

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Co-op Students in ELEN or CEEN

FROM: John E. Tyler, Jr., Senior Lecturer and Advisor, Electrical Engineering

SUBJECT: Co-op Reports

For those of you who don't already know me, I am your Cooperative Education Advisor, and the professor of record for ENGR 385 for ELEN/CEEN majors. This memo is to inform you of my policies regarding co-op reports.

The academic credit you earn for ENGR 385 is for the paper you write. You should already have a copy of the report guidelines sent out by the University Co-op Office. If not please call them at (409) 845-7725 to request a copy. Consult those guidelines for details regarding report requirements and supporting documents. Each semester's report deadline is set by the Co-op Office before the semester begins. Mail your report, an employee evaluation and an addendum, to me at the address in the letterhead above. Do not fax or email your report.

The type report you write depends on your co-op status. For your first co-op term you must write a work experience report, with the goal of informing me and your fellow co-op students about your first term activities. For your second term I encourage you to write a technical research report, choosing a topic that has some bearing on your work assignments. However, for second and later terms you may choose to write either style report. Exceptions to this policy may be granted for unusual situations, but you must appeal in writing no later than ten days before the paper due date. I do not plan to grant exceptions except in the rarest of circumstances.

Late papers will be assessed a one-letter-grade penalty. I almost never grant an exception to this policy, as the deadline is set at the beginning of each semester. You are responsible for ensuring that the paper is delivered on time. Be advised that postmark machines sometimes print illegible smears of ink instead of readable postmark dates. Therefore, you should keep a dated receipt for evidence that you mailed your report on or before the due date.

The title page of your report must have a supervisor's signature, indicating that your paper is approved for release. Such approval is intended to protect the company's interests regarding proprietary information. I will not read a paper that is not signed. In such a case a grade of "I" for incomplete will be assigned until the problem is corrected.

The content of your paper is certainly more important than any other factor affecting your grade. However, I do consider spelling, grammar and presentation in evaluating your paper. There is no excuse for spelling errors in a formal report. Remember that spell-checking software is usually very good at spelling words correctly, but not as good at recognizing the correct word to use in context (e.g.: weight/wait, two/too, etc.). Proofread your paper several times, and have someone else proofread it for you. Check for both grammar and spelling. Choose good quality paper for printing, and do a careful job of assembling and stapling the pieces together. Finally, please do not use a report cover -- just staple the pages together.

Writing well is a professional skill that every engineer should develop. Think of your co-op report as an opportunity to practice this skill. If you do a good job on this report you will not only be ensuring a good co-op grade, but you will also be developing one of the most important skills of a successful engineer — good writing.

I wish you success in completing your co-op assignments, and look forward to reading your reports. If you have questions, send e-mail to tyler@ee.tamu.edu, or call me at (409) 845-7508.