This year’s lecture scribes will have the exciting opportunity to take part in the creation of a course textbook. Your aim is to select a chapter from the existing scribe notes and significantly improve it. The task will differ based on the state of the current notes, and it is up to you to determine how best to make your chapter a more useful resource. You should make sure to include in your scribe notes any new lecture material that the notes do not cover (you may want to check other chapters of the book to be sure that the material is not covered elsewhere). You should also be sure that all material in the lecture is clearly explained in your final draft, and add to the chapter any particularly insightful questions and responses that come up in lecture. You may also decide to rework sections of the chapter for clarity, restructure the chapter to improve its flow, improve figures to make them clearer and more visually appealing, rework and expand figure legends, create or suggest additional tables or figures for the chapter, or add infoboxes containing worked example problems or summaries of recent publications. Your main goal is to make the notes a more useful resource for your classmates and for future generations of students.

As a starting point, you should begin with the latex source of the scribe notes from last year’s lecture. Before scribing, you will carefully review these notes, note their strengths and weaknesses, and come up with a plan of how you will improve them. The course has a rich set of material consisting of lecture slides, video and audio of lectures from Fall 2010, scribe notes from the last few years, and additional resources, all available online at http://compbio.mit.edu/teaching.html#compbioF10. You will draw on these materials in preparing your finished notes.

Each student taking the course for credit must sign up to scribe one lecture. Given the size of the class, two or more students will end up scribing for many lectures. In this case, you should collaborate to submit one set of scribe notes.

This assignment provides a guideline for how to best manage your time during scribing, and how to achieve the best ultimate result. Overall, the scribing assignment should take you roughly 1 problem set worth of work.

Timeline

- **Sign up to scribe**: Please sign up at the course wiki [https://wikis.mit.edu/confluence/display/6DOT047fa12/Scribing+sign-up](https://wikis.mit.edu/confluence/display/6DOT047fa12/Scribing+sign-up) or simply e-mail your preferences to the course TA.

- **With the first problem set (Due September 24)**: Carefully review the chapter on the material you will scribe. Answer the questions in the first problem set on the current state of the material and how you plan to improve it.

- **10pm 1 week after the day of the lecture**: final version due. You should upload all of your source files to the athena directory, and also email the course TA a pdf of your final chapter, entitled LectureXX_ChapterXX_Topic.pdf.

- When you submit the scribe notes, also email the course TA answers to the questions in the "Describe your experience" section of this handout. **Be sure to clearly describe the improvements that you have made to your chapter.**

If the deadline for the final version falls on the same day another assignment is due, then you receive an automatic two-day extension on the deadline.

Guidelines

**Using the latex template**

The scribe will prepare the chapter using the provided latex template, which will contain a draft of the notes compiled from previous years. Specific instructions for using this template are included in the “Using the scribe latex template” document on the Materials page on the stellar site.

You will also have access to the audio and video files from previous lectures as a resource.

**Before the lecture - review the relevant material and plan improvements**

Before the lecture, you should carefully review the chapter that you will be improving, as well as the associated lecture slides and audiovisual material. You should complete the final question on the first problem set, which asks you to assess the current state of the chapter and plan how you will revise it.
After the lecture – complete, revise, polish, and reflect

0 - Complete your notes with the lecture

1. As you attend lecture, you should pay particular attention to issues that the slides and existing notes don’t convey well, and to new material that is not covered in the existing notes. For example, questions to think about are:

- Is any of the material in the lecture not covered in the current set of scribe notes?
- What is the background and motivation for the problem we are studying?
- Is there an intuitive explanation for the complicated equation on the slide or a better way to explain it than how the scribe notes do?
- Are there particular caveats, assumptions or exceptions to a statement that are not made clear in the notes?
- What were some particularly insightful questions and answers that we discussed?
- Were there any common misunderstandings or points of confusion?

1 - Complete your notes with recitation material

1. Some of the material for a chapter will not be covered in lecture, but instead in the recitation that week, so make sure you attend recitation. Think critically whether that material fits best in your chapter, and if not which chapter it fits best under.

2. You should work with the course TA to get the recitation notes that they have prepared, as they are already written up in latex.

2 - Finalize your notes

1. You should now be ready to save your finished chapter and notify the course staff.

2. Please read it over, or have a friend read it, to make sure it flows and is comprehensible from beginning to end.

3. Your finished chapter will be due one week after the lecture.

3 - Describe your experience

Please upload your answers to these questions to the directory where your scribe notes reside on athena.

1. What overall changes did you make to the notes from previous years?

2. What did you spend the most time on?

3. What materials did you use as sources of information (slides/audio/transcripts/recitation notes/outside references)?

4. If there were two scribes, how did you divide up the work?

Grading

You will be graded on your improvement of the text, figures, and figure legends relative to the current set of notes. If you are scribing a lecture for which there is no current set of scribe notes, you will be graded on the clarity, flow, and completeness of the text and figures.

FAQ

Q: What do I do if something in the notes was not covered in lecture?
A: Read through existing material (this year’s slides, previous years’ lectures, etc.). Try to understand what’s there and present the material in a way that will be understandable to a new reader. Don’t hesitate to ask the course staff questions on this material.

Q: How do I edit the latex source?
A: See the document “Using the scribe latex template” on stellar.

Q: What if I cannot attend the recitation after the lecture I am scribing?
A: You are still responsible for incorporating this material. Find a friend that takes good notes.

Q: What do I do if I am scribing a lecture that was not given in previous years?
A: In this case, you should create a clear and comprehensive set of scribe notes for the lecture. Please format your notes using the provided latex template.

Q: What do I do if the lecture I am scribing covers multiple chapters?
A: Choose one of the chapters to improve. But, make sure to include any new material from the lecture.