Guidelines for the Term Papers

First Draft due: Nov 18th   Final paper due: Dec 15th

1. Your first draft should be 2-3 pages long. It should contain a fairly detailed overview of your final draft. I will grade it quickly and give you feedback. Your final draft should be no more than 7 pages long. It is fine if your final draft is shorter than 7 pages.

2. Your grade will be based on my impression of how well you have understood new technical material. This will, of course, be a function of how well you explain, in writing, what you have understood. Technical writing is difficult for most people and doing it well requires, at the minimum:

   (a) A clear, well-thought out organization of the paper.

   (b) Use of clear and consistent notation.

   (c) Use of appropriate examples and illustrations.

   (d) A balance between precision and intuition.

   It takes considerable practice to be able to meet even these minimum standards consistently. You might want to borrow from our library some of the books mentioned in this webpage:
   `http://www.math.ucdavis.edu/ jjohnson/writing.html.`

3. Use LaTeX for your paper. This is the standard type-setting system for mathematics and much of computer science. I will post the LaTeX file for a sample paper on the course page, in case you have not used LaTeX before and need help. Of course, there is plenty of LaTeX help on the web as well.