6.047/6.878 Computational Biology, Fall 2007: Scribe Policy

In previous years, students in this course have suggested that it would be helpful to have more thorough lecture notes than the slides provide. Therefore, for this year, we have reduced the number of problem sets and created a scribing requirement, which will also help you understand a topic of your choice in greater depth.

Each student taking 6.047/6.878 for credit must scribe one lecture. Given the size of the class this year, two or more students will scribe for most lectures. We will let you know in advance who will scribe the same lecture. We strongly prefer that you collaborate to submit one set of scribe notes. Please contact us quickly if this is not practical due to logistical or scheduling problems.

Please e-mail your preferences for lectures to 6047-staff@csail.mit.edu, including at least one lecture before and one after the midterm. If you know another student with whom you would like to work, please send us one e-mail with both your names.

Submission timeline

- **By 2PM, day of lecture:** the lecture slides will be posted on the course web site.
- **By 8PM, the day after the lecture:** a rough draft of your scribe notes is due.
- **By 8PM, six days after the lecture:** final version due (Mon. for Tue. lectures; Wed. for Thu. lectures).

If either of the above deadlines falls on the same day another assignment is due, then you receive an automatic two-day extension on the scribe notes deadline. Scribe notes will be provided by the course staff for Lecture 13 (Oct. 18), which would otherwise fall due just before the midterm. For Lecture 14 (Oct. 23), which is two days before the midterm (and will not be covered), the first draft will not be due until Friday, Oct. 26.

Please submit scribe notes electronically to 6047-staff@csail.mit.edu.

Guidelines for scribe notes

Together, the lecture slides and scribe notes should provide a self-contained narrative of each lecture. This means that the scribe notes can cite, copy, reuse or modify the slides as needed. They should also pay particular attention to issues that the slides don’t convey well on their own. For example: What is the background and motivation for the problem we are studying? How does each idea presented in the slides relate to the next? Is there an intuitive explanation for the complicated equation on the slide? Are there particular caveats, assumptions or exceptions to a statement? What were some particularly insightful questions and answers that we discussed? Were there any common misunderstandings or points of confusion? Did we stumble upon any good ideas for a final project? Of course, the course staff will be available to discuss or clarify each point.

Since this is the trailblazing year for scribing in this class, there are no examples to rely on. Some scribe notes from 6.897 Advanced Data Structures can be found at the URL below. However, our expectations differ in important respects, since we provide lecture slides containing most of the necessary figures and equations, and you are not required to cite research articles or other sources outside of the class materials.

http://courses.csail.mit.edu/6.897/spring05/lec.html

**First draft:** Given the time constraint, use the first draft to remind yourself and others in attendance of the salient points above, noting what will be expanded upon later. While we do not expect the first draft to be highly polished, its usefulness will be taken into account in your scribing grade. We will post the draft immediately so that other students can use it for review, and later send you feedback promptly with suggested enhancements.

**Final draft:** The final draft should present the lecture material in essay format, which can be used (in conjunction with the slides) as a mostly self-contained reference by you and your classmates for the midterm, final project, and future research.

**Formatting:** We encourage you to use \LaTeX for scribe notes, but this is not required. Please submit a “source code” version of your notes, and also a PDF if possible.