RESEARCH PAPER REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Each student is required to write a maximum ten-page (8 to 10) independent research paper on a data communications topic. You will need two copies. One copy will be graded and retained by your professor. The other copy is yours to keep or to exchange for the graded copy.

The goal is to have each student explore a data communications topic in depth and write a state-of-the-art research report on a current, “advanced” topic. To accomplish this, you will need to review a large sample (minimum of twelve articles) from a variety of publications of recent literature in the library or from the Internet.

The paper must be typewritten (you are expected to use a word processor) and double-spaced. Margins should be 1.25” on the left and right, and one inch on the top and bottom. Indent paragraphs and double space between them (not 3 or 4 line spaces). Font size should be 10 point to 12 point. Do not right justify. Insert two spaces after a period or colon and one space after a comma. Style sheets can be generated for most modern word processors to automate these rules and allow all of your research papers to have the same look.

The paper will follow a standard format, from the title page and introductory paragraph, to a summary and appropriate footnotes and bibliography. Please follow the style for footnotes and bibliography outlined in the Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association.
Sources must be journal articles or other professional publications such as Communication of the ACM, Mobile Computing and Communications, Harvard Business Review, Sloan Management Review, IEEE Spectrum, NetWare Solutions, Internet World, IBM Systems Journal, Wired, Wireless Networks (ACM), Data Communications, Network World, Telecommunications, PC Magazine, PC World, and MIS Quarterly. Material taken from textbooks or popular magazines such as Newsweek, Time, Forbes or Business Week is generally unacceptable and will not be counted toward the minimum of 12 articles. While your final bibliography may contain a varoius of sources, the predominant ones must be recent (last 1-3 years) professional journal articles.

The paper will be evaluated on a number of factors, including: timeliness, research effort, technical accuracy, in-depth content, writing quality and completeness, ability to follow directions, impact on the reader, readability (misspellings and grammatical errors detract from readability), and overall quality.

REPORT PARTS

Your report will conform to the following format requirements:

1. Title Page
2. Table of Contents
3. Abstract - maximum of 60 words
4. Introductory Section, containing the scope of the Inquiry of Paper
5. Body - your discussion of the subject
6. Summary of the paper - Not a conclusion
7. Bibliography

8. Appendices (if needed)

**NOTE:** the 8 to 10 page count includes items four through six. Page count starts with the Introduction and ends with the Summary. All other portions of the paper are excluded from the page count. **Be sure to label each of the major sections** (abstract, introduction and summary).
ABSTRACT, INTRODUCTION, SUMMARY AND OTHER

A. Abstracts

An Abstract is a very brief synopsis of your paper. Usually it is no more than 60 - 100 words. An abstract is your chance to “sell the reader” on your article when both time and space are limited. Abstracts are usually requested from individuals who wish to present papers at a conference.

B. Introductions

An Introduction is your mechanism for introducing the reader to your subject and its scope. It is here that you will provide any necessary background material the reader will require to understand or better appreciate your point. This section of the paper will usually occupy just a paragraph or two at most.

C. Summary

A Summary is just that. It summarizes your paper in the space of one or, at most, two paragraphs. A Summary allows the reader to skip the body of the paper, where you have provided reasoned arguments and details, and read just this section. Therefore, it must contain your essential points.

Finally, a Summary is not a conclusion. When asked to provide a Summary, do not state conclusions. Rather your paper should lead the reader to the conclusions that you have drawn. If you include a conclusion in your paper, label it and then finish with a Summary section – remember to label it.

D. Other

- Use 3rd person, not 1st person in research papers.
- Footnote and list all references including sources found on the Internet.
- Number pages.
- Staple term paper in the top left hand corner. Submit it in a jacket with pockets.