

Homework Procedure for ASTR4201, Fall 2020:

Homework problems will be assigned to Teams. The Team will have approximately the same number of problems to solve as Team members. Each Team member will be assigned to be the lead on a problem, but it is expected that they will discuss the problem with each of their Team members.

Class time will mostly consist of discussing the homework. Teams will be called on to discuss the problems they were assigned. A completed solution is not expected the first time you present a problem. In discussing each problem the first time, ideally we will help overcome any initial roadblocks, so that a more complete solution can be presented during the next class time. Completed solutions will be emailed to me, so that I can share them for all in a common location.

Sharing your solution/progress will of course be somewhat difficult in a remote environment. Several options are possible and it will probably take some trial and error to see what works best.

Option 1. Use a tablet. If you have a tablet, then directly writing there and sharing your work via screen-share is one possibility. However, I realize not everyone will have a tablet and there may be issues getting the screen-sharing to work properly.

Option 2. Write and scan. You could write your work on paper and then use a scanning application on your phone to scan your image to pdf. For instance, the Adobe Scan app does this. The reason for using a scanning app is that image files can get quite large and the software used to open them can be varied. PDFs on the other hand are often more manageable in size and tend to have a consistent look from operating system to operating system.

Option 3. Word/Powerpoint. In principle you could write your work in MS Word or MS Powerpoint, using the equation editor to make sure that the work is legible. This can be time consuming and is not expected.

Option 4. LaTeX. Some people prefer to make their work look extra-polished and like the lack of ambiguity that comes from typesetting their work. This can be time-consuming until you get experience and so it is certainly not expected. One option for easy LaTeXing is to use the online environment in Overleaf.

Option 5. Write and point your camera at your work. I'm not terribly optimistic this route will work well, since cameras tend to be poor at picking up hand-writing. However, this may be an option. If you go this route, using a marker tends to work better than a pen.

This homework format is new to me, likely new to you, and will be somewhat challenging in the online environment. I expect it to be bumpy at times, especially in the beginning. However, I think if we stick with it that this will be a positive experience for all.