



E 303: TECHNICAL WRITING

School of Literature and Languages

Louisiana Tech University



Interoffice Memo

To: Mr. Merchant's English 303 students
From: Mr. David M. Merchant, English Instructor
Subject: Lecture 16: More on White Paper Design
Date: April 26, 2020

The purpose of this memo is to give some reminders about white paper formatting for this class as well as additional information about including interviews (if you have any).

Formatting

Make sure you read and re-read both the white paper instructions but the white paper writing checklist as well (davidmmerchant.com/engl30/assignments/). Read them while you are writing to help you stay on track, and read them over again after you have finished your white paper to make sure you did not leave out anything. Also, look over the writing examples carefully; some are annotated: look at the annotations to help make sure you are doing things correctly. That is why the annotations are there.

If you have a long heading or title where it wraps with only one word on the second line, wrap it a bit earlier where there are at least two words on the second line.

If you have a long title such that in your page header it wraps to a second line, you can shorten it by getting rid of the "White Paper on" text. If that still is not enough, let me know and we can discuss how we can shorten the remaining title.

For any visual, to center them you first need to change the word wrap from the default in line with text to square or tight or top and bottom; only then will you be able to fully control how the visual is aligned.

It is OK to have extra white space at the bottom of the page if you need to move a heading to the next page (headings must not be "orphaned"--alone at the bottom of a page) or to have a visual be with its title and source information. You can crop visuals if they have extra white space in them or have a title in them (as you will be writing the title in the Figure # or Table # title line) to help make them fit, but be cautious about resizing smaller. Clarity is far more important than fitting everything nicely on the same page.

To create a soft break (a non-paragraph line break), hold the Shift key, and hit Enter (or Return). This will place your cursor on a new line without creating a new paragraph or, if you are in a list, a new list bullet or list number. This can be quite useful in technical writing.

Submit your white paper to Turnitin as a Word document and not as a PDF or any other document type. Remember: I must have the white papers submitted on time as I have a short turn around time for grading and submitting final course grades to B.O.S.S. Submit drafts as you are writing in case something goes wrong and you are not able to get a final draft up in time. And I cannot stress this enough: back up your work. Use Dropbox or equivalent (they are free to use) so that you can have a synchronized backup to protect you from losing your work.

Interviews

Keep in mind: all interviews need to have a transcript of the pertinent parts typed and put into the appendix (each interview is a separate appendix item).

- If your topic deals with Ruston, you can interview the mayor or someone from his office.
- If your topic deals with the state, you can interview someone from the governor's office or appropriate state office. You can also interview any subject-matter expert.
- Keep in mind: all interviews need to have a transcript of the pertinent parts typed and put into the appendix (each interview is a separate appendix item).
- You may want to think about a questionnaire you can pose to the Student list or even the Faculty list (depending upon your topic) or at least to your class members (any class you are in this quarter; ask permission from other instructors first, but you have my permission for this class).

If you wish to email all students, all faculty and staff, or everyone, enter one of the following email addresses in your email program:

- students-l@lists.latech.edu
- facstaff-l@lists.latech.edu
- everyone-l@lists.latech.edu

Your email will be submitted to the email server for delivery after 5 PM. If you send a batch email to one of the above addresses and it does not get sent, please contact the Computing Center at (318) 257-2893.

Closing

If you have questions, please contact me via email or the course Moodle page (forum or messaging service). Do not forget to do your assigned readings. Again, *Merchant's Style Guide*, assignment instructions, and checklist are located at davidmmerchant.com/. Writing examples are on Moodle.