Lab Write-Up Suggestions for MATH 2374

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Lab write-ups will be one of the most difficult parts of this course. While you have much practice doing math, you have little practice writing and explaining math. That’s what the labs are; I’ll be grading on how well you write and explain math.

I am giving you a sample lab that Nick put together. The big thing that I want you to notice about his lab write-up is this: For each problem he broke the solution into pieces. He explained what he was doing (except for trivial stuff) at each step and why he was doing it (or how it helped him solve the problem). For instance, the first problem has four parts:

1. finding the points,
2. implicitly differentiating and getting slopes,
3. finding the tangent line, and
4. graphing.

Other lab write-up rules include

- Use complete sentences and correct spelling and grammar. You’ll recall that a complete sentence begins with a capital letter, contains (at minimum) a noun and a verb, and ends with a period.

- Follow instructions.

- Use your own words. You can copy the statement of the problem, but from there on everything should own words.
• Organize your work. Your final handed in write-up should not start problem 3 on page 3 while ending problem 2 on page 4. I’ll dock points for problems out of order (especially because copy and paste is at your disposal).

• The goal of these labs is communication. If Mathematica input/output is helpful to whatever point you’re trying to make, then include it. Otherwise, don’t include it.

• Make the write up flow. You’re trying to explain to me how you’re doing the problem; there should be a natural flow to what you’re saying.

• I NEVER want to see Mathematica error messages in your lab write-ups.