

APPSTATE

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

**Master of Public
Administration**

Guide to Success

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I. Writing Guide for Research

Introduction

Students should use the following guidelines to complete written assignments in the Appalachian State University Master of Public Administration program. In graduate school, as in most professional settings, written works are intended to convey an analysis of important information to readers. The author should focus on making the written work interesting and meaningful so that the audience pays attention to this important information.

In most classes, students find that journal articles serve as examples of exceptional writing. Students may find that modeling the style of public administration articles is helpful to write concise term papers, capstone projects, and other reports. In certain classes, however, faculty may need to add special requirements for assignments. In all cases, students should follow any special instructions from the professor in addition to, or in lieu of, the following guidelines.

Style

- Write from a guiding **research question**.
 - You may find it helpful to include the research question in the header during the draft writing phase. This will serve as a reminder that all information should be related to the research question. Remember to change the header before submission.
- **Include an introduction** that clearly states the purpose and general outline and a **conclusion** that restates the purpose and findings.
 - Writers often find writing or re-writing the introduction and conclusion at the end of the drafting process allows them to clearly state the purpose and outline in the introduction and restate the purpose and findings in the conclusion.
- Ask “**so-what?**” Evaluate every sentence by asking yourself why the piece of information is important. If it is not important, consider rewriting or deleting the sentence.
 - To evaluate the “so what” of each sentence, you may find it helpful to make a bulleted list of the key information in each paragraph. If your list does not follow a logical order or excludes key information, you may need to add or delete sentences, paragraphs, or sections.
- Written works of more than two to three pages should have **headings and subheadings** to guide the reader through the paper.
- **Define key terms** for the reader.
- Use **active voice** rather than passive voice. You clearly identify the subject in the active voice, which makes the statement less confusing for the reader.
 - For example, “Boone’s town manager proposed a budget to the city council,” is a clearer statement than “A budget was proposed to the city council.” Why? The first statement specifies that the town manager took an action, but the second statement requires the reader to determine who proposed the budget.

- Use citations from **scholarly, peer reviewed research** in academic journals or books. Do not cite Wikipedia, which can be edited by anyone, unless the paper is about Wikipedia.

Paragraphs

- Thoughts and ideas should be organized into paragraphs.
- Each paragraph should contain **one main idea**.
- Paragraphs should be **short but have at least three sentences**. Paragraphs that are almost 1 page long (or more than 1 page long) should be edited because it is likely you have presented more than one main idea in the paragraph.
- Paragraphs should be **ordered from general to particular** information.
 - Paragraphs should begin with an opening sentence that states the general idea of the paragraph. The first sentence should be followed by supporting statements.
 - To avoid choppy writing, there should be a transition statement from one paragraph to another.

Sentences

- **Avoid writing numerous long sentences** when shorter sentences convey the information.
- Use **quotes sparingly**. Quotes are reproductions of another author's work. Most often, the reader wants to understand your interpretation of others' work and the importance of the cited work to your project.
 - Proper citation includes quotation marks, the author's name, page number, and year of the source material.
 - Quotes are not stand-alone sentences. For example, a proper quotation would be: According to Bradbury (2011), "The Appalachian State University Master of Public Administration Program has achieved..." (p. 10). The following is not proper: "The Appalachian State University Master of Public Administration has achieved..." (Bradbury, 2011, p. 10).
 - **Do not use block quotes**.
 - Changing a few words is not paraphrasing. Failure to use proper citation and punctuation in this case is plagiarism.
 - To make the work your own, incorporate the ideas into your own words and into the organization of your paper.
 - The APA guidelines encourage you to provide a page number after paraphrased material.
 - Rather than quoting or paraphrasing one author, you may find it more meaningful to consider the meaning of several works when taken together. In other words, a particular understanding may be drawn from thinking about the scholarship of more than one author. In this case, you write your understanding of previous research and cite all works that contributed to that understanding. This helps to avoid the need for quotations and may add meaning to your own work.

Word choice

- Proper **word choice** can add clarity to your paper.

- **Use transitional words** such as “first,” “second,” “finally,” “in addition,” and “furthermore” as appropriate. These can often help you transition between related, but distinct, ideas and give clues about important information to the reader.
- **Use simpler words** when possible. For example, substitute the word “use” for “utilize.” If the meaning of a word is unclear to you, avoid using the word.
- **Avoid clichés.** Phrases such as “by the same token”, “when push comes to shove”, “at the end of the day,” and other clichés add little to no value to the meaning of the sentence and may irritate or bore the reader.
- **Avoid generalizations.** Phrases such as “research has shown,” “everyone knows,” or “everyone agrees” are inappropriate unless you have specific citations to support your claim.
- **Do not use contractions** in formal writing (for example, use “do not” instead of “don’t,” “is not instead of “isn’t,” etc.)
- **Avoid unnecessary clauses** such as “in order to” at the beginning of sentences.
- **Delete extra words**, such as “very.” Rather than “very good,” you could choose the word excellent, for example.
- **Avoid vague words** such as “it” or “there.” These words are often empty introductory language that add little value to the sentence.
- **Avoid the use of jargon** whenever possible. This type of language or terminology may confuse readers who are unfamiliar with your field of study. For example, “red tape” is often used to criticize or describe bureaucracy. Specifying that procedures, rules, paperwork is an important, but frustrating, feature of bureaucracies would be clearer to readers who may be unfamiliar with the phrase “red tape.”
- **Carefully consider verb choice.**
 - Use **strong verbs** in writing to keep the reader’s attention. For example, “The research question generated discussion” is more interesting and clearer to readers than “The research question was interesting.”
 - Use a **consistent verb tense** throughout the document. Past tense is probably most appropriate.
 - Make sure verbs **match the plurality of the noun/subject** of the sentence. For example, “they are” not “they is” “data are” not “data is,” or “he is” not “he are.”
- **Spell out the full phrase for an acronym.** The first time an acronym appears in a paper; it should be in parentheses immediately following the full phrase. For example, use “United Nations (UN)” rather than “UN” the first time.
 - Each time you refer to the UN thereafter, “UN” should be used. Be consistent and do not switch back and forth between the full phrase and the acronym.
- Avoid beginning sentences with “and” “but” “because” or “however.” These words imply a continuation of the previous sentences main thought and are often mis- or over-used.
- **Numbers have different rules**, depending on the use of the number.
 - The numbers zero through nine should be spelled out, except when referring to data or measurements. For example, “I ordered three reams of standard paper measuring 8 inches by 10 inches,” is correct but “I ordered 3 reams...” is not.

- Use Arabic numerals for any number greater than nine, such as 10, 11, or 12.
- Always spell out ordinal numbers, such as tenth.
- Spell out any number at the beginning of a sentence, such as “Sixteen students passed the Seminar course.”
- If discussing a percentage, spell out “percent” instead of using “%.”
- **Check all punctuation.**
 - Note that semicolons are typically used incorrectly. The correct use of a semicolon is to connect closely related ideas. For example, “The town infrastructure is old; it is also historic,” is correct.

Editing

- Expect to **write and re-write** your own work **several times** before giving it to anyone else to read. Writing is an iterative process that takes time; there is no short-cut to writing well.
- Use Microsoft’s **spelling and grammar check** before submitting your work.
 - This should be one of several tools you use to check your work because it is not always accurate. Microsoft often does not detect the inappropriate use of a word if it is spelled correctly. For example, if you had “dessert in the desert” and instead typed “desert in the desert,” Microsoft does not note the error. Similarly, “public mangers” are not as common as writing in our field would suggest. Moreover, the check often offers suggestions you might not wish to take, such as changing the spelling of authors’ names.
- **Read** your paper out loud and backwards. These processes will help you identify grammatical, typographical, and content errors.
- Share your paper with peers for substantive content. Peers can identify any points that may require further clarification. Peers can also help to identify grammatical and typographical errors. Do NOT share your paper with your peers if your professor has specified not to.
- Proofread. Revise. Proofread again. Revise. Proofread again. Revise. Proofread once more.
 - Once you submit your written work, the reader has no choice but to assume that it is your best possible effort. Make sure that it is.

Formatting

- **Follow length requirements**, including minimum and maximum page length.
- The following formatting requirements typically apply:
 - **Double-space** research papers
 - **Number all pages** of text, beginning on the first page of text. Do not start numbering on title page, abstract, table of contents or executive summary
 - Use a **basic, 12-point font** such as Arial, Courier or Times New Roman
 - Use **1-inch margins** on all sides
 - Use **one space after the end of a sentence** and **enter key once** after paragraphs

- **Indent the first line** of a paragraph
- Include a **running head**, per APA guidelines
- Include a **title page and staple** written works of more than one page.
 - Title page should include Title, student's name, course title, professor's name, assignment name (if appropriate), and date
 - Running head is not required

References Format

- Learn how to correctly cite, paraphrase, and quote to **avoid plagiarism**.
- **Take the time to become extremely familiar with American Psychological Association (APA) format.** You want your professor to be focused on the content of your writing, not fixing formatting and citation issues. Citation resources can be found online at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.
- **Avoid writing the title of the source** in the text.
 - Do not attribute a point to a source rather than an author. For example, rather than “According to *Ethics for Bureaucrats*,” write “According to Rohr...” Publications do not have ideas, scholars share ideas through books and articles.
- **Do not trust citation generators and reference page generators.** These tools often provide a citation format that includes numerous mistakes.
- **In text citations** should:
 - Include the last name of the author(s) followed by the year of publication at the end of the sentence. See below for examples, including proper punctuations.
 - Include the page number for direct quotations. Although APA allows for some flexibility with paraphrasing, include the reference's page number for any paraphrased material.
- **Reference lists** should:
 - Include all references cited in text.
 - Be alphabetized by the first author's last name
 - Have a left-justified first line for each source. If the citation wraps beyond one line, each line beyond the first line should be indented one-half inch from the left margin. This is called a hanging indentation
- The following are examples of the most **common citation formats** in the Appalachian State University Public Administration program:
 - Single author:
 - In-text: (Bradbury, 2011).
 - Reference:
Bradbury, M. D. (2011). Representation and diversity in the federal government: A critical review of government reports. *Review of Public Personnel*

Administration, 31(4), 424-431. doi: 10.1177/0734371X11420910

- Two authors:
 - In-text: (Hur & Strickland, 2012).
 - Reference:
Hur, Y. and Strickland, R. A. (2012). Diversity management practices and understanding their adoption: Examining local governments in North Carolina. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 36(3), 380-412.
- Anthology:
 - In text: (Rohr, 1979/2012).
 - Reference:
Rohr, J. A. (2012). Ethics for bureaucrats: An essay on law and values. In J. M. Shafritz and A. C. Hyde (Eds.), *Classics of public administration* (7th ed., pp. 361-369). Australia: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning. (Original work published 1979)

Other Resources

To assist you in editing process your own work, please consult the following resources:

APA

- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. (2010). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 6th ed.
- *APA Formatting and Style Guide*, OWL Materials from The OWL at Purdue <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Grammar

- Any edition of Diane Hacker's and Nancy Sommers *A writer's reference*. The eight edition was published in 2014.
- Strunk, Jr., W. and White, E. B. (2009) *The elements of style*. New York, NY: Longman. Available online at: <https://faculty.washington.edu/heagerty/Courses/b572/public/StrunkWhite.pdf>
- <http://www.webgrammar.com/grammarbasics.html>

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Author's Checklist:

(Includes checks for many, but not all, of the guidelines presented above)

- Cover page
- Introduction provides purpose and outline of paper
- Research question is clear
- Headings and subheadings included
- Quotations used sparingly and properly attributed
- Conclusion provides summary of main findings
- All sections structured into paragraphs that are not approaching one-page in length
- Sentences are clear and concise
- Key terms defined
- Acronyms spelled out first time and used consistently thereafter
- Reference list uses APA format and includes information for all in-text citations
- Multiple drafts read and edited
- Shared with a peer for feedback
- Spelling and grammar check used
- Uses active voice
- Uses strong verbs
- No contractions or clichés
- Standard 12-point font
- 1" margins on all pages
- Page numbers included
- Read and edited again
- Stapled

Reviewer's Checklist

(Includes checks for both content and stylistic quality)

- After reading the introduction, you understand the purpose and outline of the paper
- Research question is clear to you
- Headings and subheadings match the information in the sections
- Minimal quotations with proper attribution
- Conclusion provides a clear summary of findings
- Includes definitions for all key terms
- Paragraphs have one main idea and do not approach one-page in length
- Acronyms spelled out first time and use is consistent
- Reference list uses APA format and includes information for all in-text citations
- Free of grammatical errors
- No contractions or clichés
- Standard 12-point font
- 1" margins on all pages
- Page numbers included

II. Capstone Presentation Guide & Helpful Presentation Tips

Introduction

Each student will make a presentation of their capstone project using Microsoft PowerPoint. While each student should use their discrete research and findings to prepare this presentation, the following guidelines will help to ensure uniformity, understandability, and timeliness in all presentations, including those outside of the capstone project.

Students can use a maximum of five slides for their capstone presentation. This should result in a presentation of approximately six minutes, followed by a question-and-answer exchange with attendees. The purpose of the following guidelines is to help you make an impressive, professional presentation of your research in the time allotted.

Presentation Design

Preparing a good presentation always takes longer than you anticipate. The key is to start early and allow enough time to adequately prepare. Knowing the material well and being prepared are the best keys to success in giving a presentation. The following guidelines will assist you in adequately designing a well-done presentation.

- **Brainstorm:**
 - What does the audience know about the material?
 - What do you want them to learn?
 - Try starting with the last slide first. If you do not know where you are going it is highly unlikely that you will be able to get there. Plan the conclusion first. Know what you want to convey to the audience, then make the rest of the slides lead to and support your final results.
 - Write out an introduction. Start with a fifteen-word summary. If you can not summarize your idea in fifteen words, rewrite it and try again until you can.
 - Outline your story. You want your presentation to have a logical flow. You are telling a story that should have a beginning, middle, and end. Tell your audience what you are going to tell them (beginning), tell it (middle), and then summarize it (end).
 - Stick to key concepts. Avoid description of specifics and unnecessary details.
 - Strive for clarity. Are the words you are using unfamiliar jargon or acronyms? Are the words unambiguous?
 - Background: You need to give a sufficient but not a comprehensive background for your subject. Do not get bogged down covering your literature review, rather focus on your research and findings.

- **Preparing Your Slides:**
 - Use one message per slide. Each slide should address a single concept. Slides should follow a logical progression, with each building upon the other.
 - Use brevity: Your presentation should contain no more than five slides in your capstone presentation. In general, using a few powerful slides is the aim.
 - **Do not overload your slides with too much text or data.** Too much text makes a slide unreadable. Stick to a few key words. If your audience is reading the slides

they are not paying attention to you. Keep your points/fragments short, usually 10 to 20 words.

- Maintain parallelism: Use fragments, not full sentences.
- Use a font size of 44 for titles, 28-34 for subtitles, and 28-34 with a bold font for text.
- Use no more than five lines of text on any one slide and use both upper- and lower-case text, not all caps.
- Use contrast: Light on dark background or dark on light and be consistent. Colors appear lighter when projected so look at them on a projection screen ahead of time.
- Use as few numbers as possible (they are confusing to the audience). Number should never be ultra-precise. Revenues of \$660,101.83 looks silly. Use \$660 thousand instead.
- IF you use statistics, use the same scale for numbers on a slide. Cite your source on the same slide as the statistic, using a smaller sized font.
- **Maintain professionalism, do not use animations or “cute” templates in your presentation.**
- Have all text appear when the slide does. Do not have text that appears as the speaker talks.
- If you use charts, remember that numbers in charts can be difficult to read. Ask yourself, is there a better way to present this information? Clearly label all charts.

Presentation Guidelines

- Content & Timing – Practice your presentation:
 - Talk through your presentation to see how much time you use for each slide. It can be helpful to use the “time” tool in PowerPoint.
 - Make a list of keywords/concepts for each slide.
 - Do not attempt to memorize your text.
 - **Do not use PowerPoint or note cards as a “crutch.”** Know the content of your presentation.
 - **DO NOT READ YOUR SLIDES.** Your audience can read them much faster than you can talk.
 - Step out from the podium.
 - Avoid distracting mannerisms in both speech and movement (i.e. saying “um” or shifting your weight from side to side, etc.)
 - Have a rehearsed opening statement and use it. Do not attempt to improvise at the last moment.
 - Always have a prepared handout when giving a PowerPoint presentation. You never know what will happen.
 - To end on time, you must PRACTICE. When practicing, try to end early.
 - **Your back should NEVER face the audience. Do not turn toward the screen, you should be familiar and prepared to discuss the content you are presenting.**
- Presentation Style:
 - Arrive early, do not fight a projector in front of an audience.
 - Always stand, as you are the expert on this topic.
 - Always introduce yourself whenever you talk.

- Be in control, save questions for the end.
 - Speak clearly with sufficient volume, be loud and clear.
 - Think about breathing. This limits the “ums” and “ahs” of your presentation.
 - Make eye contact with the audience.
 - Think SLOW! You are almost always going faster than you realize.
 - Have a conclusion and reiterate. Stress again your value added (tell the people what you told them), this is why you are presenting. What do you want your audience to do? What do you want them to remember?
- Always leave time at the end for a few questions.
 - If you have trouble answering a question you can always use statements such as, “that’s a really good question,” or “I’m glad you asked me that,” to buy yourself time to organize your response.
 - Do not be afraid to say, “I don’t know” or “give me your card and I will get back to you on that question.”

III. Resumes & Cover Letters

Remember, it isn't always the most qualified candidates who get the jobs; instead it's the candidates who market themselves most effectively.

Employers spend roughly 20 seconds reviewing your application. Make it count.

Key Resume Points:

- Your name should be the biggest words on the page.
- Information should be current, correct, and professional.

Education Section

- Example:
 - **Master of Public Administration**
 - Appalachian State University, Boone NC, *Anticipated May 2025*
- Include:
 - Degree/major in progress and degree(s) completed
 - School name & location
 - Graduation date
 - Major(s), concentration, and minor(s)
- Not necessary to list schools from which you did not earn a degree
- **Do NOT list high school information.**
- Optional:
 - Graduate level academic/service honors and scholarships
 - Certifications (CPR, etc.)
 - Study abroad
- Education should come first on your resume until you have had 3-5 years of professional experience.
- Tips:
 - Use bolding and italics to highlight your degree.
 - Spell out MPA, BS, and BA – it looks more professional.
 - Education can move down on your resume after 3+ years, not before then.
 - Include month and year of graduation.

Functional Headings

Related Experience	Field Experience
Leadership Experience	Research Experience
Related Projects	Related Skills
Related Work Experience	Skills & Accomplishments
Work Experience	Training & Certifications
Skills and Competencies	Honors & Awards
Affiliations	Summary of Qualifications
Volunteer Experience	Technical Skills
Languages	Professional Involvement

Presentations	Conferences and Workshops
Publications	Teaching Experience

Experience

- What skills/experience are important to this position?
- What is important for this employer to know about you?
- Top 10 Skills Employers Seek on your Resume:
 - Leadership
 - Teamwork
 - Communication (written)
 - Problem Solving
 - Strong Work Ethic
 - Analytical/Quantitative
 - Technical Skills
 - Communication (verbal)
 - Initiative
 - Flexibility/Adaptability
- Use bulleted phrases beginning with power verbs.
- Highlight skills/knowledge that is utilized/gained, and results/accomplishments
- Do not list years only
- Consistency in periods and tenses
- Avoid phrases like “responsibilities or duties included”
- Include job titles for all experiences
- Do not use “I” statements
- Use bolding and italics to emphasize company name or job title
- Use clear concise phrases
- Use power words
- Do not over or under describe
- Use numbers when appropriate
- Writing bulleted phrases:
 - **“Organized and submitted** reports consisting of quality statements, contracts and department reports for managerial decision-making”
 - **Power verb (correct tense)** who/what for/by/resulting in (purpose/results)

Types of Experience

Experience is not limited to paid work. Use the same layout for internships, volunteering, and leadership experiences as you would for work experience. Organize experiences from most recent/relevant to least recent/relevant to the job. Your most related experience should come first on your resume.

- Internships
- Graduate Assistantship

- Volunteering
- Organizational Involvement
- Relevant Coursework/Research Projects
- Work

Summary of Qualifications

Only use when you have gained a significant amount of experience in a given field (3+ years).

- Sometimes called “profile.”
- Summarizes most relevant experiences for a job.
- Includes three to five points.

Other Tips

- Avoid templates.
- Be consistent.
- Ensure that you are ERROR FREE!
- Keep your documents neat.
- Pay attention to the tenses you use.
- Avoid negativity.
- Do not overuse the same adjectives, adverbs, or verbs.
- Conservative font, not fancy.
- Use resume paper – not flashy.
- Put your name on all pages.
- Spell out all acronyms.
- Include a separate page for references.
- Use all of the paper, eliminate empty white space on your resume.
- Do not overcrowd.
- Extend margins to 0.5, if needed.

References

- This should be a separate page from your resume.
- Make sure that your references know that they are references.
- Make sure you include your references’ correct contact information.
- Include a minimum of three references on your application.
- Examples of references:
 - Direct supervisor
 - Faculty advisor
 - Volunteer supervisor
 - Club/Organization supervisor
 - NOT FRIENDS OR RELATIVES

Cover Letters

Why send a cover letter?

- Introduce yourself to an employer
- Showcase your writing skills
- Give overview of your background and abilities
- Make a good first impression
- Demonstrate your professionalism

Show how YOU will be a good fit for the organization and what YOU can contribute.

First Paragraph

State the position you are applying for and how you became aware of the vacancy.

Get the reader's attention immediately! Show enthusiasm, but do not use "flowery" words.

If someone referred you to the position, mention it within this section.

Say something that shows interest in the company.

Middle Paragraphs

Highlight specific skills and achievements that are relevant to the employer.

Use **keywords** from the job description.

Demonstrate knowledge and goals of the organization and industry.

Show how you will be an asset to this particular working environment.

Closing Paragraph

Reiterate your interest in the position.

Make a request for future communication with the employer.

Provide an email address and phone number for them to contact you at.

Thank the employer for their time and consideration.

Tips

- One size does NOT fit all... tailor your cover letter to each application. **MAKE SURE YOU DO NOT MENTION A DIFFERENT POTENTIAL EMPLOYER IN A DIFFERENT APPLICATION.**

- Cover letters should not be longer than one page. Typically, they are 3-4 paragraphs, memo-style.
- Use a professional tone and writing style. Avoid using slang and being too informal.
- Use business letter “block” paragraph style.
- Create it to look like part of a well put together application packet – font size/type, margins are the same as your resume.
- If you email the cover letter, attach it as a PDF with cover letter first, then resume, and saved descriptive title
- **PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD!**
- Print on quality resume paper than matches your resume.
- Call to request the name and title of the individual responsible for hiring this position.
- Do not use “Dear Sir, Dear Madam, or To Whom it May Concern”
 - If you cannot get a name, address the letter to the director/supervisor of the department
 - Dear Director of Human Resources

Group Work Standards

The following tips were inspired by feedback given by MPA students about working in a group setting.

Planning and Initial Contribution

- It is important to create an outline of work that needs to be completed and divide up responsibilities within the group.
- Take initiative and schedule meetings, create work plans, outlines, and timetables.
- This sets the stage for how well and efficiently the group will work together.
- You must hold yourself accountable for the items you commit to.

Attendance

- Attendance and communication are extremely important.
- Members should take group meetings as seriously as if they were meeting with an employer or professor.
- Attempt to attend every group meeting.
 - If you are unable to attend, communicate this with your group members as soon as possible. It is important to respect their time and effort even if you are unavailable.

Interpersonal Cooperativeness

- Stay positive and do not constantly complain about others or the assignment. It is a waste of time and will not change the amount of work you will eventually have to do.
- Do not be snarky or arrogant about your own abilities. It is important to be humble even if you are very knowledgeable about a topic. **People will fail to remember your insights and will recall your behavior.**
- Respect other people's busy schedules. It can be very difficult to find a meeting time that works with everyone's school and work schedules. Do your best to be flexible and try to accommodate everyone within the group. If you do not attempt to include everyone, you cannot be upset about their absence in the actual meeting.
- Come to meetings prepared and informed about the assignment or task at hand. This will decrease frustration among group members and will be a more efficient use of your time.
- Do not take advantage of others' kindness or dedication. **Graduate school requires you to take responsibility for your own actions. It is up to you to pull your own weight without a professor getting involved.**

Professionalism

- Treat group projects like an assignment given to you by an employer. The assignments are designed to prepare you with tasks that you will face within your career. Do your best to learn from them and take them seriously.
- Answer emails in a timely fashion. Communication can not be overemphasized. **Check your email often and make sure that you are respecting your group members by responding to the emails you receive.**
- Be sure to meet agreed upon deadlines. Contact your group members if an issue arises that prevents you from completing a task. If you communicate the issue as soon as it arises, your group members will be much more understanding of the situation. It is not appropriate

- to neglect your work and expect others to accept an excuse.
- Do not use meeting times to discuss any personal issues that are irrelevant to the assignment.

Leadership

- Be sure to include everyone in discussions and communicate your own contributions. Some group members may not appreciate your hard work if they do not know about your efforts.
- Help one another if they are having a problem with an aspect of the assignment. Do not take on their responsibilities, but you should try to be supportive if they have a genuine concern.
- Leadership does not necessarily mean being in total control of the project. There are many ways to be a good leader. Focus on your own strengths and use them to thoroughly contribute to the group work.

Followership

- Be willing to listen to others' ideas and take direction when it is appropriate.
- Be respectful of new or different perspectives. People may view things in a different way and you may actually learn something from them.
- Remember, it is group work, not individual work, so be in the mindset of benefitting the entire group and not just yourself.

Effectiveness

- Make sure that your work is accurate and is well thought out. People will not want to work with you if you are careless.
- Make sure that any work you complete meets the requirements set by the professor. It is not your group member's job to correct and overcompensate for your lack of concern. Do not be a burden on your group members.
- Stay focused during meetings in order to accomplish the task.

Although you are in graduate school, your classmates and faculty members can be important resources for you in your future career. You should not take them for granted. You are building a reputation for your future.