

Bulletin Board Guidelines

CS51 Course Staff

Spring 2006

1 Overview

In the past, CS51 students have asked course-related questions by emailing a TF list. This caused a few problems, as TFs would answer the same question many times, while only those students who felt comfortable asking questions would receive help. This year, we have replaced the email list with an online bulletin board. All questions, answers, and hints posted on the bulletin board will be visible to the entire class. The names of students posting questions, however, will be shown as anonymous and made available only to the teaching staff. We will also post course-wide announcements to a section of the board, so it is expected that you check it regularly.

The rest of this document describes the purpose of the different parts of the bulletin board, and it lists our posting rules. Please read and follow the rules.

2 Sections of the Board

- Announcements

Throughout the semester, the head TF will send course-wide emails containing reminders and important changes. When sent, these messages will be posted to the “Announcements” section of the board. This section won’t include everything said in lecture or anything from your own TF, so you shouldn’t consider it exhaustive. But it will capture in one place all of the important course announcements.

- Assignment Discussion

For each assignment and tests, there will be a section of the bulletin board for questions. Please use these areas to ask for clarifications on the assignment, explanations of the code we start you with, and help with related concepts. One of the TFs will post a response as soon as possible, either answering your question or emailing you individually if the question is too specific. You should get in the habit of reading the board regularly as it will likely help you with your own work.

3 Rules for Posting

1. **Be appropriate** — This is the most obvious but most important guideline. Remember that your posts are not anonymous to the course staff and will be read by your section leader and professor. It is not the right place for socializing or for voicing complaints. Always be respectful of others.
2. **Remember your other resources** — If your question wouldn't be helpful to other students, email your TF. If you want to request an extension, email `allain@fas`. If you're looking for a course handout, check the website. If you have a complaint or personal concern, email your TF or `allain@fas`.
3. **Read before you post** — Your question may have already been answered, so save everyone some time by reading first.
4. **Don't post code that we didn't give you** — Feel free to ask about code from the assignment or from section notes, but don't include code for the assignment that other students weren't given.
5. **Don't sign your name** — We really want to keep posts anonymous, so remember to not include your name.
6. **Don't answer other students' questions** — We need to make sure that answers are consistent and that the course staff agrees with them.
7. **Register with the right information** — Use your FAS alias or "first_last" name as your username, your FAS account as your email address, and uncheck the "Hide Email from public?" box.