

Problem Sets and Quality Solutions

General Guidelines

- All written homework is due at the *beginning* of class.
- Write your name, your section (e.g. Math 114-01, Math 200-05, etc.), the assignment (e.g. P 12.1 or QS 3.9), and the due date on the front page.
- Write your name on each page.
- Staple two neat packets: one for discussion/practice problems, one for your quality solution.
- Neat edges! If you use notebook paper, trim the frayed edges with scissors.
- Label each problem, and circle or box each final answer.
- Write neatly. If your handwriting is illegible, use a word processor.
- At the end of the P assignment include an evaluation box. (See below.)
- The rule of thumb is: make it easy for the grader to give you credit for your work!

Discussion/Practice Problem Sets (P)

- write up your solutions to the discussion and practice problems
- evaluation criteria: clarity, completeness, and correctness
- evaluation marks: thoroughly (plus), mostly (check), significantly (check minus), not at all (ex)
- evaluation box: list the three criteria and leave spaces for the evaluation marks

Quality Solutions (QS)

- A quality solution is a written explanation of how to solve a textbook problem. Your imaginary audience is a peer who is struggling to understand the topic.
- Restate the question. (That includes copying down directions that appear at the beginning of a group of problems and any tables or graphs).
- Show all your steps, and make your reasoning clear. If your solution includes a table, graph, or drawing, make sure it is clearly labeled.
- The rule of thumb is that what you write should stand on its own as an explanation.

Rubric for Quality Solutions

- Very Nice (4): clear, correct, and complete solution of the problem and good presentation
- Right Idea (3): essentially correct, but some small gaps, lack of clarity, or poor presentation
- Good Start (2): shows partial understanding, e.g. correct start, but significant flaws or gaps
- Good Effort (1): inappropriate approach, faulty reasoning, or wrong problem
- No Attempt (0): recopy problem but do not attempt to solve it

The numbers are “messages” not points! For example, getting an all 3s and 4s (with a few more 4s) would be very good, A-level work, whereas consistently scoring 2s would mean that your work does not demonstrate sufficient understanding to move on (D-level work).

* Challenge Problems: Occasionally you will be assigned challenge problems. These problems do factor into your regular grade. (So don't skip them!) Challenge problems are graded on a more lenient scale: as long as you attempt the problem, your score for the problem will be one level higher than the rubric above dictates. For example, if your work on the problem would normally merit a 3 (you have the right idea), it will get a 4, because having the right idea on a challenge problem is really very good!