

OCTOBER 4

RE: MA15900 Online Technical HW issues, hints, etc.

Hi,

Occasionally you will have problems dealing with the HW system, that is unavoidable. Be as proactive and self-sufficient as you as can. That is for your own benefit. Keep the 7 dropped/excused scores in the back of your mind, because that is the main reason for those for sure.

The main point of the HW is to help you learn, force you to think, reason, and understand. Use it as it benefits you best. Make sure you always do a few textbook problems as a backup if you ever have technical problems, simply to make sure you understand the HW for quizzes and exams. I have included a plethora of TECHNICAL SUGGESTIONS BELOW, if you are having technical problems.

THINGS TO REMEMBER...

Make sure you fully understand and are using all the "Online HW General Hints" and the relevant "Online HW Specific Hints" posted on the MA15900 webpage

www.math.purdue.edu/MA15900

TYPING IN ANSWERS TO ONLINE HW QUESTIONS

*****99.9% of the time a student tells me CengageNOW is not accepting correct answers, the student is actually typing the answer in the wrong format or not simplifying the answer enough. **For typing answers into CengageNOW in the correct form, the best guides are the odd-numbered problems answers in the back of the book, the answers in the textbook's examples, the answers on the even answer overheads in the recitations, and the answers I recommend in lectures.

The system itself is working fine, by whatever definition of "fine" you wish to use.

If you are having anything that remotely resembles a browser compatibility issue, these can appear suddenly at any point during the semester and they are usually associated with MACs like mine, but it can occur on PCs also. I have appended my usual plethora of suggestions below. When that happens, you are expected to complete the Online HW assignments on other computers until you get yours working correctly with the Online HW system, like in the campus computer labs(SEE BELOW).

Keep at it.

Best,

Owen K. Davis

TECHNICAL HW SYSTEM ISSUES...

IF SOMETIMES THE ONLINE HW SYSTEM DOES NOT LIKE YOUR COMPUTER...

Odd technical problems can occur from time to time, which is the main reason I excuse/drop 6 HW scores for every student, automatically. In the meantime, use the many campus labs available to you to get work done until you get your computer fixed to work with the HW system. Further below and on the MA15900 website is technical support information for easy reference.

It may be a difficulty with your browser interacting with the CengageNOW system or you are unknowingly doing something incorrectly. You might try doing the assignment on a different computer and/or use a different browser. The iTap computer labs have been particularly reliable in the past. You might try using the "Browser Setup Help" on the Cengage login page. Sometimes it is as simple as using a different browser(Firefox vs IE on a PC or Safari vs Firefox on a Mac).

The "best" solution may be simply to use a PC with Firefox as the browser(other solutions are further below)

CAMPUS LABS WEBSITE:

<http://www.itap.purdue.edu/tlt/lab/about.cfm>

Problems of this type of technical nature should be referred to CengageNOW tech support, as listed at the end on the "Online Homework Instructions" on the MA15900 webpage.
www.math.purdue.edu/MA15900

HELP AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT CONTACTS

Check out the available Students links on the iLrn/CengageNOW homepage:www.ilrn.com

Get Support

Live Chat -- Mon-Thurs 8:30AM to 8PM, Friday 8:30AM to 6PM, Sunday 2PM to 9PM

Browser Setup Help; iLrn/CengageNOW system requirements, etc.

**Phone: 1-800-423-0563 (Use Option 1; and then Option 2)

Mon-Thurs 8:30AM to 9PM, Friday 8:30AM to 6PM

I know most students get the HW system to work consistently for them most of the time, but a number of you will experience technical difficulties at some point during the semester. I will send you what information I have(SEE BELOW for many such suggestions), but I am not a technical computer expert and you may have to contact tech support or use the browser compatibility links on the CENGAGE/iLrn webpage if you have browser compatibility issues.

A common symptom of browser issues is the "Enter Answer" button not working correctly.

These difficulties are by far the primary reason I drop/excuse 6 HWs, but since you want the system to work correctly for you, you might save this email somewhere handy.

I actually still do most of my HW work on my Mac whenever possible, but it too is not always friendly with the HW system.

SOME SUGGESTIONS...

1) ...try installing the newest version of Flash Player and see if this remedies the situation. Flash Player can be downloaded at www.adobe.com. You may have to restart your browser after you install/update.

2) ...try the following and see if you get the same error. Please try removing Firefox and Adobe Flash Player completely from your system, then restart. Once your computer has restarted, go to www.mozilla.com and download Firefox. Once Firefox is installed, please switch to Mozilla Firefox as your browser and download Adobe Flash Player at www.adobe.com. Once this has been installed successfully please restart again. Once you

are back up, use Firefox to access CengageNOW and try the exercises again. If you are using a wireless connection, please try connecting directly into your modem or router through a wired connection.

3) Here are the plug-ins you need to have:

Java: www.java.com

Adobe Flash Player: www.adobe.com

Adobe Shockwave Player: www.adobe.com

****FROM STUDENT#1

I run Windows Vista Ultimate as well as Mac OS X on my laptop. I booted up in Windows, and Internet Explorer would not let me submit any answers. I then downloaded Firefox for Windows. This proved to finally work for me. So if anyone else has problems on a Mac, and if they can also dual boot into Windows, installing and using Firefox works.

****FROM STUDENT#2

I have a mac and had difficulty with the "clicking issue" you mentioned. If other students are having trouble with this and do not want to download firefox, restarting safari (or whatever web browser they are using) should correct the problem. This makes it necessary to rework the problem, but should work.

***Mac Users... I was sent the following from a student...

I just wanted to let you know that I called ilrn today about the computer problems and they said that the enter answer button is apart of the Java program. He said that anyone who has the new mac snow leopard problem will eventually be able to no longer to enter answers because their is not an updated java system yet that correlates with the new mac update and it just takes longer for some computers to have problems with it and the program becomes corrupt. He said that it may be a few months before the new program comes out so I just thought I would let you know so that you could advise other mac users that they will just have to rely upon school computers. Thanks for all your help though and emailing me back!

CAMPUS LABS WEBSITE:

<http://www.itap.purdue.edu/tlt/lab/about.cfm>

Try using a PC with Firefox as the browser.

If you ever have problems like clicking on the the Enter Answer button and not getting a response from the system or any other odd problems with the HW system, please read the following information carefully and make sure you know how to get to this information if anything ever does go awry for you....

The HW system is fine(not perfect), but your computer(s) and/or connection is the normally the problem. If you are using Internet Explorer on a PC, you should try downloading Firefox for free from the web and also check that your JAVA is current. If using a MAC, then Safari is the best browser to use. Make sure you form a study group with other 15900 students to work on the HW, it is the best way to work through even technical difficulties such as this one. I have already sent you and given you info on technical difficulties in both course emails and on the webpage. Read the information below carefully and try to get yourself all set for future assignments. You are the one who has to get that figured out with the computers you work on. Sometimes it is as simple as using a different browser(Firefox vs IE on a PC or Safari vs Firefox on a Mac).

I have received some detailed technical solutions for those having computer compatibility issues from iLrn CengageNOW tech support. Also, I have had two students send suggestions that have helped them and will append those at the very end and clearly marked.

**** iLrn/CengageNOW Technical solutions....

Please try the following:

These instructions will guide you through clearing your browser cache and cookies. This is a routine computer-maintenance task that you should perform frequently. It becomes more important when you are connecting to secure sites like CengageNOW.

This document contains directions for several different browsers supported by CengageNOW. If you are using a Macintosh, follow the directions for either Safari or Mozilla. If you are using Linux, follow the directions for either Mozilla or Firefox. If you are using Windows, follow the directions for Mozilla, Firefox, or Internet Explorer.

It also may be necessary to delete temporary files. You can safely delete these files at any time. See the instructions near the end of this message.

Safari:

1. Open Safari.
2. Click "Safari" in the menu bar.
3. Click "Empty Cache."
4. When asked, "Are you sure you want to empty the cache?," click "Empty."
5. From "Safari" in the top menu, click "Preferences."
6. In the "Security" dialog box, click "Bookmarks."
7. Click "Show Cookies."
8. Click "Remove All."
9. Click "Done."

Firefox:

1. Open Firefox.

2. Click "Tools."
3. Click "Options."
4. Click "Privacy."
5. Click "Clear All."
6. Click "Clear All Information."
7. Click "Ok."

Internet Explorer 6.0:

1. Open Internet Explorer.
2. Click "Tools."
3. Click "Internet Options."
4. Click "Delete Cookies."
5. Click "OK."
6. Click "Delete Files."
7. Select the check box for "Delete all offline content."
8. Click "OK."

Internet Explorer 7.0:

1. Open Internet Explorer.
2. Click "Tools."
3. Click "Internet Options."
4. Click "Delete" in the browsing history section.
5. Click "Delete All...".
6. Select the check box for "Delete all offline content."
7. Click "OK."

To delete temporary files:

1. Open the Windows "Start" menu.
2. Click "Run."
3. Type %temp%.
4. This will bring up the "Temp" folder. Click "Edit" at the top.
5. Click "Select All."
6. Press Delete on your keyboard.

You may receive a message indicating that some of these files are programs or "read-only" files. Choose "Yes" or "Yes to all" to delete them. Any files that do not get deleted may safely be left in place.

For more information or to contact Tech Support, please visit:

<http://academic.cengage.com/support/>

I hope these help.

Best,
Owen K. Davis