Career Communications Professional Writing Standards

As a part of your Work Portfolio courses and in efforts to secure co-op/post baccalaureate opportunities, the Cooperative Education faculty and staff will ask students to develop various professional materials, including but not limited to resumes, cover letters, e-portfolio, email communications, and video interviews.

It is the hope of the Cooperative Education faculty and staff that students, over the course of their time at Antioch, establish a strong personal brand, supported by written documentation of efforts, which will position students for success. Antioch College, along with the Cooperative Education faculty and staff, requires a certain level of professional etiquette and students must adhere to certain guidelines (standards?) when developing such materials. Please refer to the individual rubrics and guidelines (standards?) below to gain a better understanding for what is expected. The following standards are included: Resume Writing, Cover Letter Writing, Email Communication Etiquette, Web Presence Etiquette, and Interviewing Etiquette (video, in-person, and phone).

Professional Email Communication Etiquette

- Do not use "texting" language (LOL, BRB, and TTYL do not belong inside a professional email). Proper sentence structure is expected.
- Start and end each email with a greeting. (Ex. Hello, _____. Good Afternoon, _____., Sincerely, _____.)
- Be aware of the tone in which your message could be received. For example, ALL CAPS can be perceived as anger or yelling. Consider instead **bolding** or *italicizing* items that you are trying to draw attention to.
- Avoid sending an email when you are irritated –wait a day and then review the need for sending the email. If the message is urgent, have a colleague review the communication before sending.
- It is courtesy to respond to *every* email. Even a quick acknowledgement of "Got It," "Noted," "Thank you," "Will review and respond," is appreciated to assure the sender that the message was in fact received and not lost in cyberspace.
- Respond to emails within 24 hours.
- Be aware of cultural differences that may occur; Proper etiquette in regards to International email communication is imperative in maintaining favorable relationships between parties. Americans tend to work at a much hastier pace than the rest of the world and thus can come across as demanding and impatient. Be aware of this difference and adjust requests according to the cultural context in which you are engaging.
- Refrain from the use of contractions in professional communications (i.e. don't, won't, I'd, couldn't, etc.)
- Avoid name calling/threats/vulgar language. This is a direct violation of the Honor Code and other Antioch College policies.
- Check, double check, and triple check for spelling errors, typos, and grammatical errors.
- Use "please" and "thank you" often.
- Take notice of the sending options --
  - To: Intended for a direct audience, action required
  - CC (Carbon Copy): Intended for an indirect audience that should be aware of the conversation occurring, keep informed, no action required
  - BCC (Blind Carbon Copy): Intended for sending a general message to individual recipients where the other does not see who else is included in the communication
  - Reply: Intended for replies to the original sender only
  - Reply All: Intended for replies to all interested parties; Use when communicating with Co-op employers and Co-op advisors to ensure everyone is kept in the loop; Use sparingly when the group is large (5+)

Web Presence Etiquette

- Keep posts brief and engaging; readers will not want to spend hours learning about you. Show who you are and the skills that you bring right off the bat.
- Check for spelling errors, typos, grammatical errors, and inconsistent formatting.
- Refrain from use of vulgar language.
- Do not include links to, references, and/or other items that violate Antioch College policies, including the Honor Code, RDPP, and SOPP. Examples can include but are not limited to inappropriate videos, pictures referring to drug/alcohol use, nudity, and expletives.
- Remember that you are working within a public presence and thus all that you create is published, documented, and shared with the world at large. Be wise with the information that you choose to share.
- If including a photo, ensure that it is high quality to avoid pixelated images. Picture should be an accurate representation of your appearance and be free of much background noise. **Keep it professional.**
- Do not use "texting" language. Remember this is a professional online document not a casual site to be frequented by only friends and family. The goal is to be employed, so put your best foot forward, show you can write and speak eloquently.
- If planning to link to outside sources such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc., ensure that material on those sites also follows the guidelines and will not present a conflicting impression of who you are. If you chose to make your other social media more casual and less professional, DO NOT include a link to it in your professional portfolio.
- Stay positive and never criticize, condemn, or complain on social media –the [Dale Carnegie principles](#).

Interviewing Etiquette

Video Interview
- Be properly groomed.
- Be aware of the appropriate dress code for the organization and dress one level above the typical dress code. For example, if the daily dress is business casual (slacks and a blouse/button down), your interview attire should be business professional (suit, tie for males). If the daily dress is casual (jeans and t-shirt), your interview attire should be business casual (slacks and a blouse/button down).
- Enunciate and speak clearly.
- Do *not* chew gum while responding to recorded questions.
- Be aware of body language (slouching in seat, bouncing in seat, etc. detract from the quality of responses).
- If applicable --Prior to the interview, research and familiarize yourself with the organization (mission, values, goals, and recent press/media) as well as with your interviewer's bios. Be prepared to speak to those things.

In-Person Interview
- Prior to the interview, research and familiarize yourself with the organization (mission, values, goals, and recent press/media) as well as with your interviewer's bios. Be prepared to speak to those things.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of your interview.
- Greet the receptionist and all those you meet kindly. Everyone at the organization, not just your interviewer(s), is analyzing whether you would be a good fit for their organization.
- Be aware of the appropriate dress code and dress one level above the typical dress code. For example, if the daily dress is business casual (slacks and a blouse/button down), your interview attire should be business professional (suit, tie for males). If the daily dress is casual (jeans and t-shirt), your interview attire should be business casual (slacks and a blouse/button down).
- Be properly groomed.
- Be prepared with relevant questions to ask the employer at the end of the interview.
- Bring copies of your resume in case the interviewer(s) could not or did not get the chance to print out a personal copy.

Phone Interview
- Prior to the interview, research and familiarize yourself with the organization (mission, values, goals, and recent press/media) as well as with your interviewer's bios. Be prepared to speak to those things.
- Find a location where background noise is minimal.
- Smile! The tone of your voice heard over the phone is changed when you have a smile on your face.
- Be prepared with phone in hand 5 minutes prior to the scheduled call to ensure that you do not miss the call.
- Take notes during the call to use a reference when asking questions or responding to questions.
- Be prepared with relevant questions to ask the employer at the end of the interview.
- Have a copy of your resume in front of you as a reference.

HEADER (REQUIRED):
Must Include:
Name,
Address (optional),
Phone Number and/or
Email Address

JOB OBJECTIVE/PROFILE (OPTIONAL):
- One sentence, small paragraph, or 3-5 bullets either detailing the position sought or what makes individual the best candidate.

QUALIFICATIONS/SKILLS (OPTIONAL):
- Job-related categories
- 3-5 qualifications/skills
- Showcase relevant qualifications and skills for pursued role

WORK EXPERIENCE (REQUIRED):
- Reverse chronological order
- Must Include: Position Title, Name of Company, Dates of Employment (month/year), city and state, responsibilities, and accomplishments
- Must include 3-5 accomplishments/responsibilities included under each job experience
- Must use action words
- Should include quantitative *and* qualitative data

EDUCATION (REQUIRED):
- Reverse chronological order
- Must include: Degree, Major, School Name, Dates of Attendance (including anticipated graduation date)
- Can include: GPA (if over 3.0), minors (if applicable), honors, specific related courses

OTHER (OPTIONAL):
- Awards
- Honors

**No more than 5 honors/awards should be listed unless absolutely relevant to position sought
- Certifications (can also be included in qualifications/skills section)
- Achievements (can also be included in qualifications/skills section)
- Licenses (can also be included in qualifications/skills section)
- Professional Affiliations (can also be included in qualifications/skills section)

Other standards include:
No grammatical or spelling errors
Consistency in formatting, presentation, and tenses
1-2 pages at most

RESUME RUBRIC

	UNSATISFACTORY (1-2)	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (3-4-5)	SATISFACTORY (6-7-8)	EXEMPLARY (9-10)
Technique / Concepts	Resume lacks all required sections, is longer than 2 pages, utilizes no action words, and lacks use of qualitative and quantitative data, where relevant	Resume includes all required sections but is longer than 2 pages,, utilizes only a few action words, and lacks qualitative or quantitative data, where relevant	Resume includes all required sections, falls within the 2 page guideline, utilizes action words in most areas, and utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data, where relevant	Resume includes all necessary sections, falls within the 2 page guideline, utilizes action words throughout, and utilizes strong qualitative and quantitative data, where relevant
Grammar/Formatting	Resume includes spelling errors, typos, and inconsistent formatting in multiple sections	Resume includes spelling errors, typos, and/or inconsistent formatting in one section	Resume includes no spelling errors, typos, or inconsistent formatting in all sections	Resume includes no spelling errors, typos, or inconsistent formatting in all sections and formatting is unique and highlights sections well
Reflection & Understanding	Resume shows little to no understanding of relevant information to include; work experience is not targeted towards the required skills and qualifications for the role pursued	Resume shows some understanding of relevant information to include; some work experience is explained in a manner that targeted towards the required skills and qualifications for the role pursued	Resume shows understanding of relevant information to include; work experience is explained in a manner that is targeted towards the required skills and qualifications for the role pursued	Resume shows strong understanding of relevant information to include; work experience is explained in a manner that is targeted towards the required skills and qualifications for the role pursued and provides engaging examples of success
Creativity/Appearance	Resume is in standard template with no personalization incorporated OR resume is busy, wordy, includes distracting images and looks unprofessional	Resume is in standard template with some personalization incorporated	Resume shows creativity with an acceptable amount of personalization	Resume shows creativity and uses an eye-catching template with much personalization incorporated
Effort	Student shows little effort and did not make use of class time and/or supplemental resources effectively, assignment was completed past deadline	Student shows some effort but did not make use of class time and/or supplemental resources effectively; assignment was completed past deadline	Student shows effort in completion of the assigned and made use of class time effectively; assignment was turned in on time	Student completed work showing great effort, made use of class time effectively, and exceeded expectations; assignment was turned in on time

*Source: http://www.edutopia.org/resource/editable-sample-rubric-download?gclid=COrB4OXBvckCFQMJaQodduoDHw

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COVER LETTER RUBRIC

	UNSATISFACTORY (1-2)	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (3-4-5)	SATISFACTORY (6-7-8)	EXEMPLARY (9-10)
Technique / Concepts	Cover letter lacks required sections including greeting, closing, address, and/or body paragraphs; exceeds 1 page	Cover letter lacks some required sections including but not limited to greeting, closing, address, and/or body paragraphs; exceeds 1 page	Cover letter includes all required sections including but not limited to greeting, closing, address, and/or body paragraphs; within 1 page	Cover letter includes all required sections including but not limited to greeting, closing, address, and/or body paragraphs; within 1 page; content is concise, clear, and hooks reader immediately
Grammar/Formatting	Cover letter includes spelling errors, typos, and inconsistent formatting in multiple sections	Cover letter includes spelling errors, typos, and/or inconsistent formatting in one section	Cover letter includes no spelling errors, typos, or inconsistent formatting in all sections	Cover letter includes no spelling errors, typos, or inconsistent formatting in all sections and formatting is unique and highlights sections well
Reflection & Understanding	Cover letter shows little to no understanding of relevant information to include; experience is not explained in a manner that correctly ties to the position pursued	Cover letter shows some understanding of relevant information to include; some experience is explained in a manner that is correctly tied to position pursued	Cover letter shows understanding of relevant information to include; experience is explained in a manner that correctly ties to position pursued	Cover letter shows strong understanding of relevant information to include; experience is explained in a manner that correctly ties to position pursued and provides engaging examples of success
Creativity/Appearance	Cover letter is in standard template with no personalization incorporated	Cover letter is in standard template with some personalization incorporated	Cover letter shows creativity with an acceptable amount of personalization	Cover letter shows creativity and uses an eye-catching template with much personalization incorporated
Effort	Student shows little effort and did not make use of class time and/or supplemental resources effectively, assignment was completed past deadline	Student shows some effort but did not make use of class time and/or supplemental resources effectively; assignment was completed past deadline	Student shows effort in completion of the assigned and made use of class time effectively; assignment was turned in on time	Student completed work showing great effort, made use of class time effectively, and exceeded expectations; assignment was turned in on time

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