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MASTER OF COMMUNICATION (M.C.)

WORK-TERM REPORT GUIDELINES

Introduction

The work-term report is an important part of high quality Co-operative Education programs. This assignment provides you with the opportunity to report on your experience with your CO-OP employer and on how the experience relates to your academic studies. Ideally, the report facilitates the integration of knowledge and practice.

Marking

CO-OP academic coordinators are professors in your discipline who mark work-term reports. The list is available under your program page. For now, it is the members of the Graduate Studies Committee who will evaluate your two reports.

The assignment is marked as "pass" or "fail" (official grade), along with a letter grade to provide you with feedback on the quality of your report. Please see Appendix A for general guidelines and Appendix B for the evaluation form that will be used to assess your report.

If your report is judged unsatisfactory (fail), you may be given a one-time opportunity to submit a revised version within a prescribed period of time. Please note that a "fail" affects your cumulative grade point average and results in dismissal from the CO-OP program.

Deadline and drop-off

The work-term report is to be submitted to the **Co-operative Education Programs Office** by the second Friday of the following session. **Be sure to check under "Upcoming Key Dates" on the CO-OP program website for the exact date :** https://coop.uottawa.ca/en/coop-students/key-dates

Frequency

All CO-OP students are required to submit a report for each four-month work term. Thus, you will submit two reports in total (one at the end of your first placement and another at the end of your second placement).

Pick-up

Once your report has been marked (allow six weeks after the report submission date), you will be notified by email of a date and time that you can pick up your report from your CO-OP academic coordinator. Please note that because the feedback you will receive on your report is so important for your learning. Therefore you will not receive your official mark until you have picked up the report. Failure to pick up your report will result in a "fail" for the work term.

Language

As with any course at the University of Ottawa, you may write the letter of transmittal and your work-term report in English or French. However, for a Type 2 confidential report, the employer determines the language.

Writing help

To ensure that your report is of the highest possible quality, we recommend that you have your work-term report reviewed and critiqued by the Academic Writing Help Centre (AWHC), your employer, a professor, friends or family.

Academic Writing Help Centre (AWHC)
www.sass.uOttawa.ca/writing

Oral presentation

After completing both CO-OP placements, all students will be required to give a 10 minute oral presentation about their CO-OP experience. Presentations will take place either at the beginning of February at a CO-OP symposium that will be co-organized by the Department of Communication and the Graduate Communication Students Association. Because this is an excellent opportunity to share your work experience and to learn about the experience of other students, all CO-OP students who have completed their two placements must participate in this event. The Director of Graduate Studies in Communication will contact you before the end of your second placement to provide information about the symposium and your presentation.

Components

There are four components to the CO-OP work-term report that must be submitted together: (1) Cover letter, (2) Employer evaluation, (3) Student evaluation, and (4) Work-term report.

1. Cover letter

The purpose of the cover letter is to provide readers with a brief overview of key information. The cover letter should be typewritten and single-spaced, and it must follow appropriate business format. It should be addressed to your CO-OP academic coordinator. It must not be bound to your work-term report (i.e. not stapled).

The letter must contain the following information, in order:

1. Your full address
2. Date
3. Complete contact information for the CO-OP academic coordinator
4. Subject/RE statement, including course number

5. 1st paragraph:
    - The academic term completed prior to the work term (i.e., 1A, 1B, 1C, etc.)
    - The work term completed (first, second, etc.)
    - Title of the work-term report
    - Type of report submitted (Type 1 or Type 2)
    - Acknowledgement of assistance and statement that the report is your own work
6. 2nd paragraph:
    - Name of employer and name of supervisor
    - Position held and brief overview of the job and daily tasks
7. 3rd paragraph:
    - Overall evaluation of the work term
    - Skills gained through the work term (Avoid vague statements such as "I have gained engineering and laboratory skills." You have to clearly specify what skills you learned.)
8. Your signature
9. Your name and student number

You can also use the letter to pass on any further information regarding the work term or the report.

2. Employer evaluation

Your employer will evaluate you at the end of the work term. We recommend that you meet with your employer to discuss the evaluation. You must print the completed evaluation from the COOP Navigator and submit it as part of your assignment.

3. Mid-term evaluation

You must print the completed evaluation from the COOP Navigator and submit it as part of your assignment.

4. Student evaluation of the work term

At the end of the work term, you will evaluate your work term and the CO-OP program. You must print the completed evaluation from the COOP Navigator and submit it as part of your assignment.

5. Work-term report

In consultation with your CO-OP academic coordinator, you can choose one of the following types of reports. If you are required by your employer to complete a Type 2 confidential report then:

- Your employer has to mention this requirement during the site visit by the CO-OP program coordinator.
- Your employer must also inform the CO-OP academic coordinator of the requirement in writing (email).
- The CO-OP academic coordinator will inform you by email if you have been approved or not to do a confidential report.

Type of report	Overview
TYPE 1 **Non-confidential report**	Students are expected to demonstrate critical thinking relative to the work term and their program of studies.

	In this type of report, the student is required to summarize his or her work-term project. If more than one project was undertaken, the student can choose to explain one or two projects in detail. See Appendix A for detailed guidelines. See Appendix B for the evaluation form.
TYPE 2 **Confidential report**	We recommend that students choose topics and material that do not contain any information of a proprietary nature. If this is not possible, you must seek permission from your CO-OP academic coordinator at least six weeks before the CO-OP report submission deadline, and your employer must mention the need for a confidential report to the CO-OP program coordinator conducting the work-term site visit. If your report is confidential, your employer must evaluate the report and submit a signed evaluation form by the work-term report submission deadline. Note: We recommend that the employer evaluate the work-term report using the same guidelines and evaluation form presented in this document. See Appendix A for detailed guidelines. See Appendix B for the evaluation form.

Timeline

Writing and submitting the work-term report is best done over the course of several months.

1. **Early in the work term:** Develop performance and learning objectives with your supervisor and input them into the CO-OP Navigator. Develop reflections on your experience and input them into the CO-OP Navigator. Your objectives and reflections are material that you can use for your work-term report.
2. **Mid-point of the work term:** Meet with the CO-OP program coordinator during the on-site visit. Discuss performance and learning objectives, reflections and the type of work-term report that you will complete.
3. **Mid-point of the work term:** Meet with your supervisor to discuss the work-term report. If the employer requires that you complete a Type 2 confidential report, then you MUST get permission to proceed from your CO-OP academic coordinator.
4. **Last month of the work term:** Attend the final evaluation with your supervisor. Complete the student evaluation of the work term. These final evaluations are submitted as part of your work-term report. Your work-term report must be submitted to your employer for his or her approval one week before the end of your work term.
5. **Second Friday of the following session:** Complete the student evaluation of the work term in the COOP Navigator. Submit the four components of the work-term report: (1)cover letter, (2) employer evaluation, (3) student evaluation, and (4) work-term report.

Evaluation

The work-term report will be evaluated using five criteria. Recommendations are provided to help guide you towards achieving high-quality results for each criterion (outlined below).

Each of the criteria is included in the Work-Term Report Evaluation Form, which will be used by your CO-OP academic coordinator to assess your assignment (Appendix B). It is recommended that you use it as a self-assessment tool throughout the writing process.

Criteria

Rigour: The report must comply with the guidelines, criteria and conventions set by the Department.

- Adhere to the work-term report style and guidelines (Appendix A) and evaluation form (Appendix B).
- Your report will be evaluated for its presentation, structure and literary quality.
- Self-assess by asking, "Does the report follow the rules?"
- Avoid being rushed.

Precision: The concepts, terms and principles used in the report must be used precisely.

- Use materials from your work term and from your academic field as resources.
- Add a glossary if the text includes numerous technical terms.
- Use figures, graphs or tables for clarity and to shorten your text.
- Include an appendix for items such as lengthy tables and computer code.
- Self-assess by asking, "Does the report demonstrate meticulousness?"
- Do not use *Wikipedia* as a primary source.

Depth: The work in the assignment is supported by analysis and scholarly references.

- Use this criterion to showcase the quality of your report (show how well and how extensively you understand the concepts discussed, and how well you understand the significance of the work in the employer's environment).
- Refer to the methods, principles or theories in your course, explain how you've applied them, and provide scholarly references to support your points.
- Use the literature from your academic program as material.
- Describe your academic field so the reader understands the context of your learning.
- Use your work-term reflections as material.
- Self-assess by asking, "Does this report deepen my understanding of the work term?"
- Avoid discussing basic learning outcomes, such as learning to use Microsoft Outlook.

Coherence: The report is highly organized.

- Adhere to work-term report guidelines (Appendix A) and the evaluation form (Appendix B).
- Link elements across the report structurally and conceptually.
- Present your ideas clearly so the reader can follow along with ease.
- Weave your ideas together in a way that piques the reader's interest.
- Self-assess by asking, "Is this report well organized *and* interesting?"
- Avoid being rushed.

Relevance: The content of the report must be relevant to the work term.

- Use your job description, objectives, reflections and assignments, as well as the company website as resources.
- Describe your work environment so the reader understands the context of your work term.

- Describe the major tasks you completed. If the work was project-oriented, give a detailed write-up of one project and briefly describe a select number of other projects.
- Self-assess by asking, “Does this report provide an overview of my work-term experience?”
- Avoid listing daily activities.

Appendix A: Guidelines

General work-term report structure

All work-term reports must be bound with a binding mechanism (e.g. spiral bound).

All work-term reports should conform to the following general structure:

- Title page
- Abstract and keywords
- Table of contents
- List of figures
- List of tables
- Body of work-term report (introduction, results and discussion, conclusions)
- References
- Appendices

Specific guidelines

Title page
Include the work-term report title. Include your name, student number, course code and report submission date. Do not boldface or italicize anything on the title page.

Abstract
Include a 100-to-200-word (up to one page) abstract describing and summarizing the work-term report. The abstract should be self-explanatory and provide the reader with a summary of the contents of the work-term report.

Keywords
At the bottom of the abstract page, include three to five keywords (separated by commas) that may be used to index the work-term report.

Introduction
Give a *complete* background of the projects you worked on, including the nature and the objectives. Detail the work and summarize the assignments you undertook, but give more detail for those described in the body of your report. Note that the introduction differs from the abstract.

Body of the report
Include a detailed explanation of the projects undertaken, as well as the approach used to achieve the project objectives; also describe the results obtained. Provide enough information so that the CO-OP academic coordinator, who may not be familiar with the topic of the report, can easily follow the context. All figures and tables presented throughout the body of the report must be referenced in the text. Figures and tables taken from another document must be properly referenced in their title.

The body of the work-term report must follow these editorial guidelines:

- **Length**
  The work-term report should be between 15 and 20 pages. This number does not include the abstract, references and appendices.

- **Format**
  - Double-spaced text
  - 12-point standard font (Times, Times Roman, etc.)
  - One-inch margins (top, bottom, left, right)
  - Italics, as needed, but no underlining
  - Page numbers, in the bottom-right corner of the page header
  - Section headers, as needed
  - Tables and figures numbered sequentially (e.g., Table 1, Table 2, Figure 1, Figure 2) and bearing descriptive titles (figure titles at the bottom of the figure and table titles at the top of the table)

Work-term report style: All work-term reports must have proper punctuation, spelling, capitalization, italics, abbreviations, headings, quotations, numbers, tables and figures. In addition, avoid bias in language.

Footnotes and endnotes: Footnotes and endnotes should not be used. Relevant information, which might normally be placed in a footnote or endnote, should be included in the work-term report text.

References: Make sure you refer to all references in the body of your report. Use the APA model :

Use the APA Guidelines for your references : https://sass.uottawa.ca/sites/sass.uottawa.ca/files/awhc-apa-style.pdf

Additional writing resources

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1999.

Turabian, Kate L. *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. 6th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

There are a number of books on business report writing on the 4th floor of the Morisset Library. (They begin with the call number HF 57.) Books on technical writing can be found on the 6th floor. (They begin with the call number T 11.)

Appendix B: Work-Term Report Evaluation

Student's name	
Course code	
Session (ex. winter 2014)	
Work term (first, second, third, fourth, fifth)	
Type of report (Type 1 non-confidential, Type 2 confidential)	
CO-OP employer	
Employer's work-term evaluation:	– Outstanding – Excellent – Very good – Good – Fair – Needs improvement
Evaluator's name	Date
Official work-term report appraisal – Letter grade	Letter grade – 0 – F Pass Fail
Departmental coordinator signature	

Note: If a "fail" is given, the CO-OP academic coordinator contacts the student and the CO-OP Office to discuss the evaluation and determine if the student can re-submit the work-term report.

	Criteria	Weight	Fail	Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
			Not satisfactory F to E (0 – 1)	**Needs improvement D to D+ (2 – 3)**	**Good C to C+ (4 – 5)**	**Very good B to B+ (6 – 7)**	**Excellent A- to A (8 – 9)**	**Exceptional A+ (10)**
Cover letter	Presentation: address line, subject line, signature, date, etc. Literary quality: grammar and spelling Content: description of the work-term location and nature of job, skills learned, etc.	**5%**	The letter complies with **very few or none** of the guidelines.	The letter complies with **a few** of the guidelines.	The letter complies with **several** of the guidelines.	The letter complies with **many** of the guidelines.	The letter complies with **almost all** of the guidelines.	The letter complies with **all** of the guidelines.
Report	**Rigour** Work-term report guidelines and conventions are followed. Presentation: abstract, table of contents, list of tables, references, appendices, etc. The general structure follows the guidelines. Literary quality: grammar and spelling.	**5%**	The report complies with **very few or none** of the guidelines and conventions.	The report complies with **a few** of the guidelines and conventions.	The report complies with **several** of the guidelines and conventions.	The report complies with **many** of the guidelines and conventions.	The report complies with **almost all** of the guidelines and conventions.	The report complies with **all** of the guidelines and conventions.
	Precision Concepts, terms, and principles are used precisely throughout the report (degree of accuracy and clarity).	**30%**	**Very few or no** concepts, terms and principles are used precisely throughout the report.	**A few** concepts, terms and principles are used precisely throughout the report.	**Some** concepts, terms and principles are used precisely throughout the report.	**Many** concepts, terms and principles are used precisely throughout the report.	**Almost all** concepts, terms and principles are used precisely throughout the report.	**All** concepts, terms and principles are used precisely throughout the report.
	Depth The work presented is supported by analysis and scholarly references. The quality of the report is clear; for example, methods, principles or theories of practice, are correctly applied.	**30%**	**Very few or no** aspects of the work are supported by analysis and scholarly references.	**A few** aspects of the work are supported by analysis and scholarly references.	**Some** aspects of the work are supported by analysis and scholarly references.	**Many** aspects of the work are supported by analysis and scholarly references.	**Almost all** of the work is supported by analysis and scholarly references.	**All** the work is supported by analysis and scholarly references.
	Coherence Elements across the report are linked together structurally and conceptually.	**20%**	**Very little or no** aspects of the report are organized structurally and conceptually.	**A few** aspects of the report are organized structurally and conceptually.	The report is **somewhat organized** with some elements linked, either within or	The report **is fairly well organized** with elements linked structurally or conceptually within *and*	The report is **very well organized**.	The report is **impeccably** organized.

					across the report.	across the report.		
	Relevance The context and the work-term experience are well described in the report.	**10%**	The relevance of the content **is not evident**.	The relevance of the content is **evident to a limited degree**.	The relevance of the content is **moderately evident**.	The relevance of the content is **evident for the most part.**	The relevance of the content is **clearly evident for the most part.**	The relevance of the content is **clearly evident throughout.**

Appendix C: Confidential Report Marking Grid

Note: The CO-OP student's supervisor must complete this form if the work-term report contains proprietary information and cannot be released for evaluation. It must be submitted by the deadline for submission of the work term report.

Student's name: _____ **Program of study:** _____
Work term: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th: _____

CO-OP employer: _____+ **Evaluated by:** _____
Phone no.: _____

Criteria	**E = excellent** **G = good** **F = fair** **U = unsatisfactory**	**Comments**
Presentation • Letter of submittal • Front cover • Title page • Table of contents • List of tables and appendices • Overall appearance	 _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	
Structure • Summary/abstract • Introduction • Conclusions • Recommendations • Appendices • References	 _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	
Literary quality • Grammar • Spelling • Clarity • Style	 _____ _____ _____ _____	
Quality of subject matter • Relevance of ideas/solutions presented • Quality of analysis • Understanding and depth of the concepts discussed • Understanding of significance of the work within the employer's environment	 _____ _____ _____ _____	

Overall appraisal Pass _____ Fail _____Resubmit _____

Signature of evaluator: _____
Date: _____