

Term Paper: Final Term Paper Guidelines

It's time to put together your final term paper! You should first write a rough draft, in the format below. Then polish your thoughts, ideas, and their expression until you are satisfied you have done the best job you can. Write your final draft, and turn it in.

Your paper should follow the outline presented here. You can deviate from it, but if you do so substantially, you should have an *extremely* good reason.

Title Page

Create a separate page with the title of your paper, your name, email address, the course (ECS 15), the quarter and year (Spring Quarter 2007), the instructor's name (Matt Bishop), and the date.

1. Introduction

1.1. Topic

This subsection states your topic, or describes your narrowed subject area.

1.2. Rationale

Please explain why you wanted to do this research in this subsection.

1.3. Additional information

Here, you should add any other related introductory material. You can add additional subsections if you need to.

2. Statement of Purpose

In this section, please present the questions your paper will answer, and an overview of the organization of the paper.

3. Basic Description

This section may have a number of subsections. Describe your topic in some detail. Your report should include references to facts you learned in your research. Organize your points in clear, distinct sections that describe things like the technology, hardware requirements, user interfaces, or different software packages that you investigated.

You must also address the most important research questions, especially how computers are being used to solve problems in a particular field and why. For example, you could investigate how computers have changed the work done in this field; did they enable work to be done more quickly, more thoroughly, or more accurately than before, or did they even change the nature and type of work being done?

You can divide this section into subsections corresponding to logical categories, each subsection addressing a different aspect of computer use in your field. Or, each subsection could address a small unit of a complex process. What is important is that the section as a whole be logically organized and easy to follow.

Important. You must cite a source for every major fact or statement in this section. This section should not contain your personal opinions about these facts or statements; those will come later in the paper.

4. Discussion

In this section, apply the insights you learned from the class to the topic of this paper. Consider the application carefully. Give your opinions, and support them with facts. Remember, your opinion may not be "right" or "wrong", but it certainly will be "justified" or "unjustified"!

Please use your best judgement about what to include; you won't be able to include everything, so please do not try.

4.1. Factual review

This section should add your opinions about the material in section 3. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches of the different applications or packages. Based on your research and earlier knowledge of the area, please point out areas that are not yet using computers or applications, but that would benefit from doing so.

4.2. Personal Assessment

In this section, use the points mentioned in section 4.1 to suggest directions that the use of computers in that area should take. Some questions that might help you do this are:

- Are computers being used effectively in this field?
- Could computers and applications be used better, and if so, how?

- Are the applications too complicated for novices? Are the applications sophisticated enough for experts? What do these applications lack? In what ways are the applications well designed?
- Could the systems and applications be misused? What would the effects of such misuse be? In particular, does this application pose problems with respect to the privacy of personal information? How?

5. Conclusions

On the basis of your research, is this application of computer technology appropriate and useful? Is it mature? Could the application be improved or increased, or made more effective? This brief section should summarize what you learned, and in particular explain what you want the reader to learn from your paper.

6. References

This section begins on a new page and contains all your references: journal articles, books, Internet resources, interviews, videos, films, and so forth. The reader should be able to locate all quotations and other references, right down to the correct page. Please format your references as described in the handout **Citing and Formatting References**.

7. Writing the Term Paper

This section is not normally a part of a term paper. It seems appropriate for this one, though.

This section also begins on a new page after section 6 and tells the reader what hardware and software was used to create and print the term paper, and the number of words in the final version. If you used the computers in a campus lab, just say which lab; you don't have to describe the computer. If you used some other computer (such as one at your home), please tell us the name of the company that made the PC (for example, Dell or Gateway) and the operating system and version that the software ran under (Windows XP, Linux, MacOS 10.4, and so forth).

Finally, please mention any particular problems you had, or any amusing stories, related to writing this paper!

Hints

Keep track of your references as you use them. Add the full citation to a reference list. You can use a computer file, 3×5 index cards, or some other medium to record the citation. If you do not do this, you will find reconstructing the list of references, and what you used each for, very difficult!

As always, if you have questions, please see the instructor or a TA, or send us email. We're here to help you.

What to Turn In

Please turn in a printed copy of your paper. Also, submit your Word file, named "ECS 15 Term Paper.doc", in any of Word 97, Word 2000, or Word 2003 format, using MyUCDavis. **Warning: do not submit a file in Word 2007 format!**

Grading

The distribution of points for your term paper is as follows:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Possible Score</i>
Content	100
Proper citations for controversial or detailed facts	6
At least 5 references in bibliography	5
Three references of at least 7 pages each	9
Grammar: -1 point for each error; <i>note: can be negative!!!</i>	25
Spelling: -1 for each newly misspelled word	10
Title page	6
Introduction	5
Basic description	5
Discussion	5
Conclusions	5
References	19
Notes on production	5
Style	15
Electronic submission as described above	10
Total	230

When you submit your paper, we will look both at content and how you present it. In particular, we will deduct one point for every grammar error that your paper contains. You can use the Word 2003 grammar checker with all style and grammar options checked (except “use of first person”, because you can use “I” or “we” in the paper) to find possible grammar errors; but it does make mistakes, flagging perfectly good sentences as ungrammatical (especially passive sentences), and missing grammatically incorrect sentences. So please check carefully.

Important note: Remember, if you tell the grammar checker to ignore an error, then it will never highlight that error again.