

6.S899: A Graduate Section for 6.034
Leader: Randall Davis

Coming off a successful try-out last fall, we will once again this year run a graduate section of 6.034, Introduction to Artificial Intelligence, designated this year as 6.S899.

Signing up for 6.S899 will earn you graduate credit, in consequence of the extra work you'll do: in addition to the usual attendance at three lectures and one recitation of 6.034 each week, and doing the 6.034 homework and quizzes, you'll be required to attend an extra section that I will lead. It will be on Fridays from 11:00AM to noon, just after the Friday lecture, in a room to be assigned.

While the details for this extra section are not yet final, the general idea is that each week you will be required to read a research paper that we've selected to elaborate on the material presented in 6.034 that week. You'll write a one-page review of that paper, to be handed in at the beginning of the recitation on Friday (on printed paper, not by email). By doing that preparation you'll be ready to engage in an interesting discussion of the material of the week and the paper.

Your weekly write-up should not be longer than one page and should be readable by someone who hasn't read the paper. The ability to write such a review is an important skill to develop. The idea is not to include a pile of mathematical formulas or lots of code in your review. We want you to learn to extract the essential take-away message of the paper, including such things as:

1. What is the author trying to accomplish?
2. What technical methods is the author bringing to bear?
3. Did the work succeed? What does "succeed" mean in this case?
4. If it worked, *why* did it work. Where it failed, *why* did it fail? (Failures are typically among the most interesting and revealing behaviors of a program.)

If you need graduate credit, you can drop 6.034 and sign up for 6.S899 (12 units) on registration day. If you are unsure about whether you want to take 6.S899, you can decide later. Either way, attend the first session, on Friday, 7 September. We'll discuss more about what will be involved and answer questions.