ENGR 185EW Case Study: Expectations and Guidelines to Writing

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1 Expectations

- Page: 6 Pages Minimum/Maximum, including Works Cited section
- Format: 10-12 sized Times New Roman Font, 1” maximum page margins
- Abstract with Audience defined
- References: Minimum of four, avoid Wikipedia

2 Guidelines to Writing

2.1 Abstract[1]

Your abstract should be of the descriptive kind, and the purpose is to allow readers to decide whether they want to read the paper:

- communicate contents of paper by highlighting essential points
  - Usually not as gentle a lead in as introductions are written
- include purpose and define audience i.e. who the report is written to
  - Managers
  - Engineers
  - Executives
  - Regulatory agency
- are short, from a paragraph to a page or two, depending upon the length of the paper, usually less than 10 percent of entire paper

2.2 Case Study[2]

A good ethical case usually includes the following structures:

- Expository
- Time
- Plot
- Character
- Ethical Problems and Conflicts
- Conclusions

Note these structures are not necessarily written in this order. They are embodied throughout your paper logically, and warrants the audience to absorb the case’s information, and think deeply about their ramifications.
2.2.1 Expository

Specific facts and details are given so the audience can deal with issues and problems. Provide the technical cause of failure with an appropriate discussion. By appropriate, you would need to consider your audience. What do your readers know and don’t know, and what would they need to know to fully appreciate the case? Figures and/or tables could be of assistance to you.

2.2.2 Time

Explain the case in a timeline, exposing the actions/decisions/events and the corresponding outcomes. You may consider flashbacks to re-focus attention on important details presented earlier, as you unravel the story.

2.2.3 Plot

This adds interest, drama, and suspense. Foreshadow the events to come at the end of paragraphs. For example,

"With such a huge disaster, everyone expected the government to act quickly to aid the victims. But many people were disappointed with the response, in this case, the lack of any response."

2.2.4 Character

Explain who the parties are, and the roles they have in the case. Be specific with names, and import their opinions to expose the sentiments of the time regarding the events. For example,

"An excerpt from ‘Pinto Madness’ explains a widely held view about the subcompact car, that ‘if you ran into that Pinto… at over 30 MPH, the rear end of the car would buckle like an accordion, right up to the back seat.’"

The benefits of quotations are:

1. Expressing opinions
2. Stating important issues
3. Expressing a personal philosophy
4. Establishing character
5. Expressing differences of opinions
6. Increasing believability

Refer to the "Integrating Sources" handout for more details.

2.2.5 Ethical Problems and Conflicts

Subtly point out the ethical framework at hand and show the result of its violation or upholding. Avoid prescriptive language e.g. should, must, … Instead the language must be as objectively worded as possible, so the audience can wrestle with the conflict. For example,

GOOD: "The aftermath of a utilitarian cost-benefit analysis was considered by many a tragedy for all those involved."

BAD: "Company X shouldn’t have adopted a utilitarian cost-benefit analysis because the public was worse off."
2.2.6 Conclusions

Provide a take away for the reader. Your goal is to have the audience wrestle with the problems in the case you presented rather than focus on how they turned out. You want them to think broadly of the issue. To achieve this, provide a wide array of conclusions to the audience. Avoid presenting facts leading to a preconceived conclusion.

References
