

Graduate Bonus Opportunities

Paper Review (5% of 15%)

Full Research Project (10% of 15%)

Paper Review [+5%]

An important component of any research community is the review process, where active researchers in the field determine the quality, novelty, and significance of papers submitted to a workshop, conference, or journal. The typical process is doubly-blind where the reviewers and the authors are blind to the others identity to prevent many problems that occur in a non-doubly blind system (such as bias, silencing of new ideas, etc...). While many people think the goal of the review process is to be critical of others work, I recommend you think of the process as a way for you to help another researcher improve there work (either for the current publication or for a future submission).

For these bonus marks you will be assigned three random projects from the course to review. You will be graded on:

- **Quality of your writing.** This includes spelling, grammar, and writing style.
- **Constructive feedback.** Improving the quality of the papers, regardless of whether they are accepted or not, is a key outcome of the review process. You should write concise and useful feedback so that the authors can improve their submissions.
- **Due diligence.** Although reviewers are not expected to have complete mastery of the subject, it is your duty to fill the gaps in your knowledge in order to fully understand the paper that you are reviewing. Moreover, even if the paper is difficult to read, you should make an effort to understand the key ideas and the takeaways of the paper.
- **Decorum.** Authors are more receptive to feedback when is presented in a polite and tactful manner. We expect you to restrain yourself from harsh criticisms about the authors, and instead focus on providing useful feedback about the paper.

IMPORTANT: To participate in the review process to get bonus marks you must volunteer **before** the first draft deadline! Details on how to volunteer will be announced well in advanced through eclass and in the course.

Research Project [+10%]

This gives you an opportunity to explore a topic more deeply, or to start working on a project that is related to your thesis. To receive all of the points in this category your project must go above and beyond the minimum requirements of the Mini-Project. A project which fits this criteria will: contribute a novel algorithm or architecture, be a complete chapter to your thesis (not including the introduction, background, or final remarks), be of the quality of a workshop (or conference) paper.

You will be marked on the following:

- **Format.** Have you formatted your paper in preparation for a conference (or as a chapter to your thesis)? This can be any major conference in your research area (as long as you specify to the graders!). Is your paper written like a normal research paper?

- **Literature Survey.** Have you provided a thorough literature survey of the topic you are exploring? This includes justifying your work in the surrounding literature. What are you doing that is different (i.e how is your contribution novel)?
- **Motivation.** Do you properly justify the datasets (or toy problems) and algorithms you are using in any empirical study?
- **Overall quality of submission.** Is the paper close to submission quality?
- **Novelty.** Have you attempted to contribute a novel idea?

IMPORTANT: It would be advantageous to get your project idea looked at by the TAs and/or Martha before you submit your first draft. This will prevent any problematic outcomes.