

Guidelines for preparing the final project and presentation – COS597F, Fall 2013

Objectives: The second half of the course is dedicated to presentations by students on topics of their choice related to information theory in computer science. The objectives of these presentations are:

- (1) To teach the class a diverse set of topics related to information theory in CS.
- (2) To learn one topic in-depth – enough to be able to teach it and write the final report.
- (3) To learn how to give a great Theory talk.

Specifically, you will deliver a 60 minute talk on the subject of your choice, and submit a final report on that topic. *The main purpose of the talk is to teach other students the subject matter. The main purpose of the report is to showcase your understanding.* Note that these are consistent, but distinct goals.

The day before your presentation you should email me the title and abstract of your talk.

What makes an excellent presentation?

- (1) The purpose of the presentation is to teach the subject matter. Keep this goal in mind when preparing it, especially when deciding what to include and what to keep out.
- (2) Keep the presentation simple. Don't overcomplicate things to make them look cool. At the same time, make sure to cover the main points/proofs. In the words of Albert Einstein, "Make things as simple as possible, but not simpler."
- (3) Do not run over time!
- (4) Be prepared to answer questions during/after the presentation.

I will collect short questionnaires at the end of each talk, to see what was learned. Filling these questionnaires is part of the participation component of your grade. Based on those I will try to provide feedback to the speaker, but these reports do not directly affect the speaker's grade.

Report specifications: The report should be typed using letter paper and normal font (at least 11pts). The recommended length is 5-10 pages single spaced. The report should demonstrate understanding of the material you chose to cover.

Report due date: Friday, December 13, 2013.