CIS 873 - Fall 2002
University of Delaware

Instructions for Written Technical Summaries

1   The Process

According to the course schedule, you will be expected to do the following after each related set of papers:

1. Prior to the presentations, read the designated papers, taking notes on questions that you may have about the paper, things you did not understand well, problems you see in their approach.

2. Listen and take notes during the presentations.

3. Write a 2-5 page technical summary of the general topic covered by the set of related papers.

4. Hand in your summary as specified in the course schedule.

2   Content

The purpose of the written summaries is to formulate your own summary, comparison, and critique of the papers presented for a specific topic. The paper should have the following sections:

1. Introduction - general description of the topic and statement of the issues involved in the topic from what you gather from the papers.

2. Summary - summarize each paper in terms of: the problem addressed, the general approach, and contributions. You should target 1-3 paragraphs on each paper here.

3. Critique - contrast and compare the work of the various papers with each other, in terms of the problems addressed, contributions, and limitations. Offer your own critique of the work and topic in general as best you can from this limited treatment of the topic.

4. Bibliography - include citations to the papers plus any other resources that you use.

When it seems more appropriate, you may do a short summary following this format for each paper individually, as long as you include critique of each paper in these summaries. Each individual summary then should not exceed 2 pages single-spaced.

3   Style

The technical summaries should be typed with a word processor or text formatter. You may use 10 or 12 point, and single or double space, but no more than 5 single-spaced 10 point pages, including bibliography. The paper should be spell-checked, and written in a technical writing style, not conversation style. Any paraphrased or direct quotes should be cited, and a bibliography should be included at the end.

IMPORTANT: Your summaries should not resemble the abstracts of the papers, but instead be written in your own words.

4   Evaluation

The written summaries will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- Technical content - how well did you summarize the key points, compare the various papers, and attempt your own critique of the work.

- Writing style - grammar, technical writing style, spelling, overall organization of sections, flow of thoughts.

- Formatting - did you follow the formatting guidelines? cite properly, include a bibliography at the end?