Writing Checklist

Spencer Smith

October 6, 2020

- LaTeX points

  - ☐ Only tex file (and possibly pdf files, or image files) are under version control (`aux` files etc. are not under version control)

  - ☐ Opening and closing "quotes" are used (`‘‘quotes’’`)

  - ☐ Periods that do not end sentences are followed by only one space: `‘‘I like Dr.\ Smith.’’`, or for no linebreaks: `‘‘I like Dr.~Smith.’’`

  - ☐ Long names in math mode use either mathit or text, or equivalent: $coeff$ (`$coeff$`) versus coeff (`$\mathit{coeff}$`) versus coeff (`$\text{coeff}$`).

  - ☐ For CAS 741 the instructor would like to be able to add comments to your tex files. Please be sure to include the `Comments.tex` file in your repo and in your tex files.

  - ☐ Text lines should be 80 characters wide. That is, the text has a hard-wrap at 80 characters. This is done to facilitate meaingful diffs between different commits. (Some ideas on how to do this are given below.)

  - ☐ Template comments (plt) do not show in the pdf version, either by removing them, or by turning them off.

  - ☐ References and labels are used so that maintenance is feasible

  - ☐ Cross-references between documents are used as appropriate

  - ☐ BibTeX is used for generating bibliographic references

- Structure

☐ There is always some text between section headings

☐ There aren't instances of only one subsection within a section

- Spelling, Grammar and attention to detail

  ☐ Each punctuation symbol (period, comma, semicolon, question mark, exclamation point) has no space before it.

  ☐ Opening parentheses (brackets) have a space before, closing parentheses have a space after the symbol.

  ☐ Parentheses (brackets) occur in pairs, one opening and one closing

  ☐ All sentences begin with a capital letter.

  ☐ Document is spell checked!

  ☐ Grammar has been checked (review, ask someone else to review (at least a few sections)).

  ☐ That and which are used correctly (http://www.kentlaw.edu/academics/ lrw/grinker/LwtaThat_Versus_Which.htm)

  ☐ Symbols used outside of a formula should be formatted the same way as they are in the equation. For instance, when listing the variables in an equation, you should still use math mode for the symbols.

  ☐ Include a `.gitignore` file in your repo so that generated files are ignored by git. More information is available on-line on Hidden files and hidden directories.

  ☐ All hyperlinks work

  ☐ Every figure has a caption

  ☐ Every table has a heading

  ☐ All acronyms are expanded on their first usage, using capitals to show the source of each letter in the acronym. Defining the acronym only in a table at the beginning of the document is not enough.

- Avoid Low Information Content phrases (List of LIC phrases)

  ☐ "in order to" simplified to "to"

      ☐ ...

- Writing style

      ☐ Avoid sentences that start with "It."

      ☐ Paragraphs are structured well (clear topic sentence, cohesive)

      ☐ Paragraphs are concise (not wordy)

Fixed Width LaTeX Text

Having the LaTeX text at a fixed width (hard-wrap) is useful when the source
is under version control. The fixed line lengths help with isolating the changes
between diffs.

Although the checklist mentions an 80 column width, any reasonable fixed
width is fine.

The hard-wrap shouldn't be done manually. Most editors will have some
facility for fixed width. In emacs it is called auto-fill. Some advice from
previous and current students:

- In TEXMaker, you can do: User > Run script > hardwordwrap

- Wrapping is easy in VSCode, Emacs, and Vim