18.310C Heap Sort Grading and Commenting, Spring 2009

Assign 10 points: 5 for content and 5 for writing. For the first draft, the writing grade should be based on effort. For the revision, the writing grade should be based on the following rubric. Tell students what writing grade they would get if this draft were turned in as the final. See, for example, the last sentence of this fictional comment:

> Grade: 4/5 for math, 3/5 for effort. This explanation does a nice job of explaining the steps of the algorithm: the example is particularly helpful. As you revise, state the purpose of the algorithm and the structure of the explanation before you go into any detail, and be sure to define terms before you use them. Also, remember to spell check and proofread—there were many typos. Let me know if you have any questions. If this were the final version, it would have received a writing grade of 2/5.

When you assign the "advisory" writing grade (i.e. 2/5 in the example above) I recommend rounding borderline grades down rather than up because, if students make any changes when they revise, they will expect to receive a higher grade for the final. Leave room so you can increase the grade.

Grading Rubric
(The rubric refers to the "audience." Remember that the assigned audience is a classmate who missed class and so is unfamiliar with heaps and the heap sort algorithm.)

5/5 The purpose of the algorithm and the structure of the explanation are communicated before details are given.
Context is given for definitions.
Terms are defined before or as they are used.
The explanation of the steps of the algorithm is clear.
Care is taken with the text (e.g., the text is proofread).

4/5 One of the above criteria isn't met, or there are minor problems with multiple criteria, but the text would still be fairly easy for the audience to understand.

3/5 Problems with the above criteria cause the text to be difficult for the audience to understand, but reasonable study of the text would enable the audience to figure out what the author is saying.

2/5 Multiple issues seriously interfere with audience understanding.

1/5 The assignment is incomplete: there is too little text to assess.

0/5 The assignment is not turned in.

ruff@mit.edu