

About Calculus Workshops and Write-ups

“If you want to have good ideas you must have many ideas. Most of them will be wrong, and what you have to learn is which ones to throw away.” –Albert Einstein

“I try only to write clearly and I have the very good fortune to think clearly so that the writing comes out as I think, in satisfactory shape.”

–Isaac Asimov

Some of our workshop problems are difficult; they are meant to be. Don't be discouraged if your first attempts to solve them don't work; you'll have enough time to try out several ideas, to discuss them with other students, with the peer mentor, and with the professor. It's all part of the learning process.

You will hand in a written solution to one of the problems in the worksheet. At the end of the workshop, the professor will announce which problem it will be. Your written solution is often called your “write-up.” It should be handed in at the beginning of the next workshop. No late write-ups will be accepted.

Your write-up should contain a clear and complete explanation of your solution to the problem. This exposition will have a big effect on your grade. Write in complete, grammatical sentences, and include all the information necessary for the reader to understand your explanation. In particular, include the statement of the problem. How could a reader understand an answer if he or she does not know what the question is? Don't assume that the reader already knows the question or the answer.

Imagine that this explanation is your contribution to a textbook, and that you want the textbook to be as good as you can make it.