Major Assignment Descriptions

Netiquette Guide

In groups of three, you will complete the Netiquette Guide described in exercise 7 at the end of chapter 9. This should be designed like an actual handout you might receive from the university, in a packet at orientation for instance. You should also hand in a completed audience analysis sheet (from ch 4) to show how you thought about your audience and how that affected your product.

Please divide up the workload equitably. Group members all get the same grade unless there is some overwhelming problem (which will be determined on a case-by-case basis and discussed privately). As much of technical writing is collaborative, it is imperative that you create successful strategies for this process, using the guidelines in chapter 3.

Job Application Project

This assignment is basically **exercise 6** at the end of the Job Application chapter. Write a **1-page** application letter and a **1-2 page** resume. Choose the resume format appropriate for you: **chronological** for a traditional student or **skills** for someone who has been in the work force for a while. Job applications must be PERFECTLY correct, so be sure to get some help proofreading and editing before submitting your assignment. The assignment will be evaluated on how well you apply concepts from the chapter to the letter and resume, so don't simply recycle a job application you already have.

- Use SHIP Career Connection to find a job listing or internship you could apply for.

- If there's nothing posted there that works for you, then use another job board such as Indeed or monster, or use one particular to your chosen field.

- Customizing your letter and resume to the specific job will be key to success in this assignment. Do a little internet searching to find out more about the specific company you are applying to. Show that you know something about the company in your letter. I will look that you have used key words from the job ad in your resume

- Submit the cover letter and resume as an attachment to the d2l Assignments folder.

- In the "description," include the link to the job ad or copy and paste the ad.

Instructions Assignment

For this assignment you have free range: write a set of instructions following the book's guidelines. You can do it on anything you want, but keep these limitations in mind:

- Instructions should be about 2 pages long. Thus, don't pick anything too complicated, that you can't do a good job, or too easy, so that it is too short.
- Instructions should include at least one graphic, preferably more.
- They should have an introduction, body, and brief conclusion.

First, you need to designate an audience for yourself when writing these instructions; you can choose, for instance, to instruct a child of 10 on how to carve a pumpkin, which might be different than instructing an adult, who could handle more complex carvings.

In addition to the instructions themselves, please include a separate audience analysis memo: tell me who your audience is, what they know, need to know, etc. and how this influenced the way you wrote your instructions. What did you include or cut, based on the audience? This audience analysis should be in memo format, of several paragraphs.

People in the past have done things like:
- Carving a pumpkin
- Recipes for various foods
- Changing a tire (both tire and bike)
- Downloading a certain software
- Field-specific things (like how to properly administer anesthesia to a rabbit!)
- How to tune a violin
- How to adjust a sail in a sunfish

Overall, pick something you can have fun with! You don't get this chance very often in technical writing. You can get away with some interesting or unusual items, as long as you have concrete reasons behind your rhetorical choices (which will be thoroughly described in your analysis memo).

Chapter 6 Sentence Exercises

Complete Exercises 8-11, 16-19, 21-22, 24-28

For each of the exercises listed above, re-write **ONE** of the sentences, your choice, a or b. These writing skills are crucial to effective technical communication, so don't think of this as busy work but good practice you will apply later in your own writing. Take your time and really apply the advice from the chapter.

Each successful revision (there isn't just one "right" answer) will earn 2 points. If I see sentences that do not demonstrate your understanding of a concept, I'll give you a correction and ask you to try again with another sentence in that exercise. If your second (or third!) try is successful, you will earn 1 point. No attempt earns 0 points.

- Remember, for each of the exercises, re-write **ONE** of the sentences only, not both. I suggest you start an MSWord document, so you can type the sentences, save, and return to the exercises later.

- Please NUMBER and LETTER your sentences so I can compare your revision to the original.

- When you have completed all 15 of the sentences, put your document in the Assignments folder on d2l.

Researched Recommendation Report

This assignment asks you to investigate one of two topics and to provide a recommendation on the subject. Preferably, you will investigate a particular issue within the broad field of your "profession" or your major; you also can examine a particular issue that relates in some way to Shippensburg University or the surrounding community. This is another major project where you ideally can see writing at work: discovering or clarifying a problem and providing a possible solution. Your research should be organized by a specific research question for which your report will provide the answer. You may work in pairs on this project.

The body of the report should be around 2200- 3200 words. It must contain at least two graphics, one of which you must create yourself (both of these requirements will be longer for students working in pairs).

We will learn features of using MSWord to create long documents: I'll expect that you have a Table of Contents and a List of Illustrations or List of Figures built from section headings within the document and that you will paginate front matter differently from the rest of the report using roman numerals, with the Introduction starting on page 1.

Following the guidelines in our textbook, the report must have the following sections:

Front Matter: Title page
Table of Contents
List of Illustrations / List of Figures
Informative Abstract
**(no letter of transmittal, no Executive Summary)

Body (see section descriptions below)

Back Matter: References
Appendixes and/or glossary if needed

The body of the paper must have the following sections, but you will need to come up with more specific headings, too, depending on the topic.
1.0 Introduction
State the purpose and subject of the report and provide background information on the topic. Set the limitations of the report, as well as the most significant findings and if relevant, recommendations. Explain the significance of it: why is it an important topic for research? How did this problem come into being? Clearly lay out the scope of the issue--limit (or expand it) in such a way that it can be addressed in the required page limit.

2.0 Research Methods
What did you do to learn about this issue? Remember to include both primary research and secondary research methods.

3.0 Results
What are the results of your research? In other words, what did you find out?

4.0 Conclusion

Sum up and draw conclusions from your results. Depending on your topic, you might discuss the need for further research, important questions that still need to be addressed, or general conclusions that can be drawn about the role of this issue in society.

5.0 Recommendations

Based on your conclusions, what do you recommend? What are some options for "fixing" or addressing the issue, according to your own insights and those of your sources? What factors might affect the outcome of the problem?

In connection with this report, you'll hand in a basic proposal to me and a research plan updated periodically.

Progress Report

A status or progress report provides information on the tasks and time associated with a project. It is written periodically to explain what has been accomplished, to identify problems (if any have surfaced) and to identify upcoming tasks. It also assesses the project's viability: given what has been and what remains to get done, will the project be completed as originally envisioned? For this assignment, report in a memo on status of your research report, including the following information in the following sections (following a statement of purpose and a brief summary section):

- Introduction: describe the topic you are researching, with a background necessary for your readers to understand the topic. Include both the broad field into which your topic fits and the specifics of your topic. Include your research question. Conclude by discussing the significance of your topic: why is this a valuable subject for research?

- Work completed: discuss what you've already accomplished. Since at this stage you probably have only done research, present the information you've gathered on your topic as a "research-to-date" section, providing information on three of the sources you have gathered for your report.

  Each source should have its own entry with bibliographic information included (MLA or APA). Include a very brief summary of each source; a statement of what you consider of particular interest to you in each source (what does it offer to your understanding of the topic, or what is the main information you are getting from it?); and finally, any strengths and/or weaknesses in the source (does it have any biases which might detract from the its reliability? Is it sufficiently recent enough to be useful?)

- Work Remaining: give a sense of where you are going from here, what further research areas you need to explore, what you need to do for overall completion of the report.

- Conclusion: like the text says, things are either going well or not quite as anticipated. Discuss problems you've encountered in your research as well as those you might encounter as you continue with the report. Consider the over- or under-availability of resources, lack of time, level of difficulty of the readings you've encountered, anticipated difficulties in the actual writing of the document. With any anticipated problems, offer possible solutions. Finally, give the appropriate overall impression, referring if you like to specific due dates.

In addition to strong content, the memo will be evaluated on how well it follows the guidelines associated with writing memos as detailed in the book: appropriate identifying information, clear purpose statement up front, appropriate summary/background, effective organization and document design, clear grammatically correct writing. You don't need a Gantt chart, by the way!

Oral Presentations

Your last assignment will be to present your research to the class. Your presentation should not just be a summary of your paper but an interesting and directed presentation about the topic. Since this presentation needs to be very short, about 5-6 minutes, think carefully about what you want to present to the class about your topic.

I suggest a brief overview of the topic, a discussion of why you chose the topic or why it is relevant (and try here to relate the topic to your audience), a few interesting things you learned (again, try to relate them to your audience), and what your conclusion or findings were.

 I'll be checking that you follow standard "oral presentation" guidelines: that you present a quick overview, that you relate the presentation to your audience needs, that you present effectively (using appropriate style, pace, length, etc), and that your slides represent graphic excellence following the guidelines we talked about for your earlier presentations.