

# What to do when you're struggling

Introduction to Deep Learning  
11-785 / 685 / 485



# Where to start?

All homeworks 1-4, each  
with a part-1 and part 2

Bonus homeworks

Notebooks

## Materials

Lectures by the Professor,  
twice per week

Recitations by TAs, once per  
week

Hackathons / Bootcamps by  
TAs, every weekend


## Videos

All put out before the  
semester began

Meant to help you quickly  
find information about  
course-relevant topics

Referred to throughout the  
HW write-ups

## Recitation 0



“Take up an idea, devote yourself to it, struggle on in patience, and the sun will rise for you.”

—**SWAMI VIVEKANANDA**



# 01

## OFFICE HOURS & PIAZZA

Meet in-person, meet on Zoom,  
message online

# 02

## STUDY GROUP & MENTOR

A semester-long setup for your  
success

# 03

## CMU's STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER

Peer Tutoring (1-on-1)  
and Academic Coaching

# 04

## PROFESSOR BHIKSHA RAJ

Prioritizes you

A large, irregular yellow shape serves as a background for the text. To the left of the text, there is a stylized illustration of a leafy branch. To the right, there are three individual leaves of varying sizes, all in a light yellow color.

# OFFICE HOURS & 01. PIAZZA

Meet in-person, meet on Zoom, message online

- Manigandan Ramadasan
- Olivier Kwizera
- Bradley Warren
- Pengyu Chang
- Felix Hirwa Nshuti
- Floride Tuyisenge
- Massa Badli
- Mengchun Zhang
- Miya Sylvester
- Nayesha Gandotra
- Rutvik Joshi
- Ahmed Tahiru Issah
- delphine nyaboke
- Yuanyu Gao
- Euijin Hong
- Dhivya Sreedhar



# WHOA!

**You have over 25 different Teaching  
Assistants to choose from!!**

- Ron Sarma
- Akshara
- Yixiong Fang
- En Zheng
- Nadayanur Sathis Kanna
- Yabsera Yemanberhan
- Madhavi Gulavani
- Shravanth Srinivas
- Puru Samal
- Malihah Rahaman
- Khushee
- Mugur Preda
- Praneeth Chaitanya Jonnavithula
- Thomas Seleshi
- Anurag



# OFFICE HOURS

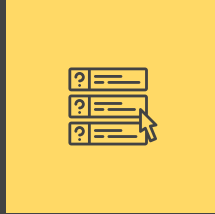
There are office hours every day, in Pittsburgh time and Kigali time.

- You'll come prepared
- You'll want a better answer
- And you'll likely feel rushed

TAs can help you the most when you've come prepared, but sometimes they are not able to solve your problem and may move onto the next student because your question(s) are taking up too much time.

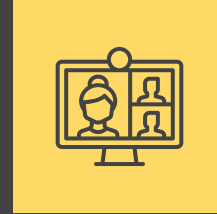


# PIAZZA VERSUS OFFICE HOURS



## PIAZZA

You'll find hints/tips on solving homework there, and you'll also get to see whether other students had the same questions. TAs are supposed to respond really quickly on Piazza.



## OFFICE HOURS

You can have a deeper conversation about your question and have more privacy. You can also get to know the different TAs personally, and befriend them, if you like.



# STUDY GROUPS & MENTORS .02

A semester-long setup for your success

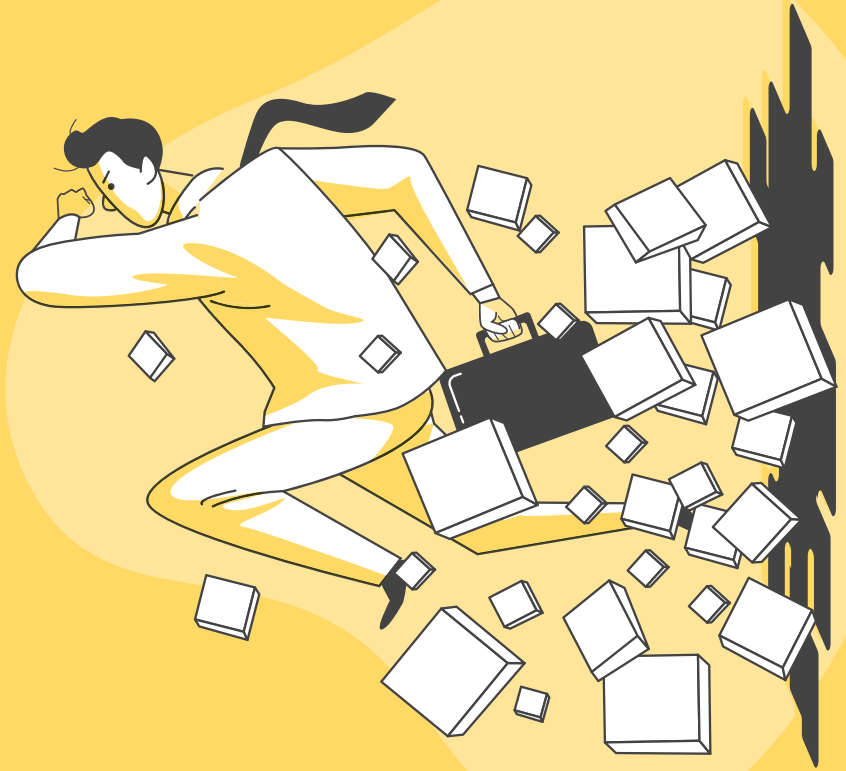


# GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR STUDY GROUP

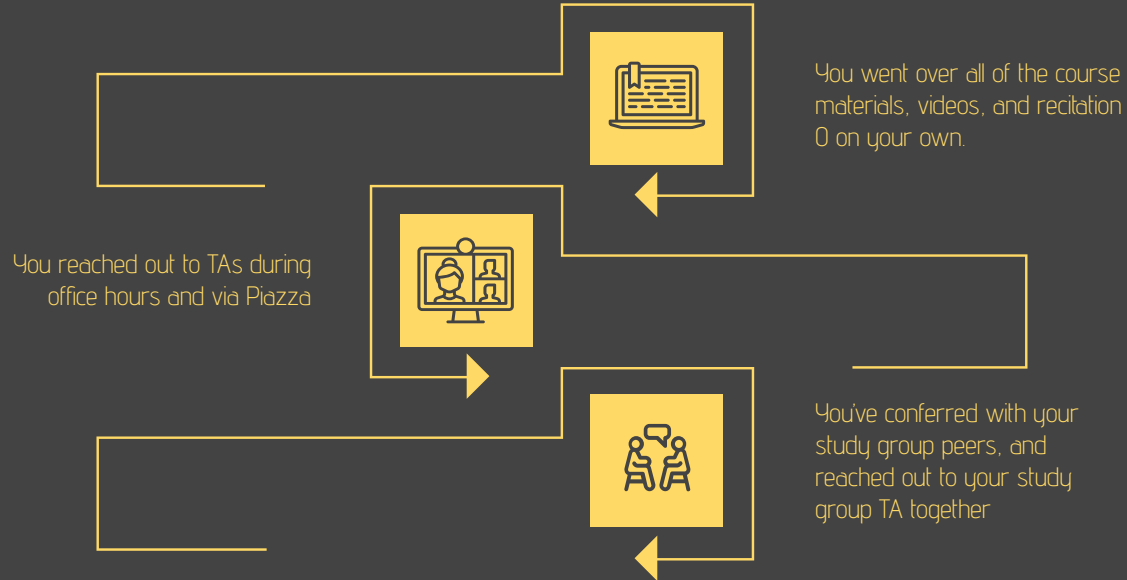
You are all allowed to work together to find solutions to your homeworks. You should have been assigned to a study group during the start of the semester. If you need a new study group, just message your TA mentor or approach another TA during office hours.



**YOUR STUDY  
GROUP TA  
MENTOR WENT  
THROUGH THE  
SAME  
PROBLEMS**



# SO FAR...



# STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS

## 03. CENTER

Do you need a personal tutor or an academic coach?

# THE STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER IS LOCATED IN THE BASEMENT OF CYERT HALL (BEHIND WARNER)



## TUTOR

You can request for a personal tutor, who will meet with you on a weekly basis to assist you with Intro to Deep Learning



## ACADEMIC COACH

The SASC can pair you with an Academic Coach, who will help you organize your schedule and get you on track with all your classes



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## THERAPIST/COUNSELOR

Counseling and Psychological Services (in Pittsburgh) and the Solid Minds Counselling Clinic (in Kigali) will support you when your stress becomes overwhelming

# WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU'VE GONE THROUGH ALL OF THESE RESOURCES?

You tried your best to go through the course material, videos, and preparatory recitations

You've been to office hours and have looked on piazza for similar questions



You reached out to your study group, as well as your study mentor, to try getting in-depth help from someone who knows you better

You tried to find a tutor and/or a coach at the student academic success center

# PROFESSOR BHIKSHA RAJ .04

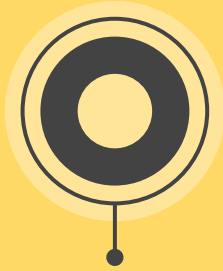
Prof wants you to learn,  
and he is happy to help

# HELP US HELP YOU!

When you share your struggles with us, we are better able to understand your situation and assess what is the best way to help you

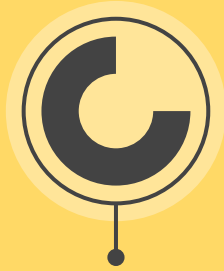


# RUNNING LOW ON STAMINA...



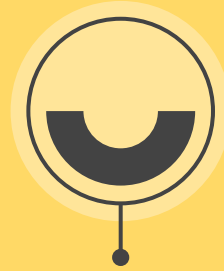
## ENERGY DURING WEEK 1

Feeling stressed is ok,  
you're in a tough school



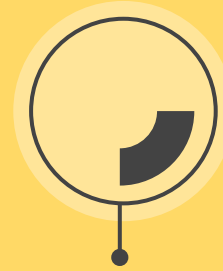
## ENERGY DURING WEEK 3

This course is really  
demanding, and it gets  
harder every week



## ENERGY DURING WEEK 5

Your personal health is  
more important than  
anything else



## ENERGY DURING WEEK 7

Learning is an ongoing  
process, even after the  
semester ends

# You're not the only one

Every semester, this course encounters students who are absolutely drowning in work, facing personal health issues, running into logistics problems, and who are unsure where to turn.





# Disability?

In the case that you have a disability (on record with Office of Disability Resources) that is impeding your ability to learn, you should let the Professor know

# Desire to learn

You should be enthusiastic about learning the material, because the Prof is working hard to teach, too!

# Forthright about personal situation

We wonder what happened to students who fail, because we could have helped them pass if they had only reached out to tell us about what's happening in their life

# Let's review what to do when you're struggling



00

Go through all of the course material, even if you don't understand it all.



01

Go to the daily office hours, check piazza for similar questions, and ask a question on piazza



02

Work together with your study group, so that everyone has a better chance at succeeding! As a group, you can approach your mentor for more advice



03

The Student Academic Success Center can provide you with a Tutor and/or an Academic Coach



04

The Professor cares about you and your learning

# Sometimes, a TA will personally reach out to students

## WELL BELOW AVERAGE

You will be contacted about your current grades because we see that you've fallen behind

## DISAPPEARED

If you haven't been submitting homeworks and haven't been responding to project and study group emails





# YOU CAN DO IT!

There are many ways to reach out for help

Professor Bhiksha Raj's office:  
6705 Gates & Hillman Complex