

Prelim date: Friday, March 2 (in-class exam).

Topic coverage: All lecture material up to and including the lecture of 2/16/07, and all material covered in the first and second homework. We will assume you have thoroughly understood the lectures and the homework problems and carefully read our solutions sets (note that the solutions often discuss ways to think about the problems and include additional general comments about the course material). Of course, since the exam is in-class, the questions will be designed to have relatively short answers.

“Note sheet” option: You may bring one 8.5” × 11” sheet of paper, on which you have written or printed whatever you please on both sides, for consultation during the exam. (No other references, nor calculators or other objects of that ilk, are to be used.) *Rationale:* Having a reference available can alleviate some of the stress associated with exams. Also, by imposing a one-sheet (two-side) limit, we are encouraging you to organize information in your head as much as possible, which tends to greatly improve one’s efficiency at exam time. Finally, in our experience, the process of creating a brief note sheet is a very effective study activity.

Enclosure: A past prelim, with solutions written in (the first page is on the reverse of this sheet). The overall format of your exam will be roughly the same.

Some advice: We suggest that in the process of studying, you try to summarize the main points of each lecture and understand how the pieces fit together. This will help you economize in using your allotted sheet of notes wisely (in our experience, it is rarely useful to simply try to cram onto your notes sheet every single piece of information you can). Also, this study technique may help you anticipate what topics are most likely to be covered on the test.

A useful strategy for preparing for exams is to make up your own questions and try solving them yourself (or with a study group, or in office hours). Use the same techniques we do: ask yourself what happens when a condition is changed, removed, or extended. When you understand the ramifications of such alterations, you have truly understood the original concepts.