

## FIN 477 Cooperative Training First Report Guidelines

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### General Guidelines for Writing Co-op Reports (and Writing in General)

#### Cover page

On the cover page the following items only should be included:

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**Name or logo of the university**

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**Name or logo of the organization that is training you (if possible).**

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**Your Name**

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**Your Student ID:**

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**Your Job Title**

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**Your E-mail Address:**

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**Semester you are registered for:**

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**The title of your report. e.g. "First Report."**

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#### Report Content

The specifics of the report content will vary from report to another. However, the body of your first report should include main subjects:

1. The organization you work with. (Part one)
2. The industry of your organization. (Part two)
3. Responsibilities were assigned to you. (Part three)

*Make sure that your report is not in the form of questions and answers; rather it should be written in the form of paragraphs. Also avoid simple cut-and-paste composing*

#### 1. The organization you work with:

You should describe the employer you work for in thorough detail. As you do so, consider doing the following jobs, typically devoting at least one paragraph to each:

- a. Introduce the employer's connection to you by providing an overview of your position, for how long, and how the position fit into your education.

***Do not copy and paste***

Instead, use headings and subheadings to organize your document. Headings will make it easier for the reader to connect the different parts of your report and make sense of what he is reading. It is OK to rely on the company or organization's website and other sources (website, publications, etc....) as long as you cite it for information. However, **it is not OK to copy and paste**. Such a practice could be considered a case of plagiarism.

- b. A brief about your organization's kind of business, the products or services it offers. **Do not copy and paste the vision, mission, and strategy.**
- c. The type of organization whether it is public, private, government agency, parent company, subsidiary, etc.
- d. How long it has been doing business.
- e. The size of the company, for example: number of employees, value of assets, major markets and any relevant information that you think is important to describe the company/organization.
- f. A brief description of the company/organization's structure and where your department fits within that structure. Discuss the role of your department briefly. **Do not put only a chart of the company/organization's organizational structure without describing it.**

**Do not** write the details of their vision, mission, or strategy. Such details are not relevant in describing the company. You can rely on the strategy to get some information (e.g. the market it targets).

## **2. The industry of your organization**

- a. A brief description of the industry the company or organization belongs to.
- b. The major challenges this industry is facing.

This should include briefly stating the major competitors and major clients (if applicable) in the industry. This might require doing some research and provide some statistics.

## **3. Responsibilities were assigned to you**

In describing your work duties, outline your specific responsibilities and tie them into any larger projects with which you were involved. Detailed accounts should be given of such issues as the following:

- a. Your specific day-to-day responsibilities and activities. Turn here to your daily routine activities, record keeping methods, and any job description provided by the employer.
- b. Activities in coordination with project teams or co-workers.
- c. The goals of any project you were involved in.
- d. Key data, equations, or software that you generated or used.
- e. Documents, reports, or presentations that you were required to complete.
- f. A detailed explanation of any problems or challenges you faced or are currently facing.
- g. List several experiences contributing to your professional growth this month.
- h. Comment on one of your successes this month.
- i. What are your duties or assignments for next month?

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### Grammar and spelling:

- Many students make subject-verb agreement mistakes, which indicate that their English writing is weak, a message that you do not want to send to any potential employer, client, or anyone else. You can avoid these mistakes easily if you learn the proper grammar rules related to subject-verb agreement. Check the following websites to learn about these rules:
  - a. <http://www.grammarbook.com/grammar/subjectVerbAgree.asp>
  - b. [http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/sv\\_agr.htm](http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/sv_agr.htm)
- Learn about how to capitalize letters properly. Many students write most or all their report without following proper capitalization rules. The following websites will help you learn about proper capitalization:
  - c. <https://www.scribendi.com/advice/capitalization.en.html>
  - d. <http://www.grammarbook.com/punctuation/capital.asp>
- English is not the mother tongue for most, if not all, of us. Hence, we might not know how to use many words properly. We might not know what adjective, adverb, or preposition we can use with a particular word. However, this should not stop us from improving our writing. Fortunately, we can learn how to use words properly by referring to a collocations dictionary. If you do not know which preposition comes with a word, like “difference” for example, check a collocation dictionary. The following three websites give you free access to collocation dictionaries.
  - e. <http://www.freecollocation.com/>
  - f. <https://prowritingaid.com/en/Collocation/Dictionary/>
  - g. <https://www.ozdic.com/>
- You must **spell check** your report after writing and before submitting your report. If you submit your report without taking the time to check the spelling and review your writing, you will send a negative message to the reader about how serious you are and to what extent you care to make your work look professional. Even the best writers in the world proofread the text they write at least twice. *You can ask someone else to read your writing to help you detect any potential problems.* If a friend cannot understand something you wrote, it means there is a big chance anyone else will face the same problem.
- Pay attention to the formatting of your report. Lines must be equally spaced, font type and size must be the same, paragraphs must have the same indentation and space between paragraphs must be the same, headings must not be indented, and page numbers must be inserted in the footer. In addition, if you really, really need to use bullet points, avoid using shapes like ➤ or ✓. Use letters or numbers to indicate a sequence of importance or chronology. If the list includes a group that is not sequential, use neutral symbols like –, ●, or ■. The internet has a lot to offer regarding proper style and formatting practices in business writing. For example, check the following websites for best advice on when and how to use bullet points:
  - a. [http://www.cypressmedia.net/articles/article/18/using\\_bullet\\_points\\_and\\_lists?pages/article7.htm](http://www.cypressmedia.net/articles/article/18/using_bullet_points_and_lists?pages/article7.htm)

- b. [http://www.businesswritingblog.com/business\\_writing/2012/01/punctuating-bullet-points-.html](http://www.businesswritingblog.com/business_writing/2012/01/punctuating-bullet-points-.html)
  - c. [http://www.businesswritingblog.com/business\\_writing/2005/12/the\\_best\\_of\\_bul.html](http://www.businesswritingblog.com/business_writing/2005/12/the_best_of_bul.html)
  - d. <http://www.montana.edu/business/bracken/bbcc/documents/bullet-points.pdf>
- Never end a sentence with a comma “,”. A complete sentence must end with a period “.”. Never leave a space before a period “.” a comma “,”, or a colon “:”. However, you need to leave a space after them.
  - Avoid run-on sentences, which are sentences that consist of two independent parts. Each can stand by itself but are not appropriately connected with conjunctions (like “and,” “or”) or appropriate punctuations.
  - Also, avoid too long sentences. Such sentences make readers work too hard to understand what you are writing. There is no fixed rule on how long a sentence should be. However, being aware that too long sentences can be destructive is important, as it will help avoid damaging your effort to convey the message you want to the reader. In addition, searching the Internet for experts advises on the proper length of sentences will assist you in improving your writing.
  - Do not waste valuable space on your document by writing very long lists. If you think writing a lengthy list is essential, write such list in a paragraph form instead of a list of bullets. For example, my favorite car makers are Mercedes, BMW, Nissan, Mitsubishi, Kia, and Ford (do not laugh at this example!).
  - Common grammar mistake includes the misuse of it, its, or it’s, the misuse of “a,” “an,” or “the” articles. These mistakes are easy to avoid if you give yourself a chance to learn how to correct them. Check the following websites to learn how to avoid these mistakes:
    - a. <http://www.its-not-its.info/>
    - b. <http://www.englishpage.com/articles/a-an-vs-the.htm>
  - Many people use pronouns, such as “they” or “he”, assuming that people will know the pronoun refers to what, which is not always the case. There are rules you should follow when you use pronouns to make sure that the quality of your writing is not negatively affected. The following website discusses how to avoid using ambiguous pronouns.
    - a. <https://webapps.towson.edu/ows/proref.htm>
  - Citing the source from which you get information or which you rely on in your writing is very important. Failing to do so could be considered an act of plagiarism, which could result in severe consequences. Proper citation has two elements. The first is to do an in-text citation, which means you cite the reference within your text. The second is to include a reference list of all the sources you used when you wrote your document. The following is an example of how you should properly do an in-text citation:

- a. Argaam (2016) presents analysis showing that the earning per share has declined in the past four quarters.
- b. An analysis of the earning per share shows that the ratio has declined in the past four quarters (Argaam, 2016).

The proper way to include various sources in the references is provided in the following website:

- a. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/05/>

Note: the page the previous link will take you to is only the for the basic rules. More specific rule could be found on the left side panel of the website (e.g. Reference list: electronic resources).

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### **Format and style:**

Your first report should adhere to the following format and style:

- A) The maximum number of pages is 3 (not including the cover page).
- B) Do not write your report in a point form.
- C) Make sure you use left-to-right text direction.
- D) Font type and size: Time New Roman, size 11.
- E) Paragraph style and spacing: Indent the first line in each paragraph by 0.4 cm, set the line spacing into 2 (double space).
- F) Your report should include a cover page that contains your information.
- G) Do not forget to add page numbers.

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### **Grading:**

The first report will be graded based on the following grading distribution:

- Part (1) 30%
- Part (2) 20%
- Part (3) 30%
- Format and style 10%
- Grammar accuracy 5%
- Writing fluency and ease of reading 5%