mathematical Correctness**: All arguments given in your writing should be mathematically correct, and should answer the question at hand.

- **10**: No mathematical errors are present in the argument.
- **7.5**: At least one minor error is present, but any errors are of a nature which does not indicate a serious lack of understanding on the part of the student, and does not largely impact the correctness of the solution. The solution is “basically correct”.
- **5**: The general outline of the argument given is correct, but there is at least one major error on the part of the student which indicates that the student does not fully grasp an important concept.
- **2.5**: The solution indicates very little, if any, understanding on the part of the student. The line of argument does not make sense and/or does not even seem to get at the question being asked.
- **0**: Little to no effort made.

(2) **Clarity**: Your writing should be clear. This means that the audience should have no question as to what you mean by anything you say, or as to why any of the claims you make are true. Do not use obscure mathematical jargon or symbols in favor of English words/sentences.

- **5**: The argument is clearly written.
- **3**: The overall structure of the argument, and the major parts of it, are clear, but there are at least minor issues of clarity.
- **1**: The student does not communicate clearly at all. It is not evident what the students line of argument is, and/or large and crucial portions of the argument are not clearly justified.
- **0**: Little to no effort made.
(3) **Conciseness**: Your writing should be as to-the-point as possible while still communicating all necessary details. Every word and symbol contained in your argument should further the argument. Do not define symbols that you do not use. Do not overly explain something that you would expect your audience to know already.

- **5**: The argument is concise and to the point.
- **3**: There are minor issues with conciseness. The student defines symbols/variables for no real reason and then never refers to them again, and/or there are superfluous sentences that do not further the argument in any way, and/or the student goes overboard in explaining very basic facts which the audience would generally be expected to know.
- **1**: The argument is extraordinarily and unnecessarily long-winded.
- **0**: Little to no effort made.

(4) **Mechanics**: Since this is a formal written communication, you should make proper use of the English language. This means writing in complete sentences, not writing one big run-on sentence, spelling words correctly, using proper grammar and punctuation, etc.

- **5**: The writing contains no major mechanical problems.
- **3**: There is at least one major mechanical problem, but it does not make the argument unreadable. The student demonstrates an effort to write well.
- **1**: There are numerous major mechanical problems, and no real effort is evident on the part of the student to avoid these problems. For example, the student writes mostly symbols with very few English words, and makes no effort to combine those words into coherent sentences.
- **0**: Little to no effort made.

(5) **Peer Review (if applicable)**: If you are asked to review the work of a peer, then you will be graded also upon the quality of your feedback. You should read your peer’s work critically and spot mathematical errors, if they exist. You should give (constructive) feedback on the quality of your peer’s writing.

- **5**: The student makes a real effort to give constructive criticism. Any mathematical errors present in the argument are spotted by the reviewer.
- **3**: The student completes the review, and makes some effort at constructive feedback. However, the student fails to spot a (perhaps subtle and minor) mathematical error and/or has very little to say on the quality of the written communication.
- **1**: The student completes the review, but does not spot major mathematical errors in the argument, indicating either a lack of effort, understanding, or both. The student has very little to offer on the quality of the written communication. (Example:
Your feedback is “Looks good to me” and your peer’s assignment is a mess, with ghastly mathematical content and horrible mechanics.)
• 0: The student does not complete the review.