

## Outline of Engineering Written Communication Module

### Before Class 1 of the Module:

As an assignment students receive one of three reports on a very straightforward experiment (kind of like growing a bean in the window vs. in a closet). The report will include all parts EXCEPT the abstract and a summary. Students will write an executive summary for the report that they receive. [Include the technical reports here. These are only the simple reports.](#)

### Class 1:

The class lecture will begin with a discussion of (1) why written communication is important and (2) the form of a “standard” technical report. Then, it will focus on the executive summary (abstract/summary).

As an interactive exercise, students will tell the instructor what they believe should go in the executive summary. Then, the instructor will follow with information that is generally accepted as being appropriate for an executive summary.

As an in-class/homework assignment, students will re-write their executive summaries in accordance with the guidelines (form) given in class.

### Class 2:

Class begins with a quick critique of their homework. Students having like experimental write-ups will critique other students’ executive summaries.

As an interactive exercise, students will propose a process by which an executive summary can/should be produced.

The instructor will provide a process by which an executive summary can be written.

An in-class/homework exercise is assigned in which students will use this process to write an executive summary for a second technical paper.

[Include handout called “Process for Writing an Executive Summary” here.](#)

### Class 3:

Now, let’s refine our writing. Here we will cover some guidelines for improving your writing in general (10 tips for better writing). At first, students will be asked to generate some tips, then the instructor will list some.

In-class exercise: to be presented with some examples of executive summaries – one good and one bad for each of several experiments. Students will determine which is which and write explicitly why.

Homework: They will receive a write up about a physics experiment and must write an executive summary for it.

[Include the second set of lab reports here; these are the ones on physics. Also, include the handout on “Ten Tips for Improving Your Writing” here.](#)

### Follow-On Classes:

Students will have to write executive summaries for experiments or technical reports specific to the current course later in the semester.