

SOM 301 PERSUASIVE MEMO (Fall 2015)

DUE DATES

Abstract & Company Profile:	Submitted electronically to Blackboard during lab the week of October 12 th (Week 7).
Draft 1:	You need to submit your first draft to Blackboard by the start of lab the week of October 26 th (Week 9). Two peer-reviewed hardcopy drafts are to be completed as homework by the week of November 2 nd (Week 10).
Draft 2:	Submit electronically to Blackboard by the start of lab and bring one hard copy to lab the week of November 2 nd (Week 10)
Final:	Submit electronically to SafeAssign (Blackboard) at the start of lab the week of December 7 th (Week 15)
Presentation:	In lab week of November 16, November 30, or December 7 (Week 12, 14, or 15). *Your presentation date will be assigned later in the semester.

Comment [GG1]: Assignment indicates required draft deadline and revision deadline, with sufficient time for thoughtful faculty feedback and for student revision.

Points:	<p><u>Abstract & Company Profile:</u> Must complete on time or you will receive a penalty of 10 points (10 points for each) on your final assignment grade; however, there will be no points awarded for the completion of these assignments.</p> <p><u>Drafts 1 & 2:</u> Must complete on time or you will receive a penalty of 10 points (for each draft) on your final assignment grade; however, there will be no points awarded for the completion of these assignments.</p> <p><u>Final:</u> 250 points</p> <p><u>Presentation:</u> 50 points</p>
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Objective:	To develop research and persuasive writing skills; to demonstrate 300-level writing
Purpose:	To analyze, inform, and persuade
Format:	Memo (see Blackboard for sample format)
Audience:	Superior
Blackboard / SafeAssign:	Blackboard submissions are due for all incremental assignments. A SafeAssign submission is required for the final only; failure to submit to SafeAssign by the start of lab will result in the assignment being considered late and marked with a zero.
Hard Copy:	A hard copy submission is required for Drafts 1 & 2 and the Final.
Grading Criteria:	See rubrics posted to Blackboard.
Honor Code:	All instances of plagiarism—intentional or unintentional—will result in a report sent to the University Honor Committee and a recommendation of a zero for the assignment, and possibly the course; all work must be original to this semester.

The ability to persuade is an important skill you will need in the business world. Persuasion is particularly important for any business or organization that sells goods or services. The effectiveness of a persuasive argument depends largely on the reasonableness of the idea and the credibility of your research.

Comment [GG2]: Assignment prompts include rationales, strategies, and/or suggestions for writing in this field or genre.

Corporate Social Responsibility

While various businesses may define Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in different ways, a generally agreed upon definition is that CSR is the act of conducting business in a way that considers the welfare of society. On a micro-level, CSR allows a business to contribute to the wellness of the community in which it resides. This could include donation of services or goods, partnership with a charitable organization, adjustment of policies out of concern for the local environment, and implementation of procedures that create an ethically aware workforce. Being active in the local community has the potential to greatly benefit the reputation of a company if the practice is implemented properly. However, involvement with a controversial issue or group may severely harm the company. In a weak economy, CSR is still important, though companies will likely prefer low and no cost CSR programs.

The website <http://www.csrwire.com/> may be useful in providing you with additional information on CSR.

Assignment Scenario

Assume you work for a for-profit company of your choice (do not use a non-profit for this assignment). As an employee of your selected company, you have been tasked with proposing a new low or no cost CSR program. This must be a new program at the company.

Comment [GG3]: Writing assignment description.

You have been told this program needs to address an issue occurring in the local area **and** have a logical connection to your company.

You need to justify why this issue is worthy of the company's involvement, show how this issue has a logical connection to your company, and thoroughly explain how the program will operate, be implemented, and how it will benefit both the community and your company (more emphasis on the company's benefits).

Persuasive Memo Abstract & Company Profile

Abstract:

In one paragraph, inform your lab professor of the following:

- Your selected for-profit company (must be the company headquarters)
- A community issue that is logically connected to the company's product, service, or mission (make sure the community issue is local to the company's headquarters)
- Your proposed program and what makes it low or no cost

This deliverable exists to encourage you to start the assignment early in the semester. You may change your topic later, if need be; however, make sure to share any topic changes with your professor.

Company Profile:

Identify what for-profit company you have selected, including (use bullets for this portion):

- Company's website (include URL)

SOM 301 PERSUASIVE MEMO (Fall 2015)

- Company's mission statement
- What the company does exactly
- Where the company is located
- Does the company offer any similar programs to the one you are proposing, and if so, what?
- The name of the person(s) in charge of any CSR programs at the company
- Any other relevant information (e.g., are they publicly or privately held, etc.)

NOTE:

Please use the "Company Research" tab on the Business InfoGuide to help answer the above questions and for finding appropriate research going forward (<http://infoguides.gmu.edu/business/companyresearch>).

Comment [GG4]: Assignment indicates writing resources that are/ will be available to students.

Persuasive Memo Drafts 1 & 2

The Memo Drafts are required of all students so that you will receive feedback on your paper during the writing process.

Comment [GG5]: Assignment describes that the instructor will provide feedback on writing.

Draft 1

This draft should be *at least* the first three paragraphs of your paper (introduction and first two body paragraphs); however, the more you offer at this stage, the more feedback you will be able to receive. To make sure you are on the right track this draft will be reviewed by your peers.

Draft 2

This should be a *substantial* and *revised draft*; be sure you have addressed the comments from the peer reviews on Draft 1. This is an opportunity for your lab professor to ensure that you are on the right track and to offer you feedback and recommendations. This second draft should be a polished draft; do not ask your lab professor to read and respond to a draft that has not been proofread and edited at least twice. Although you are encouraged to use memo format and incorporate research at this stage, you will not be graded on format or research for this draft. Instead, your instructor will comment on the content you have provided for the assignment. Again, the more you offer at this stage, the more feedback you will receive.

Persuasive Memo Final

You will need to justify why this issue is worthy of the company's involvement, show how this issue has a logical connection to your company, and thoroughly explain how the program will operate, be implemented, and how it will benefit both the community and your company (more emphasis on the company's benefits).

A logical approach to this assignment is to devote approximately a third of your paper content to each of these areas:

- 1) Community issue
- 2) Connection to company
- 3) Program specifics

Content Requirements:

- **Select** a for-profit company's headquarters.
- **Select** an issue local to the company's location (headquarters) that will logically connect to your chosen organization in some way.
- **Find** the name of the person(s) responsible for CSR policies at your chosen organization. This is your memo audience/recipient, and you should consider this person your boss for this assignment.

SOM 301 PERSUASIVE MEMO (Fall 2015)

NOTE: Consider this information common knowledge; there is no need to cite it.

- **Describe** the proposed CSR program.
 - How will the program operate?
 - How will the program be implemented?
 - What will make it low or no cost? Use research.
 - How will the program address the community issue?
 - How will the program benefit the company?

Format Requirements:

- **Use** standard business memo format (refer to format sample on Blackboard).
- **Include** a strong opening that grabs the reader's attention and states the purpose of the memo, as well as a closing paragraph with an action statement that clearly identifies logical next steps in the process.
- **Use** first person sparingly. This memo is not about you.
- **Meet** the page requirement of 2.5-3 single-spaced typed pages; the required reference list does not count toward this page length requirement. Use Times New Roman, 12-point font, and make sure to have standard one-inch margins.
- **Include** descriptive (more than one word) headings and structure throughout the memo to create a logical flow and make your document easy for a skimmer to scan the document. The opening paragraph should either have "Executive Summary" as the heading or no heading at all (this is the only section that could go without a heading; all other sections must have headings).

Comment [GG6]: Assignment describes any specific strategies and conventions necessary for student success for this assignment.

Research Requirements:

- **Find** *at least* four sources that will provide support or data for your proposal. Your textbook, class materials, and the selected company's website do **not** count toward the required sources. However, these sources would still need to be cited if you use any of these as additional research.
- **Cite** sources in the actual memo (use signal phrases and internal citations) and include a reference list in APA format. It must be clear where your research begins and ends. Please review the "citation sandwich" slide posted on Blackboard.

Persuasive Memo Presentation

See separate directions and rubric posted to Blackboard.