

SENIOR PAPER: PEER REVIEWS

AUTHOR: _____

REVIEWED BY: _____

- Your main focus for this review should be whether you find the discussion of the mathematics understandable, whether you feel the writing flows smoothly so that the paper is understandable as a whole, and whether you feel you "got the point". Remember, the paper is supposed to be aimed at you—a senior major who has given little, if any, thought to this particular topic. So if you're having trouble following, that's a problem.
- Read the paper through. During this initial reading, only make small notes in the margins - in pencil - such as putting a "???" next to statements or sections that are not immediately clear to you, or a "!!" next to parts that are extremely clear, interesting, or insightful. Don't worry about pointing out spelling mistakes or grammar mistakes unless they are so intrusive that they interfere with your understanding.
- Go back through the paper, this time to make comments. Pay particular attention to your initial markings. Think about how understandable the discussion is and how convincing you find the arguments are. If you ever felt confused or lost, let them know. Also, you should not have to pause for several minutes to figure out why something is true – everything should either be proven, sufficiently justified so that you believe it, *or* the author should be clear that why it's true is beyond the scope of the paper.
- Pay attention to whether there are diagrams or pictures where you think they're needed.
- Also pay attention to notation - did the paper get bogged down in symbols?
- If there is a problem with clarity, notation, etc, don't feel you need to give a suggestion how to solve it, as you're not the expert on the subject. Having the problematic portion pointed out is constructive and helpful as it is.
- Your comments should mainly consist of two types:
 - In the margins, very terse notes, such as "interesting", "very clear", "nice transition", "justify", "I don't follow", "clarify", "awkward", "confusing", "unconvincing", "why???", "is this really true?", "switch these paragraphs", "move this table to page n", or even the vague "something isn't working here", just for starters.
 - On this form, broader, but still brief, comments that mainly address overall trends, or the big problems.

1. Did you feel the topic was clearly introduced? Did you want to know more background?

2. Did you find the reasoning convincing? Would examples help? Did you feel important logical steps or ideas were omitted (or were there so many you got bogged down)? Was the notation consistent and easy to follow? Were there so many variables you lost track? Any terms that needed definition or clarification?

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3. Overall, how did the paper flow? Aspects to consider: the introduction and/or conclusion, whether you felt like you were reading a list, transitions, order of topics, and the combination of prose with mathematical arguments, for starters.

4. Any other comments or suggestions for improvement? (A few ideas for you: Parts that are explained particularly well, or are particularly interesting? Issues you wanted to read more about, or were omitted entirely? Something you're pretty sure is just not right? Grammar or punctuation that is so poor it's distracting?)