Dear All,

I have finished reading all the mutual evaluations and self-evaluations. I wish I could have organized the class as well as you hoped for; but I am relieved to see that you have taken my simple initiative much further than I could imagine. At the end, I learned much more and got many good ideas from your comments, suggestions and criticism. Thank you all!

I feel compelled to share with you some common comments from our self-evaluations...

◊ It is mind-opening to have seen an algorithm or a type of algorithms, such as iterative methods, richly interpreted and used in many different ways and with many different applications by the students. This is a change from a passive study via homework to an active digestion, investigation, re-examination and research.

◊ We gain positive and valuable experience in team work, despite some not-so-pleasant experience in the past. A team is no longer for sharing the points or grades from assigned homework. The team finds and describes its own relevant problems of interest and challenge. The teammates seek mutual contribution, respects and credits. It is very touching to me that almost everyone thanks his or her teammates for intellectual stimulation, rigorous inquiry style, well-thought approach and hard work. This is indeed an important aspect of individual position and integrity.

◊ There are multi-disciplinary influence, cross-disciplinary learning, and mutual-enhancement within a team work and from the presentations by the other teams. We have learned from each other how to inquiry, investigate and succeed. As a result, each individual’s capability to recognize, analyze and solve a problem is enhanced.

◊ Some of us have figured out how to position ourselves, and hence gained more confidence, in individual thesis work in connection with collaborative work, noticing that many research topics of today have passed beyond the conventional boundaries.

◊ We gain different perspectives of our own work by evaluating other people’s works.

◊ We have also learned from each other many concrete examples and techniques how to communicate and present clearly and effectively and how to work efficiently.

Finally, I will need more time to email every team a summary of the others’ evaluation on the phase-3 presentation (I have a trip to NYU early next week). Wish you a safe and happy holiday break!

–xiaobai