How to Review a Paper
What’s the point behind peer reviewing?

- Maintain standards of quality
- Improve performance
- Provide credibility to results
Elements of a Review

- Short summary of the text
- Contribution statement
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Typical questions to ask
  - How relevant is this work?
  - How is the argument flow?
  - What is new about this work?
  - Which problem is this work trying to solve?
  - Which other works does it extend?
  - What did the authors do?
  - How did they do it?
  - How valid is their approach?
  - How relevant are the results?
Critical Review

- A review is NOT about personal interests or personal criticism of the author
- The review should focus on content and presentation

Ethics in Scientific Communication

- It is ok to consider a contribution to be superfluous or of no need for the scientific community.
- It is not ok to personally judge or insult the author.
REJECTED

Shit My Reviewers Say

Collecting the finest real specimens of reviewer comments since 1456

@yourpapersucks
“The paper comes with proofs, but – at a first glance – they seem to be more cute than useful.”

“Recommendation: Publish elsewhere
Comments: [none]”

“Figure 6. This figure is silly.”

“Why chase a gene in this ridiculous organism?”

“Unless the authors performed some clever pagan ritual before euthanizing the animals I would use ‘killed’ (or ‘euthanized’) instead of ‘sacrificed’”
Don’t do this!

The authors have put a lot of effort in their submission, and they might be still learning. Be accommodating and respecting, and help them improve their work.

That’s why we do reviews: to ensure high quality
Tasks of a Reviewer

• Analyse for
  • Correctness → did the authors design a valid study?
  • Originality → is this work novel? What’s new in this work?
  • Significance → is this work useful? Does it have an impact?
  • Quality → is the analysis well done? Are the conclusions justified?
  • Improvements → Does it improve over what’s already out there?
When does a paper merit publication?

- A paper merits publication if there is a scientific contribution
- Examples:
  - new and significant results
  - new knowledge through synthesis of known results
  - helpful surveys and tutorials
  - combinations of these categories
- Worth to publish: small, surprising results that stimulate a new direction for future research or has interesting applications
- Not worth to publish: results with flaws in methodology, repetition of previous work without significant improvement (debatable!)
Reviewers provide the following

• Decision in the form of a recommendation
  • accept
  • (accept with minor revision)
  • (accept with major revision)
  • reject

• Justification for the recommendation
• Ways for improvement (particularly in case of rejection)
Typical Review Report

- Overall judgement (usually scale from 1-5)
- Summary (1-5 sentences)
- Strengths and weaknesses in:
  - Originality and significance
  - Quality (methodology, precision, errors, presentation)
- Justification for the rating

A so-called “meta reviewer” revises all reviews, and summarizes them
Possible Verdicts (Smith, 1989)

- Major results - very significant
- Good, solid, interesting work; a definite contribution
- Minor, but positive, contribution to knowledge
- Elegant and technically correct but useless
- Neither elegant nor useful, but not actually wrong
- Wrong and misleading
- The paper is so badly written that a technical evaluation is impossible
Some Final Issues

- Multiple submissions at different conferences is not allowed
- Plagiarism results in immediate rejection (and possibly banning)
- Anonymity is sometimes important
- Conflict of interests: Reviewers should not review papers of people they worked with
- Reviewed papers should remain confidential
You’re going to be a reviewer!

- Read the paper you are asked to review
- Write a review, guided by these slides and your own intuition on how to improve the paper you are reading
- Don’t worry! Your review won’t influence any grades! It will only help the authors improve their work.
- Be nice 😊
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.04.18</td>
<td>Introduction and Topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.05.18</td>
<td>Submission deadline: 1. paper draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.05.18</td>
<td>Submission deadline: one slide for 60 seconds presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.05.18</td>
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<td>29.05.18</td>
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<td>12.06.18</td>
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<td>Mock presentations</td>
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<td>24.07.18</td>
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How to submit your paper?

- Go to https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=hs2018
- Create an account
- Click on “enter as author”
How to submit your paper?

- Fill in the form with your information, and upload your submission (there is only one author for your submission, and that is you)
- You can update the submission as many times as you like before the deadline
How to submit your review?

- You will receive a “review request” after the paper submission deadline.
- Click on the link below to access the paper you should review.

Click on the link below to access the paper you should review:

https://easychair.org/conferences/review_request_offline.cgi?code=x56ioSOE2sCAhuhi2ohD

You will have to create an EasyChair account first unless you have one already.

Please be aware that this is an unmonitored email alias, so please do not reply to this email.
To contact EasyChair use the EasyChair contact Web page
https://easychair.org/contact.cgi
How to submit your review?

- This time, enter as a “subreviewer”
How to submit your review?

• Click of the submission’s ID (in the screenshot, it is 3)

• Click on “Answer request”

• Then click “I agree to review this submission”, and submit
How to submit your review?

- Click on “submit review” then fill the form

The review request has been registered as accepted. Mohamed Khamis will be notified about your decision by email.
Recap

• Today you learned about reviewing and how to write a review
• Submit the second (complete) draft on easychair before 29.05 @ 23:59
• You will be assigned to review one of your colleague’s papers, accept the request and submit your review on easychair.org before 08.06 @ 23:59